

RAMAPO UNPACKED



VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1: Spring 2016

reflections
from abroad
page 2

PUSHING>BOUNDARIES

INTERDISCIPLINARY>INTERCULTURAL>INTERNATIONAL



RAMAPO UNPACKED | SPRING 2016

in this issue:

REFLECTIONS FROM ABROAD

- 2 Catherine Armstrong '16
- 5 Olivia Dunn '16
- 6 Aleksandar Goranov '17
- 7 Maximillian La Rocco '16
- 8 Amelia Morgenstern '16
- 9 Carly Schaublin '16
- 16 Brianne Bishop '16

ALUMNI PROFILE

- 4 Alexander Ruiz '11

WHO'S WHO IN STUDY ABROAD

- 10 @ Ramapo College

YEAR OF LATIN AMERICA

- 12 Photos from Campus Events

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

- 14 Cuba: Revolution and Evolution

GEOGRAPHY QUIZ

- 17 Latin America

FACULTY TRAVELS

- 18 to Latin America

#RAMAPOABROAD

- 20 Jose Pepe Photo Contest

ON THE COVER: Brianne Bishop - Cattle Pastures of Costa Rica

CURRENT PAGE: Bahia Lopez Bay in Nahuel Huapi Lake near Bariloche, Argentina

meet the team



BEN LEVY

Director of International Education
201.684.7533 | blevy1@ramapo.edu



RAJESH ADHIKARI

Director of International Student
and Scholar Services / PDSO / RO
201.684.7533 | radhikar@ramapo.edu



KATE GODFREY

Assistant Director of International Education
201.684.7463 | kgodfrey@ramapo.edu



IZUMI OSAWA-MINEVICH

Program Assistant / DSO / ARO
201.684.7533 | iosawami@ramapo.edu



KATIE WIGGINS

Graduate Assistant / Study Abroad
201.684.7263 | kwiggins@ramapo.edu

.....

The Roukema Center for International Education is located in the Anisfield School of Business, Suite-123.
Our phone number is 201.684.7533, or contact us by email at international@ramapo.edu

www.ramapo.edu/international

CATHERINE ARMSTRONG '16

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER
LONDON,
UNITED KINGDOM

FALL 2014



MIND THE GAP!

For someone who has always had a fascination with British culture, the decision to study abroad in London was honestly a no-brainer. Spending the fall semester of my junior year in London, I created lasting memories of visiting Big Ben, the London Eye, Stonehenge, Bath, Buckingham Palace, seeing several shows in the West End, and so much more. Brighton was probably my favorite town to visit -- the shops are all locally owned and situated together into what is called "The Lanes." Brighton has several galleries and street art displays that give the town a definite artsy feel. Brighton Pier ties the whole town together, highlighting the beauty of the English seaside.

Though I was traveling around the United Kingdom as much as

possible, a good portion of my weekdays were spent attending classes in the heart of London. My four classes were taught in a traditional classroom setting but also took me to visit incredible museums and unique galleries as part of my lessons. Through these classes, I was able to create contacts with professionals in my field of study. My weekends were spent at various markets in the morning, my favorite one being Borough Market. With a huge selection of produce, pastries, homemade jams and honey, I was able to enjoy a wide array of fresh foods provided by local business owners. In the afternoons and evenings I explored various parts of the city with my friends, stumbling upon various events such as open mic nights at O'Neil's Pub, Winter Wonderland in





- Clockwise:
1. Visiting Stonehenge
 2. Browsing through old records in "The Lanes"
 3. View from the top of St. Paul's Cathedral
 4. My friends and I on Brighton Pier
 5. Seeing *Wicked* in the West End
 6. My sister and I in front of Big Ben
 7. View from Brighton Pier
 8. My friend and I in front of Tower Bridge



Hyde Park and ice skating in front of London's Natural History Museum.

Studying abroad taught me that life is meant to challenge you and overcoming those challenges is a great way to discover who you are as an individual. Being able to travel,

not only around England and the United Kingdom, but throughout Europe, showed me that the world is a complex and incredible place that deserves to be explored. I would encourage everyone to travel abroad at least once in their life. My advice to those who do study abroad would

be to take it each day at a time, explore areas that aren't on the "top sights to see," talk to the locals and, most importantly, write about your favorite thing that happened each day because it is amazing how quickly the time goes by.



