How can you connect with the world?

Great opportunities are right here at FGCU! Read how others have connected and why, learn how it changes their lives and impacts the lives of others, how it enhances their learning, teaching, research and career future. Students can expand learning through study abroad, work, service or internships. Faculty can provide a world classroom by leading a study abroad program, or hosting an international scholar to teach or research. Learning in a “classroom” the size of the globe, prepares us for increasingly globalized lives. It can change our thinking, values and actions as it did for our recent New Student Convocation speaker, Greg Mortenson, author of “Three Cups of Tea,” and it may lead to incredible lessons, journeys and accomplishments not only at FGCU but also as citizens of the world.

Visit our website, our office or attend information sessions to learn more about your opportunities to connect with the world!

Students and scholars from around the world visit with Greg Mortenson at his book signing for “Three Cups of Tea”.

Elaine Hozdik, Director of International Services

International Services cordially invites you to

The Thirteenth Annual International Reception

presenting International Initiatives and welcoming International Students and Scholars

Friday, October 2, 2009
5:30PM
Student Union Ballroom

for more information, call 239-590-7925
additional guests are welcome
Business and Cultural Attire Encouraged
Marta Ramos empowers FGCU students & children in the Dominican Republic

When I started working as an adjunct at FGCU in 2004, I heard about The Dominican Republic Service Learning Project. It was with a lot of passion and enthusiasm that Dr. Ingrid Martinez-Rico approached me and told me about this project. I was then extended an invitation to collaborate with her on this project and it was my great privilege to accept. My first trip with the group was in Spring 2007 and the experience more than exceeded my expectations. Since then, I have grown with this project serving as an advisor for the past two years.

This past Spring, the 9th year of the project, a group of 14 students from different majors and backgrounds committed to be part of this endeavor. One of the things that never ceases to amaze me about this project is the commitment of its participants. Among the many options for Spring Break, these students chose to help disadvantaged children and extend themselves beyond their “comfort zone”. This year we had a group of very dedicated, enthusiastic and passionate young people with an authentic will to make a difference. They had to work for several months planning activities and fundraising in order to make this trip work out. During those previous months they did not just work, they also took the opportunity to get to know each other, to build a team and in many cases, establish a long term friendship. When Spring Break finally arrived we had built a team in which each member put their skills forth - whatever those skills might be- and incorporated them in a cohesive educational-fun concept.

This year, we worked with two organizations: Acción Callejera (“Street Action”) and Niños con una Esperanza (“Children with a Hope”). The team came up with the idea of making journals with the youth in Santiago in order to incorporate a theme of empowerment. It gave the children the opportunity to express their individuality and show that they are special and unique. Rather than teach traditional “educational lessons” the group sought alternative and engaging ways to connect and influence the boys in a positive way.

As an educator, I have learned more than I have taught through this experience. I have valued, more than ever, the importance of taking teaching beyond the classroom and to expose the students to real world experiences. It is truly inspiring and eye-opening to witness the way in which the language, the culture and ways of life are exchanged in a reciprocal way between our student group and the youth in Santiago. It is also a great opportunity for our students and for us to awaken awareness of other realities, but mainly to inquire and to question the order and the system that sustain the poverty and the injustice around the world.

The reality that we were exposed to is hard and painful and facing this reality is apt to make you feel frustrated and helpless at many times. The greatest lesson I have learned from this: no action is too small, whatever the path is. It is always better to transform the words, the thoughts and the pity into actions. When action is taken, there is hope. That is what this group is about: hope.

FGCU Master’s degree goal for Yixuan Xing

My name is Yixuan Xing, and I am an international student from China and a MS in the Accounting and Taxation Program. Some people here call me Ellen. I was one of the first groups of exchange students from China in 2007. I had a wonderful time in FGCU for two semesters as an exchange student, so I decided to come back to FGCU to work on my master degree.

The classes in FGCU are more flexible and individualized than classes I had in Chinese college. In China, most students of the same grade have the same classes and same schedule except for a few optional classes. Students in the same major all go to classes together and live together. Most of us have classes from 8am to 5pm and have a longer lunch break for lunch and a nap. All of us live on campus in the dormitory, and we are divided into several groups to have activities together.

In China, seldom college students have cars because we have a very good public transportation system. Students can do grocery shopping and all kinds of entertainment activities just by walking for ten to twenty minutes around campus. If we want to go to downtown or another part of the city, we only need to wait for the bus for a maximum 10 minutes, which only cost about 15 cents in US currency to arrive where we want to go. Even if we want to go to another city, the intercity bus system and trains are very convenient as well.

