

JORDAN JOURNEYS

the Official Newsletter of the MSC Leland T. and
Jessie W. Jordan Institute for International Awareness

MSC LELAND T. AND JESSIE W.
JORDAN
INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

Spring 2014

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"When the Jordan family established the L.T. Jordan Institute more than two decades ago, they were visionaries. They understood the need for Aggies to have an outlet to the world beyond Texas and the United States."

Joe Rodriguez '15
2013-2014 Chair

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Teaching in another World

Former L.T. Jordan ILAP Director Finds Fulfillment Volunteering with Peace Corps

Nearly four years after his graduation from Texas A&M University, Andy Marchbanks '10 finds himself in Ukraine, drawn by a love of travel, teaching, learning, helping others and gaining a broader perspective.

A Garland, Texas native who graduated in 2010 with a bachelor's degree in political science, Marchbanks works as a secondary TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) volunteer through the Peace Corps, where he teaches English to Ukrainian students in fifth to eleventh grade.

"I deeply enjoy learning about the world and its people. Ukraine is just one country, but you can infer a lot about Eastern Europe after spending time over here," said Marchbanks, who has been in Zolishchyky, Ukraine for approximately a year and a half. "The opportunity to look at my own country with a critical, semi-foreign eye, can't be overstated, either."

Before arriving in Ukraine, he partook in pre-service training, a three-month intensive crash course in Ukrainian and teaching abroad. Beyond his official mission of teaching, Marchbanks has a secondary mission of cultural exchange – working to teach local Ukrainians about the United States so



Andy Marchbanks '10 (center back) with his 11th grade Ukrainian students.

that he can later teach Americans about Ukraine.

"As a country with a collective mindset, Ukrainians are always concerned with others. Once you get to know them, Ukrainians are some of the nicest people around. If you ask, almost anyone here will lend you a helping hand, regardless of the circumstances," Marchbanks said.

International Ambitions

Marchbanks has long had an interest in international service and volunteerism, stemming from his involvement in a number of student organizations at Texas A&M. In addition to serving as L.T. Jordan's ILAP (Internship and Living Abroad Program) director (2009-

2010), Marchbanks was involved in Aggie Rotaract, the Model United Nations, SCONA (Student Conference on National Affairs), ISMA (International Student Mentor Association) and AGS (Aggies Giving Selflessly).

"These organizations, combined with Jordan, provided a near-ideal crash-course in what Peace Corps would be, and what it wouldn't," Marchbanks said. "Serving as ILAP director was my first taste of leadership and everything that goes along with that. It gave me a big self-confidence boost and helped me realize that these kinds of positions are within reach."

Marchbanks also participated in the ILAP program to Singapore, where he

—Continued on page 4

Events Director Addresses Member Goals



Nia Johnson '15
Events Director

My name is Nia Johnson, and I am a junior from Austin, Texas. This semester I was accepted into the Professional Program for Accounting, a five-year master's program in which I will receive a bachelor's of business administration in accounting and a master's in management information systems. I plan on working in the advisory department of a public accounting firm, focusing on risk assurance. Along with PPA and the Jordan Institute, I am in my fifth semester of involvement with St. Mary's Youth Retreat Team as well as MSC Freshman Leadership International (FLI) alum. Growing up in Austin, I never pictured myself as an Aggie; that was unheard of in my household. However, after my older brother chose to attend Texas A&M, the idea became present in my mind. After visiting the campus and witnessing the atmosphere that surrounds Texas A&M, I was sold.

As a freshman in FLI, the chair of our organization spoke about the Intern and Living Abroad Program put on by the Jordan Institute. The program sparked my interest and after learning that the Jordan Institute not only sends students abroad, but also holds on-campus events, I decided to apply in hopes of expanding my global horizons. I joined my sophomore year and after seeing the impact the Jordan Institute can have on participants in the abroad programs as well as participants of on-campus programs, I wanted to become more involved. The position of Events Coordinator especially appealed to me because I would have the opportunity to participate in all of the on-campus programs, as well as help members achieve their personal goals toward increasing their global awareness. This summer I will be participating in the ILAP program, traveling to Seville, Spain for six weeks, which will bring my Jordan involvement full circle to how it began.