ALEXANDER RUIZ '11

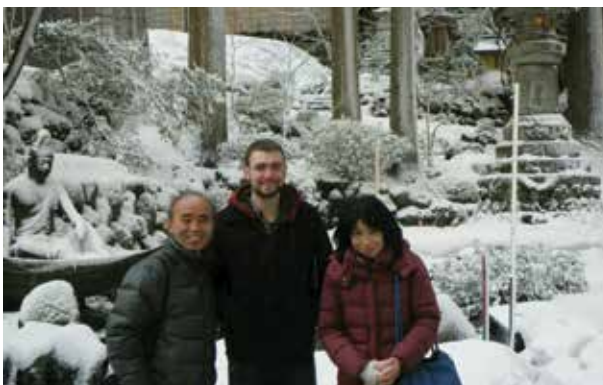
RCNJ INDIA: **DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**
BANGALORE, INDIA
SPRING 2010

RCNJ CHINA: **BUSINESS IMMERSION EXPERIENCE**
BEIJING & SHANGHAI, CHINA
SPRING BREAK 2011

Create Your Own Adventure

After my commencement from Ramapo, the post-graduation blues hit me hard. The pressure to have an immediate plan for graduate school or to step into a career path right away did not seem to be the right option for me. After some research and much thought, I opted to leave home to teach English abroad with the English Program in Korea (EPIK) in Busan, South Korea for one year. During that first year, I taught English at a high school, making friends with teachers from across the globe. A road trip with these friends, across the tip of Africa, led to a year of teaching English to adorable Kindergarten students in Seoul, South Korea. Both of these experiences gave me an edge; which in turn gave me the opportunity to apply for and be accepted to the prestigious Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) program. It's amazing how two years in South Korea led to my time in Japan.

As I reflect on these few years, I have difficulty describing the impact living overseas has had, first with my study abroad semester in Bangalore, India and then my study abroad in Beijing and Shanghai, China over spring break my senior year. India gave me the confidence I needed to explore and China showed me a part of the world I could never have imagined. Now that I have returned to the states from Japan, I realize that when I first made the decision



- Clockwise:
1. Kindergarten Cooking Class Seoul, South Korea, 2013
 2. South Africa, Titiskarma 2013, Post EPIK program road trip
 3. Cultural Immersion Study Aboard Program South India, Bangalore, 2010
 4. Eihei Temple with Host Family JET Program, 2015

to go overseas, more than six years ago, I could not have foreseen all of the opportunities, friends, and connections I have now made. I credit the Roukema Center for International Education with giving me the opportunity to hone the skills I would need to survive in a new environment.

My advice to future graduates is to dive in head first, especially if you feel like you are stuck. You will be okay. Even if you find that the experience presents you with challenges, you will be able to say that you overcame those challenges and persevered. Do not let obstacles like debt stop you. I was told you cannot repay loans while working as a teacher. Four years out and I have paid off all my debt. It is possible, you just have to want to change your life and challenge yourself to grow. Life-changing seems very cliché, but there really isn't another word for it. Do not let yourself wonder what might have been, take that step towards the unknown and create your own adventure.



OLIVIA DUNN '16

RCNJ INDIA: **DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**
BANGALORE, INDIA
SPRING 2015

ALLEN & OVERY
FRANKFURT, GERMANY
SUMMER 2015

CULTIVATE MY PASSION



As an undergraduate student at Ramapo College, I was able to fulfill my dreams of studying and interning abroad. In spring 2015, I studied abroad through Ramapo's South India program in Bangalore, India. Then I interned abroad in summer 2015 for an international law firm, Allen & Overy, in Frankfurt, Germany.

India was one of the most exhilarating, colorful and beautiful places I have ever experienced. I had the pleasure to grow not only as a student, but also as a person. My semester in India truly opened my eyes to an entire world existing parallel to my own, but yet so different from where I called home. At the end of the semester, our final course was an independent research project that each of us conducted with a professor. For my final project, I was able to cultivate my passion for animal rights into a tangible research presentation. I worked with the director and founder of the Captive Elephant Project, an animal rights group in Bangalore, to go out into the field and collect data on captive elephants owned by temples. These elephants were used for religious ceremonies, as begging elephants in the cities, or as tourist attractions.



My internship in Germany was nothing short of amazing as I was able to live in the country where my mother's family is from. I had the pleasure of reconnecting with family, as well as improving my German language skills. Living in Europe for the summer also allowed me to travel and see new places, including Paris and Versailles. My internship at Allen & Overy exposed me to the legal profession on an international level and allowed me to see where I want to be in the future. I loved living abroad so much that I have applied to grad school in three different European countries. I chose to attend Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland.

