



Jordan Journeys

the Official Newsletter of the MSC
L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness

Glimpsing Life in “Asia Lite”

It's been nicknamed the “Switzerland of Asia.”

Others call it “Asia Lite.”

But for Brooke Hill, a former MSC L.T. Jordan member, Singapore is simply “home.”

An active member of Jordan in the early 1990's, Hill moved to Singapore three years ago from London, where she had lived 13 years.

Of the eight former Jordan members who currently lead international lives, Hill lives the farthest from Texas: approximately 9870 miles away

from College Station.

During her time in Jordan, Hill contributed by giving tours of the artifacts found in the Jordan Collection. She recalls joining Jordan to gain international awareness.

“I enjoyed listening to the great speakers arranged for meetings and having new cultural experiences,” she said.

Hill graduated from Texas A&M in 1993 with a Bachelor's in Marketing and went on to receive an MBA from Thunderbird in 1994.

Soon after, she moved to London. Over the years, she's held positions in a software firm, a consulting firm and in banking. Her husband's job transfer prompted the move to Singapore.

“Going from a grey, chilly city to a sunny resort-like fantasy land with low taxes wasn't that difficult a decision!” Hill said. “It was so easy to transition here.”

As one of the most advanced and cosmopolitan cities in Southeast Asia, Singapore has the distinct reputation of being one of the cleanest, safest and most efficient cities in the world.

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ENJOYING the sounds of salsa, merengue, and bachata, a number of Aggies turned out to make one of L.T. Jordan's first on-campus programs of the year, Salsa Night, a success.

Salsa Night Remains Popular

Free Food, Open Floor Draws Students

A hallmark of the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute's on-campus programming over the years has been Salsa Dance Night, a program which promotes the variety of music in Hispanic culture.

Partnering with MSC Town Hall, Aggie Nights, and MSC CAMAC (Committee for the Awareness of Mexican-American Culture), MSC L.T. Jordan offered four hours of free lessons and competition

in a range of dance styles, including salsa, merengue, bachata, and cumbia.

Salsa Fusion Latin Dance Company, a Texas A&M University Recognized Student Organization created in 2008 and dedicated to celebrating Latin Culture through its characteristic dances, led the lesson instructions.

Over 250 students attended the event.



“Being part of the Jordan Institute is more than getting to hear about global issues; it is fully understanding the advantages of international experience as well as the possible consequences of global issues in this country.”

--Giuliana Salazar Noratto, '12

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A Note From Our Chair



Giuliana Salazar Noratto

My name is Giuliana Salazar Noratto. I was born in Lima, Perú and lived there until the age of 12. I became an Aggie in fall 2008. My major is Biomedical Engineering with a specialization in Biomechanics, while my minors are Spanish Literature and Mathematics. Along with attending classes, I do research in the area of Cellular Biomechanics in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. I have been part of several engineering societies as well as service-based and diversity organizations. I founded the Texas A&M Peruvian Students Association a year ago and took several leadership roles in the Memorial Student Center (MSC). Currently, I am the chair of the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute.

My story as part of the L.T. Jordan Institute started my sophomore year, when I decided to go abroad the following summer. The programs that the L.T. Jordan Institute offered appealed the most to me, and I decided to apply for membership. Before I went to the Internship and Living Abroad Program in Spain, I discovered that L.T. Jordan had more to offer to students than abroad opportunities. I was fully engaged in discussions as well as arguments about global issues in meetings. I decided to apply for a leadership role in L.T. Jordan before I left for Spain.

My experience in Spain was close to mind-blowing. I was not only submerged into a completely different culture, but I was working in a prestigious international company closely related to my major. Once I came back from Spain, there was no doubt in my mind that I wanted to remain part of the L.T. Jordan Institute. As the director of International Education Outreach, I produced "One Colorful World," an elementary school program where Texas A&M students presented their culture to kids in order to expose and educate them about different cultures and customs from around the world. Children from Creek View Elementary School enjoyed presentations from Colombia, dances from the Middle East, and story time from India and Japan.