I try to gear the content of the general member meetings to be both informative and interesting. It is important to me that at each meeting Jordan members leave with a sense of their place in the current globalized world. Additionally, I strive to keep members aware of what is going on within the

world, whether that news directly affects the United States or not. This year we have started our meetings with three of the top global news articles of the past two weeks to help keep our members informed. Some of these topics come from current events, topics brought up in some of my personal classes or ideas from members themselves. This year, our meetings have included a guest speaker from North Korea, the issues surrounding micro financing and former participants of the ILAP program sharing their experiences.

My hope is that the Jordan Institute is able to carry out its mission of providing students of Texas A&M with a broader understanding of the world and an appreciation for the culture that comprises it. Jordan has greatly increased my cultural understanding and knowledge as well as challenged me to learn more and continue to keep up with global happenings.

North Korean Refugee Speaks Out

Joseph*, a North Korean refugee and current student at Texas A&M University, spoke at an L.T. Jordan Institute general member meeting on Feb. 19.

Joseph did the impossible and unimaginable by escaping from North Korea.

Invited as a guest speaker to present at the meeting, he spoke to L.T. Jordan members about his childhood, his escape from North Korea – filled with small successes and many tribulations – and his life as an Aggie.

His presentation was accompanied by maps and pictures of his life in North Korea and his escape across a frozen river to China. He spoke of the kindness of individuals in China who sheltered him and gave him work,

as well as North Korean conditions and political, economic and social problems affecting the country. He offered an incredibly unique perspective on a life and journey that most Aggies could never imagine.

Joseph's presentation was arranged by Nia Johnson '15, events director for L.T. Jordan.

Other topics at general member meetings this semester have included issues surrounding micro financing; talks by former ILAP participants; an overview of the Norman Borlaug Institute at Texas A&M; Ted Talk videos; and a showing of *An Idiot Abroad*.

**Joseph's last name is left out for privacy reasons.*



A North Korean refugee and current Texas A&M University student spoke at an L.T. Jordan general member meeting on Feb. 19. He discussed his life in North Korea, conditions in the country, escape to China and experiences as an Aggie. His presentation was one of several this semester.

*From Our Members...***What international event would you have liked to witness?**

"I would have liked to have meditated and achieved enlightenment with Buddha underneath the tree."

—Angelo Gonzalez '16

"Seeing the Nuremberg trials would have been fascinating."

—Adam Lapucha '17

"The building of the Coliseum as well as the gladiator battles."

—Amy Groves '15

"The building of the Great Pyramids in Egypt."

—Joe Rodriguez '15

"The 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall."

—Alex Summers '16

If you could pick another country to live in, where it would be and during what time period?

"Definitely Italy during the Renaissance."

—Lucero Rodriguez '17

"The Hellenic period in Greece."

—Nick Mumme '15

"Paris when Versailles and its gardens were being built."

—Andrea Batarse '17

"It would have to be England at the height of the Victorian Era."

—Valerie Lopez '15

"France during the 1920's! So much culture."

—April Martin '15

Twenty-Sixth Class of Fellows Inducted Apr. 3

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute's twenty-sixth class of Jordan Fellows was inducted on Apr. 3 at the annual Fellows Banquet. Fellows are a premiere group of Aggie students who receive funding to conduct educational or research activities abroad, selected on the basis of a rigorous application and interview process. Fellows for the 2013-2014 academic year are listed below, along with a short description of their research projects.

EDUCATION EMPHASIS

Arlean Dawes is an undergraduate pursuing a double degree in international studies and Spanish. She is traveling to Bolivia to participate in a qualitative research study that focuses on narrowing the gap in access to education for marginalized Bolivians.

STUCK ON STATISTICS

Mary Dorn, a doctoral statistics candidate, will travel to Israel to study the theoretical aspect of the approach to classification that benefits from the flexibility of non-parametric estimators.

FILIPINO PASSION

Lori Fields is a Ph.D. student in anthropology. She is traveling to Bohol and Leyte, Philippines to conduct research on how indigenous knowledge and cultural beliefs affect views on nature, tarsiers and macaques to assess their impact on conservation efforts.

FILM BUFF

Andrew Lantz is pursuing a Ph.D. in Hispanic studies with a graduate certificate in film studies. He is conducting a comparative study of film representation as it relates to political and social climates in La Paz, Bolivia.

MATH MASTERY

Eric Wendel, a graduate student pursuing a master's degree in mathematics, is traveling to Paris, France to perform an independent study at the Institute Henri Poincare on sub-Riemannian geometry.

