International Experiences Program Supports Honors College Students Abroad

"The International Experiences Program would make IU the site of the most comprehensive effort of any major American university or college to offer its students firsthand exposure to other cultures."

One of Indiana University’s most active alumni and philanthropic supporters, Edward L. Hutton (B.S. ’40, M.S. ’41, Hon. LL.D. ’92), CEO of Chemed in Cincinnati, credits his first post-World War II experience overseas as being “the key to my development as a person and success as a businessman.” In 1945, he was sent to Germany to work for the occupation government’s Office of Trade, dealing with the country’s import and export operations. Reflecting on that critical first experience abroad, Hutton decided that he wanted to give Indiana University students the opportunity to have similar life-transforming experiences living in a foreign culture. In 2000, he created a new endowment through the IU Foundation called the International Experiences Program (IEP). The IEP is part of the Honors College Undergraduate Grant Program and is administered by the Honors College.

In principle, any IUB student with a GPA of 3.2 or higher may apply for an IEP award, but preference will go to students who have entered IUB as Honors College students or who have joined it before their junior year. Preference is also given to students in the Minority Achievers Program (MAP) and the Minority Science Scholarship Program (MASS). Awards are competitive and made on the basis of merit with particular attention paid to the quality of a student’s proposed overseas experience.

The addition of the IEP enables the Honors College to make international experiences a central feature of its mission and goals. When the endowment becomes fully funded, it will be expected to support 600 students each year—about the size of a yearly Honors College intake—in every school and field of study. As administrators at IUB have noted, “The International Experiences Program would make IU the site of the most comprehensive effort of any major American university or college to offer its students firsthand exposure to other cultures.”

Although the IEP typically supports students who enroll in traditional credit-bearing courses or pursue professional or academic internships or research abroad, its recipients are encouraged to explore other options, particularly in international service activities such as AIDS education projects in less developed countries or Habitat for Humanity projects overseas. Their period abroad can be for an academic year, a semester, a summer, or an intersession or break. Whatever the project or its length, the key objective of the International Experiences Program is for IU students to experience living in other cultures and societies and to return home as “agents of change ... tomorrow’s teachers, business leaders, government officials, and opinion leaders” who will in turn stimulate a “new view of the world.”

The program provides a stipend of up to $2,000. The first full year of the program was in academic year 2000–2001. Up through summer of that year, 47 students had benefited from the scholarships. In the current academic year including spring semester, another 52 awards have been granted. For summer 2002, the

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Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis Hosts International Speakers

In the fall of 2001, the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University Bloomington hosted the following international visiting scholars who presented papers in their areas of specialization at the workshop’s colloquium series.

Ganesh Shivakoti of the School of Environment, Resources and Development at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Thailand gave a lecture on October 22 in which he discussed the activities related to forestry that are being undertaken at AIT and a study on Asian irrigation in transition. An associate professor of Agricultural and Natural Resources, he also co-directs the Center for the Rural Populations and Forest Resources (RUPAFOR).

Gerd Mutz, director of the Munich Institute of Social Science (MISS), specializes in international studies on the future of work, including social and cultural learning processes, community involvement, and corporate volunteering. He has conducted extensive research in Europe, North America, and Asia. On November 5, he spoke about “Social Capital,” the model that has been developed particularly by French social scientist Pierre Bourdieu.

On November 20 Martina De Moor from the History Department at Ghent University, Belgium, gave a talk titled “Comparing the Management of Common Land in Northwest Europe, 1500–1850.” The paper summarized the results of collaboration between several historians of Northwest Europe on the theme of the management of common land during the period 1500–1850, which will be published as a book next spring. Eight regions in the following countries were included in the comparison: The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, France, and Sweden.

On November 26, Ivan Grdesic, ambassador of the Republic of Croatia to the United States, spoke on the topic “Croatia’s Second Transition.” Before assuming his ambassadorial duties, Grdesic held the position of vice dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences from 1996 to 1999 and was president of the Croatian Political Science Association. He has published scholarly books and articles on Croatia’s political systems, democratic transition, elections, and public policies.

For further information on these visiting scholars or to obtain copies of their presentations, contact Gayle Higgins, Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis; telephone: (812) 855-3905; e-mail: ghiggins@indiana.edu.

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number of awards expected to be granted is about double that figure. Students’ fields of study include business, special education, music, chemistry, history, and sociology, illustrating the breadth of disciplines that is envisioned and encouraged by the program. Their studies take them to far-flung locations, from Wales, Austria, China to Thailand, South Africa, and Haiti.

One of the earliest recipients of the scholarship last year was senior Shannon Thake of the Department of Theatre and Drama. She spent last summer in a theatrical school in the state of Kerala, India, taking three intensive courses, on Kathakali dance-drama, South Indian singing, and Indian culture. A slide show documenting her experiences can be seen at the Web site listed below.

For further information on the IEP, contact Edward Gubar in the Honors College, IUB; telephone: (812) 855-2827; e-mail: gubare@indiana.edu.

-Shannon Thake in costume

For Honors College information on IEP: www.indiana.edu/~iubhonor/hds/overseas.php3

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