Clockwise:

1. During one of our first few weeks in India, we visited Mysore Palace, a few hours outside of Bangalore.
2. While interning in Frankfurt, Germany, the Main River and Frankfurt skyline were part of my daily commute.
3. While conducting my research on captive elephants in India, one decided to rest her trunk on my head.
4. How many people can say they climbed a mountain in India? Hardest hike of my life!
5. Living abroad for summer 2015 allowed me to travel to other countries, including Paris, France. I visited Versailles and can finally check off the Hall of Mirrors from my bucket list!



Clockwise:
1. Being distracted by a seastar while measuring seagrass density
2. Receiving the Garmelle Le Vin Memorial Research Award for my work in Australia
3. Sydney Opera House

SCIENCE ABROAD

It is a myth that science students cannot study abroad due to their sequences of classes and labs. With enough planning and motivation to explore the unknown, you can work toward the most suitable program for you and even pursue a program in a field that is not supported by your college.

I am majoring in chemistry to obtain a career in teaching and researching marine chemistry. Because Ramapo College does not offer a marine-related class or program, I decided to take advantage of the programs offered by the Roukema Center of International Education.

There is a rich array of programs and my specific interest could be accommodated. I chose two programs in the summer of 2015. The first one was an international internship in Sydney, Australia, through Arcadia University and I was a research assistant at Macquarie University's Marine Ecology Group. I worked on a project dealing with marine pollution with microplastics and their transfer throughout the food chain. I earned the 2015 Arcadia University and Garmelle Le Vin Memorial Research

Award for my work there. About 20 hours after leaving Sydney, I went to the Turks and Caicos Islands to pursue a research and fieldwork-based Applied Marine Research Techniques Program through the School for Field Studies. It included classes, fieldwork, scientific SCUBA diving and research – I worked on how aquatic parameters correlate with seagrass meadow density. The benefits of these two experiences were richly rewarding for me.

Embarking on two programs during one summer was difficult, but the Roukema Center staff was more than willing to help whenever possible. Finances were also a concern but there are numerous scholarships given out by the Roukema Center – one of the reasons why my summer went smoothly.

Without these study abroad programs, my chemistry major at Ramapo would not have been sufficient for me to do a marine biogeochemistry summer 2016 research internship, or give me the knowledge and skills I will use during my graduate projects. Science abroad was an unforgettable experience – make sure to try it out.

ALEKSANDAR
GORANOV '17

ARCADIA UNIVERSITY:
SUMMER INTERNSHIP
PROGRAM
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

SCHOOL FOR FIELD
STUDIES - APPLIED
MARINE RESEARCH
TECHNIQUES
TURKS & CAICOS

SUMMER 2015

"IT IS A MYTH
THAT SCIENCE
STUDENTS
CANNOT STUDY
ABROAD DUE
TO THEIR
SEQUENCES
OF CLASSES
AND LABS."



MAXIMILLIAN LA ROCCO '16

KANSAI GAIDAI UNIVERSITY | OSAKA, JAPAN

FALL 2015



ALTERED MY PATH

After months of planning and worrying (not to mention six 50-hour work weeks), I boarded a plane for the first time in my life. That flight wouldn't touch the ground again for 12 hours. Then there was a layover in China for another 13 hours, followed by

an extremely turbulent one-and-a-half hour ride to Kansai International Airport, located outside of Osaka, Japan.

I knew very little about Japanese culture and even less of the language but that was my goal, as I was looking for as

disorienting an experience as possible. However, the Japanese people are kind to foreigners, and many people my age at Kansai Gaidai University had been studying English for almost 10 years, so there were only a few times when things got "out of hand." There were a few instances when I felt panic

setting in: one night in the first month, I got lost coming home from the supermarket with my hands full of groceries, and then during a weekend spent in Tokyo, I found myself wandering back and forth through a couple of blocks surrounding my hotel.

Other than that, life was sort of normal, but in the best possible way. I cooked, kept my room clean, made sure I got to class on time and went to the gym. On weekends I went to Osaka or Kyoto, or spent time at the seminar houses with friends from all over the world. It's strange how normal life felt at times, when I'd be getting lunch with someone from Somalia or going to karaoke with classmates from Australia and France.

