The Austrian city of Graz, located on the river Mur about 100 miles south of Vienna, hosts the Indiana University summer abroad program in German. This past summer, twenty students spent six weeks in this hospitable city as participants in IU's intensive overseas program of language instruction and courses in Austrian culture. The size and location of Graz are ideal, offering our students ample opportunities to practice their language skills in a bustling environment which includes markets and stores, as well as local festivals. Needless to say, Graz is rich in cultural treasures, as reflected in the city's many galleries, museums, and centuries-old buildings.

While this year's students came from various academic backgrounds and possessed different degrees of language proficiency, all the participants coped exceptionally well with the program's challenging curriculum of twenty hours per week of intensive study. The informal instruction provided by the program's host families greatly facilitated the students' study of language and Austrian culture. Throughout the summer program, the families were actively involved in the students' course preparation, conversing with the students in German and assisting them with their homework assignments. This program of total immersion in the German language provided the students with the confidence to spread their wings throughout the city and to experience the hospitality and cultural richness of Graz.

The advantages of such an overseas study program of cultural immersion are obvious in respect to language acquisition, since active communication skills are required of each student in order to meet his or her daily needs. Through this combination of formal and informal instruction, all of our students became accustomed to expressing themselves spontaneously in German. This became especially evident as the students ventured to other cities during the course of the program. During the Pentecostal vacation, some students traveled to Innsbruck, while others visited Munich or journeyed as far away as Prague. These excursions proved challenging as well as satisfying, and revealed to the students how far they had come in being able to independently handle diverse situations.

Highlights of the program included extended trips to Salzburg, Admont, and Vienna in order to experience firsthand various aspects of Austria's illustrious past. The program's curriculum concerning Austrian culture was supplemented by viewing the magnificent baroque structures of Salzburg and through learning of this city's impact on Austrian music. In Vienna, we visited an array of museums devoted to Austrian art, architecture, and literature. In Admont, the role the Church played in Austrian intellectual life was revealed through viewing the library holdings of the Benedictine abbey. These fieldtrips were not only historically informative, but also provided the students with a greater insight into Austria's unique culture, which is still molded by an inveterate cosmopolitan tradition.

In addition to providing intensive language study and various broadening cultural experiences, the Graz Program had an important impact on the students' personal growth. Through the daily challenge of encountering the ubiquitous 'difference' of another culture, the students came to realize the deeper significance of knowing a foreign language. For it was the students' ability to speak German which enabled them to find common ground for a dialogue with a distant and yet close world—an experience which will continue to reverberate in their lives.

The participants of IU's 1993 Graz Program are to be congratulated for their successful summer of overseas study, and many thanks are extended to all the host families and program staff who have made this valuable program possible.

**Bohdan Bochan**

Bohdan Bochan, professor of German at IU-Southeast, has been reappointed Resident Director for the 1994 Graz Program.