**Jordan Announces 2014-2015 Chair**

Joe Rodriguez '15 will serve as chair of the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for the 2014-2015 academic year.

He is a political science and history double major and is active as a Resident Advisor, Aggie Muster Host and member of The Association of Former Students' Future Former Students Program.

This will be his second year as chair.

Ahmadi, Kuwait (1956)—Our Lady of Arabia Church was the first Catholic Church built on Kuwait soil, following a proposal for its erection supported by the Kuwait Oil Company. Leland and Jessie Jordan attended church here regularly.

Executive Officers 2013-2014

Joe Rodriguez '15
Political Science & History
.....Chair

Amy Groves '15
Economics
.....Vice-Chair

Nick Mumme '15
Civil Engineering
.....Co-Vice Chair & Internship &
Living Abroad Program Director

Alex Summers '16
Chemical Engineering
.....On Campus Programming
Co-Director

Ale Ochoa '15
Food Sciences
.....On Campus Programming
Co-Director

Dunae Crenwelge '15
Communication
.....Development Director

Daniela Escobar '16
International Studies
.....Marketing Director

Nia Johnson '15
Accounting
.....Events Director

April Martin '15
Communication & Anthropology
.....International Education
Outreach Director

Angelo Luis Gonzalez '16
International Studies
.....Fellows Director

Andrea Batarse '17
International Studies
.....International Service
Program Director

Tyler Hoyt '15
Mechanical Engineering
.....Greece Leadership Program
Director

Teaching

enhanced his understanding of the Eastern world and learned a valuable lesson that has served him well while living abroad.

"L.T. Jordan taught me to accept the differences, as they exist, rather than attempting to change another country's culture for my own sake. The list of ways you change your host country will be short, but

the list of ways the country changes you is essentially endless," Marchbanks said.

Looking to the Future

Living in Western Ukraine, where pro-European sentiment is strong, he has fortunately not been specifically affected by ongoing protests in the country or witnessed significant change with

their outbreak.

Marchbanks' tour in Ukraine will end in November. His future plans include additional travel to South Korea, Israel and/or South Africa, graduate school and a future career either teaching domestically or internationally, or working with the Peace Corps in Washington, D.C. or as a response volunteer.

Sino-American Exchange Program Navigates Cross-Cultural Borders

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute is partnering with the Chinese Students and Scholars Association to create Texas A&M University's first-ever Sino-American Cultural Exchange program.

The program seeks to foster communication and friendship between Chinese students and families of the Bryan-College Station community by giving local families and off-campus students the opportunity to host four to eight Chinese students in their home two to four times a semester.

Hosts are encouraged

to plan events and activities for Chinese students to take part in, which might include a movie night, game night, a barbecue, bowling, a football watch party or dinner.

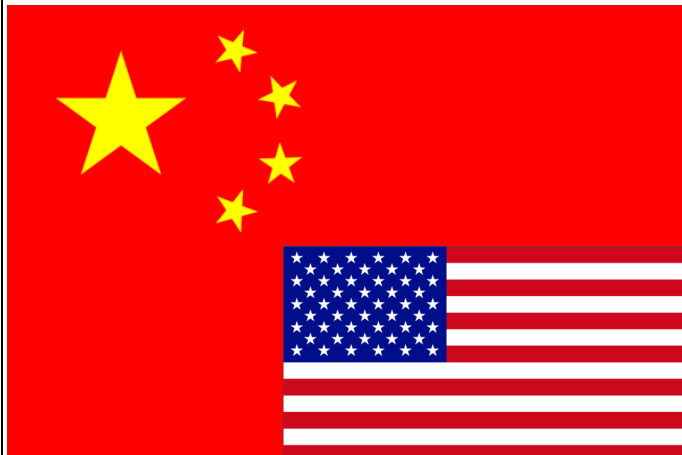
The program was developed by Tiantian He, external vice president for the Chinese Students and Scholars Association; Diego Garcia, advisor to the L.T. Jordan Institute; and Alex Summers, programming co-chair for L.T. Jordan, in response to the realization that many Chinese international students at Texas A&M have never been inside an American home and are eager to learn more about American culture and

the College Station community.

"Because of language and cultural barriers, many organizations do language practice sessions with Chinese students, but usually in large formal settings that are not as comfort-inducing," Summers said. "This program will allow Chinese students the opportunity to interact with the local community in a less formal setting, so that they have the opportunity to practice their English and develop lasting relationships while sharing aspects of their culture with Aggie volunteers and hosts."