I consider the time I spent in Japan to be the most fascinating period of my life, and I think the things I've experienced there have fundamentally altered my path. Although I plan on visiting friends in many different countries, Japan will always be the only other home I've ever known. With luck, my friends and I will be back to climb Mount Fuji within the next few years.



Top to bottom:

1. Sunset at Mt. Misen - While in Miyajima, some friends and I decided to hike to the island's mountaintop just in time for sunset. Pictured from left to right is yours truly, Mounir (Paris, France) Brent (Boulder, Colorado), and Adam (Springfield, Massachusetts).
2. Food Boat on the Hozugawa - As part of a student-organized trip into Kyoto, we took a riverboat ride to Arashiyama, a mountain with a monkey park located at the top.
3. Contemplating Ground Zero - This is the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, sometimes referred to as the A-Bomb Dome, one of the only structures that survived the almost directly overhead detonation of the Little Boy bomb.
4. Fujisan - On a whim, my friend Adam and I took a bus from Tokyo to the base of Mount Fuji, which is referred to in Japan as Fujisan, to take in this incredible sight.

Amelia
Morgenstern '16

University of Havana
Havana, Cuba

Spring 2016

THE "MYSTICAL"
LAND OF CUBA
IS NO LONGER
AN OBSCURITY;
IT IS NOW A
FAMILIAR PLACE
OF COMFORT.



HEART OF HAVANA

For my third and final semester-long study abroad experience, I cannot think of a more revolutionary and historic location than Havana, Cuba. To me, Cuba has always been a mysterious and unknown land, mostly because of the strained relationship our countries have endured. Being in Cuba, living and experiencing these historic changes, have made it doubly exciting. I witnessed the visit of the first sitting U.S. president in 88 years to visit Cuba! I sat at an international baseball game with special guests President Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, and Secretary of State John Kerry. The best part was that President Obama was sitting side-by-side with Cuban President Raul Castro, with a translator in between as the two spoke and shared laughs. Witnessing these moments is something I will remember for the rest of my life.

Studying abroad in Cuba has been such an amazing

experience, especially since citizens of the two nations have never been able to travel across one another's borders. After my time in Havana, I moved to Miami for a job with Teach For America. I feel confident in this decision having experienced the many similarities of the two cities. I also look forward to being able to come back and visit this eclectic city someday soon.

Learning salsa and practicing Spanish was a day-to-day source of fun, as well as connecting with new Cuban friends who are curious about American life. It is going to be amazing to keep in touch and reminisce about our experiences together, including our front row spot at the first Rolling Stones concert in the heart of Havana. Walking home from school and stopping to chat and play dominos with the neighborhood pack is what I will miss most. The "mystical" land of Cuba is no longer an obscurity; it is now a familiar place of comfort.



- Top:
1. Viva Cuba graffiti in Old Havana
 2. Sitting on the Malecon in Central Havana
 3. A 1950s classic car in Havana



1. Zip lining in Costa Rica
2. One of the many birds in the Santuario de Lapas Natuwa



CONQUERING MY FEARS

Over the 2016 winter break I was lucky enough to spend 10 days with 10 fellow Ramapo students at Santuario de Lapas Natuwa in Aranjuez, Costa Rica. The sanctuary's mission is to educate and practice conservation and habitat restoration. Many species are threatened due to deforestation and the destruction of their habitat, and from being sold in the illegal pet trade. Before I left for the trip, I was under the impression that my peers and I would be doing volunteer work and contributing to small changes at the sanctuary. But what we gained was so much more.

Santuario de Lapas Natuwa is home to some of the most amazing animals, including green and scarlet macaws, jaguars, tapirs and monkeys, among others. In order to support the animals, the workers put so much time, effort and love into the sanctuary and welcomed us with open arms. We were only at the sanctuary a little more than a week, but I feel that the connections and friendships I made will last a lifetime.

The Alternative Break trip was the most personally challenging experience of my life, but it gave me more opportunities

than I could have imagined. I was able to see the Costa Rican sunrise before feeding the animals, make wooden perches for the birds to enjoy, learn some Spanish and wake up every morning with a sense of excitement, wondering what would be in store for us that day. We were also lucky enough to have an excursion day where we went horseback riding through the mountains and zip-lining through the Monteverde cloud rainforest. Being someone who is afraid of heights, pushing myself to the limit and conquering my fears was an unexpected and rewarding accomplishment. Being in Costa Rica forced me to try new things, including living a completely laid-back lifestyle filled with geckos, birds and the biggest bugs I've ever seen.