College education in the US is more computerized than in China. Taking classes online or submitting homework online is very popular here, while most colleges students in China still study from books and do homework on paper. There are many differences in studying and living in these two countries, and they both have advantages and disadvantages. Studying aboard helps me open my mind in many ways and really prepares me to adapt to different international environments in the future.
My name is Kristen Froehlich and I have always dreamed of traveling abroad. I decided that since it was the summer before I graduate, now was the time. Needing an internship, I figured studying abroad would be a great opportunity to give me cultural experience while learning career skills. My major at FGCU is Environmental Studies, and I specifically enjoy studying marine science. Because of my passion for marine science, I was placed in Auckland, New Zealand to do Marine Biology research with Dr. Steve O'Shea. For a total of 11 weeks I lived and worked there learning much about the process of science. Our work involved sorting sediment samples that had been collected by our team and documenting species diversity. The research will help New Zealand know which sediment types are important to protect. Participating in something as vital as conservation was exciting and interesting.

Not only was our environmental Studies interesting and educational, but the culture there was amazing. The native Maori’s have many traditions that the "Kiwi’s" still embrace today. I enjoyed their music and food. It seemed that everyone I met was ready for adventure and enjoyed living life day by day. That spirit impacted me as I tried new things like hiking up mountains and a 160 meter bungee swing across a valley. I would have never seen myself doing those things before I went there! I feel incredibly lucky to have experienced all that I did and will never forget the memories I've made.

Through my study abroad experience I have grown and have a new view about things. I feel more confident in my field and now believe I can be successful in doing marine biology research. I have gained skills and the courage to continue becoming involved here in SW Florida and possibly someday go back to New Zealand or another adventure like Australia! I recommend every student go abroad; find what interests you and go for it because your experience will be indescribable and well worth it.

New Zealand Environment...classroom for conservation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Abroad Fair and Information Sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon, Oct 5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed, Oct 7th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues, Oct 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues, Oct 27th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs, Nov 5th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Nov 16th</td>
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Meet Dr. Madhavilatha Maganti, researcher in Infant Language Development

Dr. Madhavilatha Maganti is an international scholar on the campus of FGCU doing research for the College of Arts and Sciences. We recently asked her a few questions so we could get to know her better. Dr. Maganti is from Hyderabad, India which is well known for its pearls and the famous Kohinoor Diamond. She has an eleven year old daughter and nine year old son; both are in India with their dad. When she is not working at FGCU she enjoys reading, writing poetry and listening to Indian Classical Music. Dr. Maganti specialized in Developmental Psychology; her teaching and research focus on infants. To substantiate her efforts in this direction, Dr. Maganti is presently pursuing her Post Doctoral research at FGCU’s Infant Development Lab. Her research is specifically in the area of infant language development and will hopefully help answer some of the intriguing aspects of language development in infants. Her continuing research and teaching facilitates a transparent and innovative medium for expression of knowledge which builds on her strengths and helps her to continue her work with infants. For her, education in the U.S. and in India demonstrate few differences. She has noticed that India is more competitive in its approach; students focus more on grades than building skills for employment. Another major difference she has observed is that the education system in the U.S. encourages more growth in students’ independence and does give them professional expertise to aid in their decision making on career choices. Dr. Maganti finds FGCU a great place. It’s natural landscape of trees, greenery and lakes make the ambience soothing and relaxing. The students and faculty are amicable and supportive and her experience with “Unity in Diversity” has been very enriching. Dr. Maganti thinks that technology is a great way to engage internationally and can play a pivotal role in educational exchange. She encourages us to find a way to exchange thoughts, views and ideas so that we too, can broaden our scope for understanding the other perspective and nourish our life experience.

Important Events, Announcements & Deadlines

- **Study Abroad Fair**
  * October 14th, 10:00am – 3:00pm in Breezeway

- **Faculty-Led Study Abroad Information Sessions**
  * October 8th, 10:00am in Reed Hall 122
  * October 21st, 11:00am in Reed Hall 122
  * October 27th, 9:00am in Reed Hall 122

- **Hosting a Scholar Information Sessions**
  * October 20th, 3:00pm in Reed Hall 122
  * October 28th, 9:30am in Reed Hall 122
  * November 4th, 11:00am in Reed Hall 122
  * November 10th, 2:00pm in Reed Hall 122

- **NO CLASSES**
  * Fall Break, October 29th
  * Veteran’s Day Observed, November 11th
  * Thanksgiving Break, November 25th – 28th

Visit www.fgcu.edu/international for more information!