Addition goals of the program include fostering friendships, building cross-cultural skill, learning about Chinese culture, increasing cultural acceptance and understanding, unifying the community and helping foreign students feel more at home in Aggieland.

To learn more about this program – or if interested in volunteering – please contact the Jordan Institute at (979) 845-8770 or ji-programs@msc.tamu.edu.



Jordan Programs



On-Campus Programming

- Produces lectures, entertainment and discussions for Aggie students throughout the year
- Focuses on international issues
- Increases campus awareness of world cultures



International Education Outreach

- Brings cultural presentations to K-12 schools in Bryan-College Station
- Expands child perspectives
- Participates in Brazos Valley Worldfest



International Service Program

- Sends Aggies overseas during the summer to participate in community-based service projects in rural areas
- Currently established in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Belize
- Focuses on areas of marine conservation, health and agriculture

Helping Aggies:

Expand their horizons

Learn about world cultures

Develop international skills

Gain real-world experiences

Develop a global perspective

Travel abroad

Educate other Aggies

*Dedicated to
international
outreach at home
and abroad
since 1986*



Internship & Living Abroad Program

- Arranges overseas internship opportunities for Aggie students
- Sends ten students each to Chile, China, England, Singapore and Spain
- Work experience tailored to career interest of student



L.T. Jordan Fellows Program

- Awards grants to A&M students for use in independent research conducted abroad
- Fellows receive funds up to \$2000 to assist with travel expenses and projects



Greece Leadership Program

- Sends ten sophomores to Greece for two weeks every other summer for an intense leadership learning experience
- Widens the multi-cultural and international perspectives of students
- Focuses on subjects of philosophy, democracy, history and architecture

These Programs Aren't Possible Without Your Help!

If you are interested in giving to one of these programs and supporting the international education of Aggie students, please follow the instructions found on page 6.

Yes! I want to invest in the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Enclosed is my contribution in the amount of ____ \$100 ____ \$50 ____ \$25 ____ \$Other

Please make checks payable to: MSC L.T. Jordan Institute

Return to:

Memorial Student Center

TAMU 1237

College Station, TX 77843-1237

(All Contributions are Tax Deductible)

If you prefer to make your donation using a credit card, please go to the Texas A&M Foundation website at <http://giving.tamu.edu/> and follow these steps:

- Click on the "Give Now" button
- Under the 'Select a College or Program to Support', select "Student Affairs -Memorial Student Center"
- Under the 'Select a Fund to Support', check the box for "contribute to an account not listed above"
- Indicate "MSC L.T. Jordan Institute" and the dollar amount you wish to give
- Proceed to step 2 to complete your personal information
- Proceed to step 3 to complete your credit card information and review your gift



You make it all possible.

You are an important part of our students' success--and the success of the MSC. Your support makes it possible for the MSC to achieve its goal to offer Aggies experiences that will change their lives. Your contribution will ensure that MSC students are able to continue to strive toward achieving their goals--both personal and professional. We thank you.

A Gift from the Far East



CHINESE GENEROSITY--

This elegant and jewel-encrusted brazier (a container for fire, generally used for cooking or providing heat or light) was made in China and was a gift to Mrs. Jessie Jordan on a state visit to China. It is housed in the MSC L.T. Jordan Collection Room.

**Please continue the
Jordan giving tradition
and support our Institute
with a gift! We
appreciate your help in
making our organization a
success.**

msc

Be Part of Something

**A department in the division
of student affairs**

All aspects of the Jordan Institute for International Awareness are administered by a committee of approximately 40 Texas A&M University students and Memorial Student Center staff. The Jordan Institute is divided into several subcommittees, each led by a student director. These are: On Campus Programming, Fellows, Development, the Internship and Living Abroad Program, the International Service Program, and International Education Outreach. Each member of the Jordan Institute serves on one or more of these subcommittees. Active involvement is encouraged to enhance international awareness and personal skills such as time management and communication. A student chairperson, staff advisor and associate staff ensure the smooth operation of the Institute.

This newsletter was written and designed by Dunae Crenwelge '15, Director of Development for the MSC Leland T. and Jessie W. Jordan Institute for International Awareness. If you would no longer like to receive a copy of this biannual publication, please e-mail: ji-development@msc.tamu.edu.