That year, I was recognized in the L.T. Jordan Fellows banquet as an outstanding leader, and I was chosen as the 2011 – 2012 Chair. I see a lot of potential in the institute to become a renowned entity. I have a vision for the L.T. Jordan Institute to become well-known on campus and in the community of Bryan-College Station, not only for its abroad programs, but for the awareness of global issues the institute brings to campus.

In order to accomplish my ultimate goal, I have three simple aims: To create an extensive network with former students, current students, and the community; to form partnerships with colleges, departments, and associations that will give us campus exposure; and to increase membership and the retention of such members. I believe much has been accomplished with the help of my team, but we have a long way to go until we achieve my vision. I know that it will not be fully accomplished in my term, but I want to make sure I lay a foundation for future chairs and members of L.T. Jordan to build upon.

Being part of the L.T. Jordan Institute is more than getting to hear about global issues; it is fully understanding the advantages of international experience as well as the possible consequences of global issues in this country. Every student can benefit from being a member regardless of their interest or major, and it is our responsibility as leaders to provide that opportunity for students.

Glimpsing

"Life is easy here. Everything runs efficiently," Hill said.

Married to a Colombian and the mother of two boys, ages four and six, she currently spends most of her time caring for them.

Living in multiple countries has provided Hill with a unique cultural experience, affording her the ability to notice differences between the U.S. and other countries.

"In Singapore, locals eat out more frequently than they cook at home. Most people work longer hours here than in the U.S. or UK," Hill commented. "There are about 20 different languages spoken here, with English, Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil being the most common. The kids are learning Mandarin at school, and it is common to have bilingual or trilingual families."

Popular dishes in Singapore hail from a number of countries, including Korea, Japan, Thailand, China, Indonesia, and India. Rice dishes, curries, grilled meats,

and the more well known chili crab and black pepper crab are commonly found on menus.

Hill has become so accustomed to foreign culture that returning to the U.S. can prove a bit of a shock.

"The first few years returning to the U.S., all the open space as I drove home from the airport really made an impression on me, as well as the enormous cars and enormous food portions," she said. "In the UK, roads are narrower, cars are smaller, and there is a bigger focus on efficiency and green energy initiatives. Foods tend to be sweeter in the U.S. than in the UK or Singapore."

While Hill concedes missing aspects of the U.S.—her family and friends, free supermarket parking, good Tex-Mex food, Freebirds and great customer service—she also notes that her life "is richer with these new experiences."

Travel remains a personal passion, while family excursions have included stays in



PICTURE PERFECT -- Living and working abroad in Singapore has proved to be an eye-opening experience for Brooke Hill and her family.

Malaysia, New Zealand and Thailand.

To Hill, understanding other cultures is a must for herself and for her children.

"It teaches you tolerance. If you understand other cultures, you can appreciate other views and beliefs. This helps in personal and business relationships. It also helps you understand stereotypes, why they developed and how wrong they can be," she said.

Further, she recognizes the importance of international exposure in today's global world.

"You can be at a distinct disadvantage if you do not have international experience," Hill said. "Nowadays, the world is so competitive. You should study, work or travel abroad to gain additional perspectives, spot business opportunities, network, and learn new languages."

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Newest Jordan Program Incorporates Service Abroad

Since its establishment in 1986, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness has worked to expand its programs to include more students, more destinations, and more cultures. Its newest addition, the International Service Program in Belize, attracted four participants over summer 2011.

Junior Bret Hamm, an Ecological Restoration major from San Antonio, TX, contributed ten weeks of his summer to volunteering for an environmental organization that monitored a marine reserve, a national park, and many private terrestrial lands.

"I was working on a project where a small little island was being eroded away by the sea, and the ranger station there was about to collapse," Hamm said. "Our job was to do a habitat and bathymetric survey of the island and its surrounding shelf for the purpose of saving the island."

Hamm stayed in the town of Punta Gorda with a host

family, but made weekend visits to nearly all of the major cities in Belize and took one trip to Guatemala.

"Belize was much simpler than America, and I loved it that way. I didn't use a cell phone, drive a car, or see a fast food restaurant the entire time I was there," Hamm said. "Everyone says hello to everybody as they walk by, and the entire town felt like a big community. And I loved that Punta Gorda was right next to the ocean as well as the tropical rainforest. After work, I would go hiking in the jungle."