For someone who knew little about conservation and Costa Rica in general, this trip was an eye-opening experience and I'm happy to say I learned so much from the sanctuary and the people who work there. The labor-intensive physical work, language barrier and overcoming personal challenges made this the most fulfilling experience of my life and I can't wait for my next visit to Costa Rica!

CARLY
SCHAUBLIN '16

ALTERNATIVE
SPRING BREAK

ARANJUEZ,
COSTA RICA

SPRING BREAK
2016

"THE
ALTERNATIVE
BREAK TRIP
WAS THE MOST
PERSONALLY-
CHALLENGING
EXPERIENCE
OF MY LIFE."

WHO'S WHO IN STUDY ABROAD

SUMMER I 2015

Diana Aguilar Valencia, Spain ●
Victoria Antropow Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Brenda Arthur San Jose, Costa Rica ●
Houssein Assi Barcelona, Spain ●
Megan Brady
Accra, Kumasi & Cape Coast, Ghana ●
Ariana Chousa
Accra, Kumasi & Cape Coast, Ghana ●
Elyse Connolly Florence, Italy ●
John Di Stefano Seville, Spain ●
Alexandria Farrell
Moyo Hill Camp, Tanzania ●
Ariana Garbaccio Rome, Italy ●
Paul Garno Gold Coast, Australia ●
Aleksandar Goranov Sydney, Australia ●
Alison Haight Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Esther Han Rome, Italy ●
Brittany Hooper San Jose, Costa Rica ●●
Colleen Kelly Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Karla Krause
Accra, Kumasi & Cape Coast, Ghana ●
Kaitlyn Lynch Barcelona, Spain ●
Sabrina Mc Lean Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Tara Mizzoni Rome, Italy ●
Gregory Mulroy Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Nicole Norman
Accra, Kumasi & Cape Coast, Ghana ●
Jennifer Ovalles Seville, Spain ●
Jamie Pagdonsolan Rome, Italy ●
Emmanuel Quainoo
Accra, Kumasi & Cape Coast, Ghana ●
Rebecca Ramos Bilbao, Spain ●

Allie Roethke Rome, Italy ●
Christina Sammarco Rome, Italy ●
Carly Schaublin Rome, Italy ●
Princep Shah Dublin, Ireland ●
Brianna Skuriat Dublin, Ireland ●
Monica Torres Barcelona, Spain ●

SUMMER II 2015

Aleksandar Goranov
South Caicos, Turks and Caicos Islands ●
Melissa Stein London, United Kingdom ●
Alexandria Taveras
South Caicos, Turks and Caicos Islands ●
Brian Vogel Shanghai, China ●
Kendall Zimmerman
London, United Kingdom ●

ACADEMIC YEAR 2015 - 2016

Olivia Mendez Northridge, California ●
Alison Pham Hilo, Hawaii ●

FALL 2015

Brianne Bishop Atenas, Costa Rica ●
Emily Cafaro Cairns, Australia ●
Kevin Checkett Berlin, Germany ●
Elena Conklin London, United Kingdom ●
Gelline De Guzman Paris, France ●
Joanne Delices Florence, Italy ●
Jessica Dragone Milan, Italy ●
Danielle Feanny London, United Kingdom ●

Michel Felipe Salamanca, Spain ●
Nichole Gloria San Marcos, TX ●
William Kantanas Copenhagen, Denmark ●
Maximillian La Rocco Osaka, Japan ●
Courtney Mazzola Seville, Spain ●
Michael Nowicki Osaka, Japan ●
Esteban Robalino
Cambridge, United Kingdom ●
Kaitlyn Safchinsky Heidelberg, Germany ●
Emily Sakowski Maynooth, Ireland ●
Brandon Smith Milan, Italy ●
Vincent Tancredi San Marcos, Texas ●
Sophia Thys Prague, Czech Republic ●

WINTER/JAN. TERM 2016

Carlos Alonzo Barcelona, Spain ●
Emily Batcho Rome, Italy ●
Brianne Bishop Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
Tyler Blackman Amsterdam, Netherlands ●
Alexander Cardazzi Florence, Italy ●
Deryn Carter Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
Misha Choudhry Valparaiso, Chile ●
Sarah Corrado Rome, Italy ●
Monica Cuello Natera
Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●●
Grace Eid Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
John Graf Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
Andrew Herrera Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
Uma Joshi Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●
Victoria MacKay Rome, Italy ●
Erin Mc Kenna Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Brady O'Connor Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Megan Patel Florence, Italy ●

Elaina Rizzuto Florence, Italy ●

Michelle Santucci Rome, Italy ●

Carly Schaublin Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Christine Szpond Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

SPRING 2016

Nicole Amada Copenhagen, Denmark ●

Brett Arndt Monterey Bay, California ●

Anisha Banerjee Osaka, Japan ●

Veronica Bassano Bangalore, India ●

Danielle Bethencourt Florence, Italy ●

Colin Brence Milan, Italy ●

Kristina Bruno Cape Town, South Africa ●

Aidan Buckley London, United Kingdom ●

Sara Carson Bangalore, India ●

Natalie Ciampi Rome, Italy ●

Dorothy Costa Rome, Italy ●

Charlotte Councill Rome, Italy ●

Jenna Crescibene Florence, Italy ●

Marco Cutri Florence, Italy ●

Emily De Maio Bangalore, India ●

Alyssa Del Turco St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands ●

Meryl Dorais Dublin, Ireland ●

Sean Farrell Bangalore, India ●

Sarah Gallopo London, United Kingdom ●

Pamela Gilligan Bangalore, India ●

Damon Godbolt Monterey Bay, California ●

Noel Gordon Cambridge, United Kingdom ●

Marissa Hatten Managua, Nicaragua ●

Kenya Hilton Gold Coast, Australia ●

Brittany Hooper Salamanca, Spain ●

Sarah Keir Dublin, Ireland ●

Kelly Kemner Florence, Italy ●

John Klalo Valencia, Spain ●

Seungha Kong Osaka, Japan ●

Victoria Lee London, United Kingdom ●

Sasha Lopez Amman, Jordan ●

Vanessa Magnone
Edinburgh, United Kingdom ●

Meredith Mc Ginnis Seville, Spain ●

Amelia Morgenstern Havana, Cuba ●

Timothy Munzer Bangalore, India ●

Michael Pacheco Bangalore, India ●

Christian Paz Madrid, Spain ●

Gabriella Prieto Florence, Italy ●

Amira Rachouh Bangalore, India ●

Tara Sanders London, United Kingdom ●

Arielle Saracinello Bangalore, India ●

Cassandra Spano Bangalore, India ●

Rebecca Swiatkowski Sydney, Australia ●

Samantha Tutiven London, United Kingdom ●

Ryan Varick Valencia, Spain ●

Sarah Zyto Bangalore, India ●

SPRING BREAK 2016

Steven Alemany Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Jorge Arias Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Brenda Arthur Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Lauren Belsky Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Evan Carey Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Sarah Corrado Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Shelby De Carlo Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Sara De Hanes Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

John Di Stefano Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Matthew Earl Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Alexandria Farrell Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Sarah Greenfield Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Emily Hutton Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Veronica LaBrie Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Thomas Mac Donald
Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Jason Mejia Aranjuez Costa Rica ●

Danielle Mermelstein Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Yesid Noriega Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Wilson Quiceno Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Michelle Santucci Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Matthew Stenger Beijing & Shanghai, China ●

Angela Taylor Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Dominique Torio Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

Emily Wirt Aranjuez, Costa Rica ●

KEY FOR MAJORS:

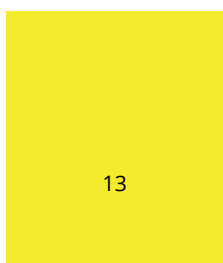
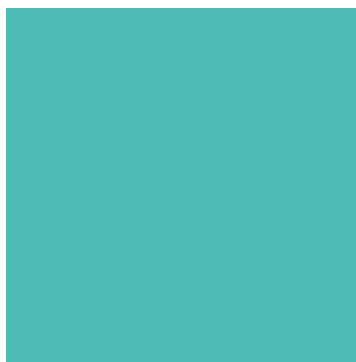
- | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| ● Accounting | ● Communication Arts | ● History | ● Literature | ● Social Work |
| ● Bioinformatics | ● Contemporary Arts | ● Information Technology Mgmt. | ● Mathematics | ● Sociology |
| ● Biology | ● Economics | ● International Business | ● Music | ● Spanish Language Studies |
| ● Business Administration | ● Environmental Science | ● International Studies | ● Nursing | ● Visual Arts |
| ● Chemistry | ● Environmental Studies | ● Law and Society | ● Psychology | |



year of **L A T I N A M E R I C A**

2015 - 2016





LLAS-325/INTL-325

Cuba:

Revolution and Evolution

Get ready to land in Cuba, an island in the Caribbean only 90 miles from Key West or a 45-minute flight from Miami. This neighboring island has nevertheless been, for the most part, off limits to Americans for more than half a century. Now, members of Ramapo faculty with expertise in Cuban affairs are diligently laying the groundwork for a study abroad program in Cuba, the first of its kind for Ramapo students. The initial trip will take place during the 2017 winter intersession and will be open to sophomores, juniors and seniors from any discipline. The interdisciplinary and cross-listed course counts as an elective in both the minor in Latino/a and Latin American Studies and the major and minor in International Studies, and could partially fulfill requirements in several other majors and minors at Ramapo. Previous knowledge of the Spanish language is NOT required.

Cuba has long been considered frozen in time given the socialist nature of its political system and the lack of relations between the U.S. and Cuba, which brought about a travel ban. Fixed, simplistic ideas about each other and surreal stereotypes have flourished as a result of the divide. Our study abroad program is meant to question those stereotypes, shed light on the conditions that gave rise to and maintained the hostility between the two countries, and demonstrate that far from being unchanging, Cuba has experienced an evolution all its own since the 1959 revolutionary takeover. While the rhetoric of revolution has been preserved throughout, Cuba has had to adapt to manifold

challenges, most recently to those emerging from the end of the Cold War and its reinsertion into a capitalist world economy since the 1990s.

Students will explore the theoretical and political implications of Cuban literature, history and visual culture in a variety of readings as well as of social spaces, from art galleries and architectural tours to specialized centers and cultural salons. Three major areas of interest will be examined: the arts and literature, history, and gender and race. Students will use reflection papers, writing, photography and various interactions with students, academics, professionals and Cuban citizens to learn how the “real” Cuba compares and contrasts with representations of the island in U.S. popular culture and elsewhere.

The course will be divided between two pre-travel meetings at Ramapo, 11-12 days in Havana, Cuba, and a final exam back at Ramapo. An overnight trip to Viñales, a breathtaking valley filled with tobacco fields and other crops, is included in the program. Prior to the trip, students will complete readings and film screenings that will help familiarize them with the topics and places they will encounter in-country.

Are you ready to join in the adventure and be enriched by the experience?

For more information, please visit:
<https://ramapo.studioabroad.com/?go=Cuba>
Scholarships are available.



BRIANNE BISHOP '16

SCHOOL FOR FIELD STUDIES -
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
ATENAS, COSTA RICA

FALL 2015

Pure Vida

Studying abroad through The School for Field Studies in Costa Rica was the best decision I could have made in my undergraduate years at Ramapo. My first experience in Costa Rica was through the Alternative Winter Break program at Santuario De Lapas Natuwa. This was by far one of the most eye-opening, rewarding and life-changing experiences I have ever had. I fell in love with Costa Rica and knew I had to go back. With the help of the Roukema Center for International Education, I was able to make that dream a reality.

During the fall 2015 semester, I lived in a town called Atenas located in the Alajuela province of Costa Rica. I also traveled throughout the country to a number of National Parks including Braulio Carrillo, Volcán Poás, Monteverde, Carara, and learned about sustainable development and tourism. We visited small towns such as El Sur, volunteered at local farms, visited the Dole Banana Plantation and worked within the Atenas community as well, by painting schools and holding educational programs for the Boy Scouts of Costa Rica. We even spent a week in Nicaragua learning about the differences in environmental awareness, practices, laws and initiatives and visited a few of the volcanoes.

This program was heavily research-based, which was a personal challenge for me since I am an Environmental Studies major. However, the professors were always willing to help. As part of the program we were required to complete directed research projects. My project was focused on measuring ecosystem services including: biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration in agroforestry systems and cattle pastures. My favorite part of the program was the time we were out in the field, hiking at different national parks and learning along the way. Through this experience I fell even deeper in love with Costa Rica! Pura Vida!