The culture in Punta Gorda is strongly influenced by nations in the Caribbean, but also remains true to its Garifuna culture. Citizens in Belize have preserved much of the culture from their two main branches of ancestry, the Carib Indians and Black African slaves, and Belize has not been affected by Americanization to the same extreme as its neighboring countries, Mexico and Guatemala.



IN ADDITION to his volunteer work, Hamm was able to fully immerse himself in the culture of Belize. He witnessed many ritual and social customs, including native dances and festive ceremonies.

"Being exposed to new things makes you a better person, and this is why it is important to learn about other cultures," Hamm said. "I enjoyed every single day in Belize. My favorite part of the trip was basically everything. I had the time of my life there and never wanted to leave."

Hamm hopes to work for

an environmental consulting firm after completing his degree.

Through offering students like Hamm the opportunity to travel abroad, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness is able to fulfill its mission of providing innovative and creative international education programs at Texas A&M.

Worldfest A Success

CONCENTRATING on drawing a travel-worthy luggage tag, a young boy (below) explored the crafts projects available at L.T. Jordan's booth at Brazos Valley Worldfest.



L.T. Jordan's International Education Outreach Program Exposes Children to World Culture at Community Festival



WORLDVEST not only provided an opportunity to educate local youth, but a chance for L.T. Jordan members (above) Katelyn Kuck and Ryan Trantham to check out other culture booths.

CORRECT! -- A group of three (right) participate in a country matching game at L.T. Jordan's Worldfest booth.



History

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness first opened its doors in December 1986 through a generous endowment from Mrs. Jessie W. Jordan in the name of her husband, Leland Thomas Jordan.

Known to friends and colleagues in the oil business as "L.T.," he was truly an international citizen, spending more than thirty years in Venezuela and Kuwait. Mr. Jordan, a native of Luftkin, Texas, was born in 1906. Upon graduating from Texas A&M University in 1929 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, he was hired by Gulf Oil Corporation.

In later years, Gulf Oil Corporation created the Kuwait Oil Company, Ltd. Mr. Jordan and his employees from twenty-nine countries transformed the company into a highly successful technical and commercial enterprise.

Upon retirement in 1962, Mr. Jordan returned to Luftkin with his wife of 27 years, the former Jessie Wright.

Having lived abroad most of their lives, they knew the importance of traveling abroad and wanted to give Texas A&M University students the opportunity to experience it themselves. Since then, the Jordan Institute has evolved into a flagship organization providing innovative and creative international programs at Texas A&M University.

Reflections on Jordan

Former Officer Shares Experiences

Q: What was your favorite thing about being involved with L.T. Jordan?

A: "The relationships will always be my most cherished takeaway. Well, those and the stamps in my passport."

For Jessica Morris, a 2006 Texas A&M graduate (BBA Accounting, MS Marketing), the L.T. Jordan Institute provided both a networking foundation and international exposure.

"I gained friendships, life experiences, organizational knowledge, and relationships that have lasted far beyond my years on campus," Morris said. "I loved the freedom I found being involved in Jordan, both in how we were able to run the organization as well as in the programs themselves. It was empowering, even for my life after college."

Morris served as Director of the Fellows Program in spring 2003 and held the position of Vice-Chair in 2003-04.

Like many L.T. Jordan members, she took advantage of the offered abroad opportunities by participating in the Internship and Living Abroad Program in Singapore in 2004.

"That trip was definitely a pivotal point in my college career and life. Traveling alone was liberating," Morris said. "I really felt secure and independent and confident in myself and what I was capable of achieving."

Living with a host family, Morris learned about the importance of family in Asian cultures.

"I was able to bond with my host mom and her youngest son. My host grandmother was so impressed that I knew how to use chopsticks that she decided I couldn't be half bad and that we should be friends," Morris said. "Our



Jessica Morris

friendship consisted of watching Chinese sit-coms and her hitting me in the arm every time I was supposed to laugh. I had a huge bruise by the end of the summer."

Outside of home life, Morris worked a corporate internship at Chevron Texaco/Caltex.

"I was able to travel to Bangkok, Thailand on my internship for a week-long global meeting of the marketing heads from each region," Morris said. "That first experience of traveling for work really opened my eyes to how the corporate world of a global company works."

Such knowledge still proves relevant to her job today as a Senior Accountant at the Neiman Marcus Group, Inc. (NMG).

As a member of the Corporate Accounting and Financial Reporting group, Morris is partly responsible for the consolidated financial data that is presented to NMG's Board of Directors, sponsors and owners, and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

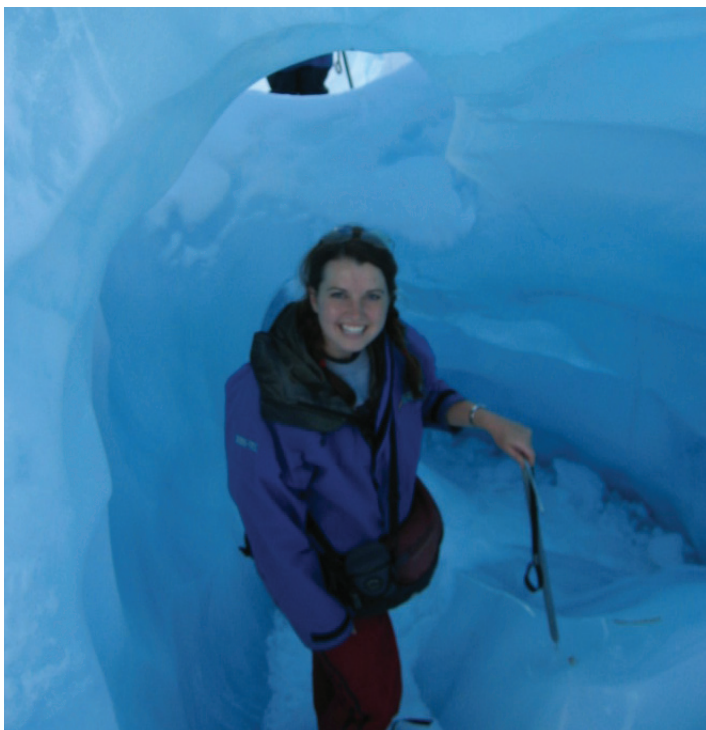
"I love working for a company that I care about. Neiman's has a reach that is national and global, and I love being part of an organization with that kind of legacy,"

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ILAP Program Left Impact On Current NASA Employee

Although the destinations have undergone some changes, one of MSC L.T. Jordan's most enduring programs has been the Internship and Living Abroad Program (ILAP). A 2004 Texas A&M University graduate and Biomedical Engineering major, former ILAP participant Cindy Smith Koester

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CONTINUING her travels after her Australia internship with the ILAP program was complete, Cindy Smith Koester explored glaciers in New Zealand.



HAILING all the way from Namibia, Sean Kalundu (center) spoke at one of L.T. Jordan's biweekly meetings. A Fulbright Scholar in Resident, he teaches a course entitled "International Agricultural Development in Africa" under the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications at Texas A&M University. Additionally, Kalundu is conducting agricultural research. Kalundu touched upon his childhood in Namibia, his ultimate success in gaining an education, his perceptions upon entering the United States, and his goals as a lecturer at Texas A&M. He also highlighted the political, social, and economic issues affecting much of Africa today.

ILAP Program

Continued from page 4

dy Smith Koester credits her experience on the program as proving beneficial to her even now, as a current NASA employee.

During her six week travel in summer 2004, Koester was afforded the opportunity to stay in Townsville, Australia, where she worked at a school for special education.

"We supported children with learning disabilities and children with physical limitations," Koester said. "I focused mainly on the children with physical limitations and adapted games and activities to suit their needs."

While Koester lived in Townsville, she also went to Cairns on a weekend trip and took a day trip to Magnetic Island to indulge in snorkeling and swimming.

"My host family was absolutely fantastic. They really made me a part of the family," Koester said. "They showed me the best of what Townsville and Australia had to offer."

And indeed, Koester got to see a lot of what Australia had to offer during her stay.

"The people were so friendly and hospitable," she said.

"I got to see the differences and similarities between the U.S. and Australia, how fascinated the country is with the sport of rugby, and how many Asian and British influences are present in Australia. The only thing I really missed was Mexican food!"

Since her participation in the ILAP program and her college graduation, Koester has furthered her travels to include trips to Japan, Germany, Russia, England, France, Norway and Tanzania—where she and her husband recently climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Koester currently works in Mission Operations for the International Space Station, specifically in the area of Environmental Control and Life Support Systems.

Her job is to train astronauts to operate and interact with the life support systems and equipment necessary to have a human presence on board the space station.

She also trains astronauts on how to respond to emergency situations in space and works as a flight controller.

"I sit in the Space Station Mission Control Center and

monitor data from those life support systems and respond to any unexpected situations that may arise," she said.

Koester calls her job a "truly international venture."

"You must have good personal and technical relationships with international counterparts to have successful partnerships and complete projects," she said.

From the ILAP program, Koester gained skills she still employs at NASA today when working with colleagues from around the world.

"I gained the ability to recognize that even if you speak the same language, you may have very different cultural backgrounds, and it is necessary to be sensitive and appreciative of this fact," Koester said. "In our ever-increasing global community and global economy, it is so important to have an awareness of other cultures."

The L.T. Jordan Institute has sent over 1000 students abroad through the ILAP Program alone. The program currently has five operative countries, but Australia, Germany and France have been destinations in the past.

Q&A from Our Members:

Q: What do you like most about being a member of L.T. Jordan?

A: "I enjoy learning about different cultures through the various activities our group hosts."

—Maci Hurley '14

A: "Having the opportunity to expand my knowledge of the richness of world cultures with a group of similarly interested individuals."

—Ryan Trantham '15

Q: What made you decide to join L.T. Jordan?

A: "I was part of a study abroad trip to Italy and became interested in developing cultural awareness."

—Katelyn Kuck '15

A: "I really wanted to be a part of increasing global and cultural awareness to campus."

—Stephanie Meals '15

Q: What do you hope to gain from L.T. Jordan?

How do you think this organization has or will benefit you?

A: "I will be more aware of the different cultures that exist in the U.S. and around the world."

—Grecia Sanchez '14

A: "I hope to gain the opportunity to study abroad. Jordan will benefit me by giving me opportunities to expand my global horizon and become informed about global issues."

—Amelia Altendorf '15

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Our Programs

Local and International Outreach

The **On-Campus Programming** committee organizes and produces several lectures, panel discussions, and entertainment programs throughout the year for Texas A&M students. Each program focuses on an issue of international significance and increases campus awareness of cultures, issues, and matters going on throughout the world. This semester we have had programs such as Salsa Night and *Taking Your Business Elsewhere*, and we have many more coming up!

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LEAD

Our **Greece Leadership Program** sends approximately ten sophomores to the historically and culturally rich Greece for two weeks each summer. Here students get to strengthen their leadership skills and widen their multicultural and international perspectives. This provides students an opportunity to experience Greece's rich culture, gain valuable friendships, develop their communication skills, gain confidence, and be further encouraged to study, research, or intern abroad. The activities and excursions focus on themes like Democracy, Philosophy, Literature, History, Architecture, and current cultural events.

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"International Education Outreach benefits the community by supporting the idea that youth are our future and that the only way to create a better future is to teach our youth about the world around them."

John Spikes II '15
Jordan International Education
Outreach (IEO) Director

"On-campus programs increase international awareness by bringing the culture and customs of foreign countries right to campus, where students can engage and explore through speakers, activities, and events."

Arnold Zhang '13
Jordan On-Campus Programming
Director

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A bit closer to home, our **International Education Outreach** program brings cultural presentations to the K-12 schools in the Bryan-College Station community, reaching students who might not have other international exposure. Through these presentations, IEO works to expand children's perspectives and knowledge to help develop well-rounded and culturally sensitive individuals. Outside of their individual programs, IEO participates in community-wide events such as the Brazos Valley Worldfest.

TEACH

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The **International Service Program**, or ISP, is a service oriented program that allows Aggie students to live in one of several countries for four to eight weeks over the summer and participate in intensive community-based service projects for the people and environment of these countries. We have established programs in collaboration with the Texas A&M Health Science Center, College of Medicine, School of Rural Public Health, and College of Geosciences.

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The **Internship and Living Abroad Program**, or ILAP, annually selects up to ten students to live in several different countries every summer. Here the Jordan Institute arranges all of the logistics including roundtrip airfare, housing with host families, group activities, and non-compensatory work experience which can relate to academic and career interests of students.

INSPIRE

"ILAP combines the excitements and benefits of an international experience with the advantage of a professional internship. Students live, work, and immerse themselves in the culture of a foreign country."

Ryan Trantham '15
Jordan Internships and Living
Abroad (ILAP) Director

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Programs

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Last but not certainly not least is the L. T. Jordan **Fellows Program**. This program concentrates on giving grants to A&M students for use in research conducted abroad. Applicants design a specific independent international study or research project in another country that will enhance his or her educational or career goals. Fellows will receive grant monies up to \$2,000 to assist with students' travel expenses. This program is designed for individual study or research and is not designed to fund a Study/Internship Abroad program.

RESEARCH

"The Fellows Program helps benefit participants by allowing and encouraging them to immerse themselves in the culture of the country in which they are conducting research."

Jose Sanchez '12

Jordan Fellows Director



SOCIALS for L.T. Jordan members are held once or twice a month and encompass a wide range of activities, from bowling to sledding down Mt. Aggie, a dry-land skiing hill made of Astroturf. Directors Arnold Zhang and Cervando Banuelos give an Aggie thumbs up before the journey downhill.

Reflections

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Morris said. "In many ways, fashion is an intersection of art and business, and I find that interesting."

Morris currently lives in Dallas, where she enjoys cooking, yard work, community service, and has recently taken up target practice.

Uniquely, she's been to five of the seven continents and

concedes that her favorite place on earth is Italy.

"I do love traveling—always have," Morris said. "The next place I plan on visiting is Budapest. Or maybe Costa Rica. Or Brazil. Or Lebanon. You get the idea."

Basically, anywhere to acquire another passport stamp.

All aspects of the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness are administered by a committee of approximately 40 Texas A&M University students and Memorial Student Center staff. The L.T. Jordan Institute is divided into several subcommittees, each led by a student director. These are: Programming, Fellows, Development, the Internship and Living Abroad Program, the International Service Program, and International Education Outreach. Each member of the L.T. 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 committee.

Careers Abroad

First Campus Program Highlights International Job Opportunities

"Taking Your Business Elsewhere!" was the subject of MSC L.T. Jordan's first on-campus program of the year, and approximately 50 students attended the event to gain information on getting a job abroad.

A panel of five speakers lectured on a variety of related topics, including studying abroad, the importance of international business, cultural differences across countries, and the international job market.

Mrs. Vanita Mahajan, a lecturer in the Mays Business School's Department of Management, spoke on the importance and relevance of international business, challenges and opportunities associated with international business, and how a student can prepare to be a part of the global marketplace.

Focusing on the cultural aspects of working abroad was Dr. Amanda Martinez, a current faculty member in the Department of Arts and Humanities at the University of Houston-Downtown.

Recently having received a Ph.D. in Communication

from Texas A&M, Dr. Martinez specializes in communication studies with a targeted emphasis on intercultural interaction. Her speech centered on the topics of culture shock, integration, and adaptation, gestures and body language, time and culture orientation, and the difference between individualist and collectivist cultures.

Wrapping up the lecture series was Mr. Paul Pausky, the Associate Director of Texas A&M's Former Student Career Services.

Mr. Pausky discussed the international job market and how students can utilize informational interviews to fully understand employer needs and identify opportunities in the hidden job market.

Concluding the program were two junior-year marketing majors, Ashley Collier and Katie Heins, who studied abroad in Florence, Italy this past summer. After discussing their own experiences abroad, they led a question and answer session for any Aggies considering studying abroad.

This newsletter was written and designed by Dunae Crenwelge and Jordan Grahmann, Co-Directors of Development for the MSC L.T. 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**

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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.

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