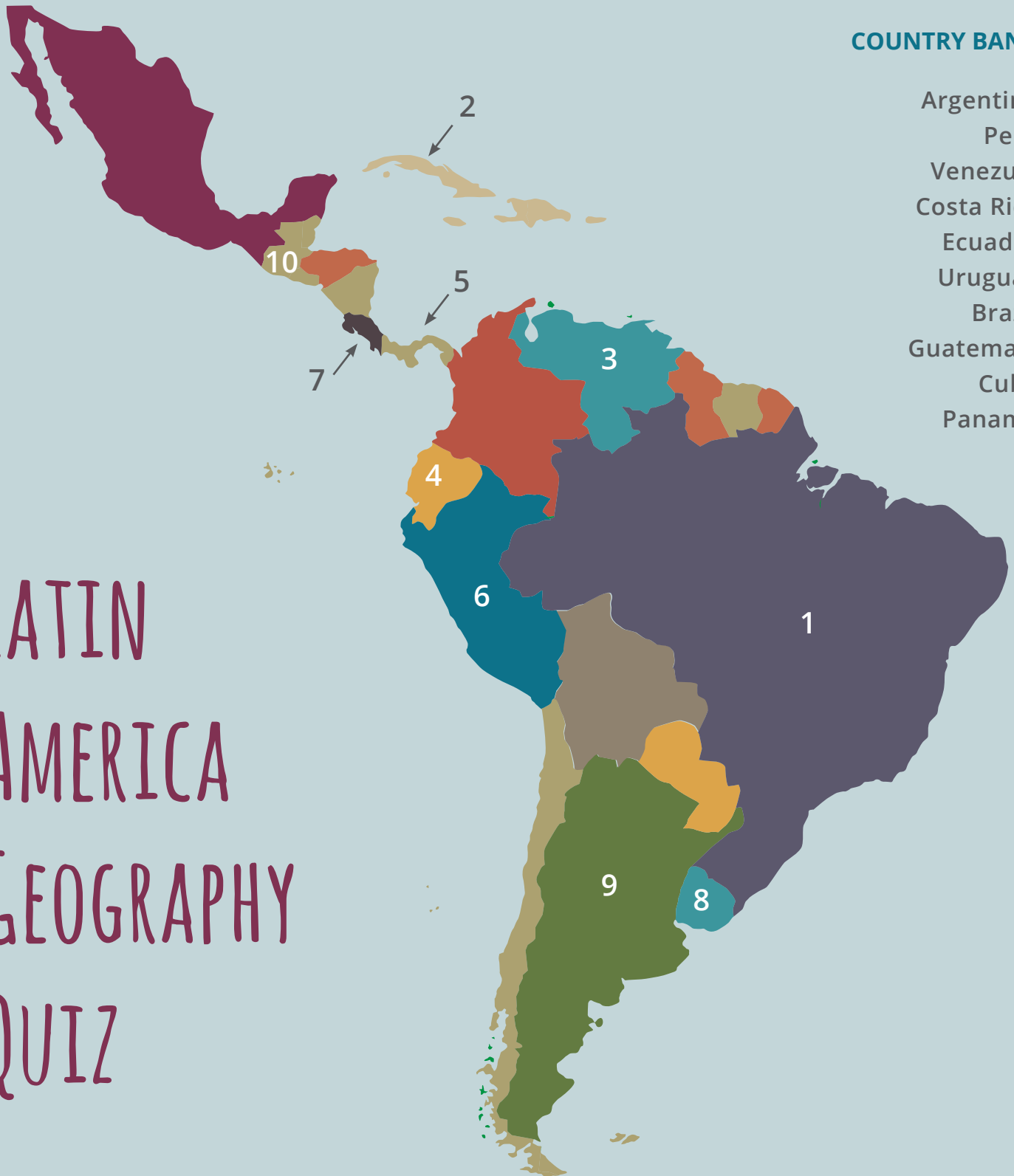
Clockwise:

1. Wild Things
2. Cattle Pastures of Costa Rica
3. Adventure of a Lifetime
4. Que guava!
5. A Whole New World

COUNTRY BANK

Argentina
Peru
Venezuela
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Uruguay
Brazil
Guatemala
Cuba
Panama

LATIN AMERICA GEOGRAPHY QUIZ



ANSWER KEY:
1: Brazil / 2: Venezuela / 3: Ecuador / 4: Colombia / 5: Peru / 6: Chile / 7: Cuba / 8: Uruguay / 9: Argentina / 10: Costa Rica

FACULTY TRAVELS TO **LATIN AMERICA**

As part of Ramapo's Strategic Plan for Comprehensive Internationalization, each year will have a dedicated regional focus. During the academic year 2015-2016, we are celebrating the Year of Latin America. To further support this initiative, the Provost's Office developed a grant to support faculty to complete activities in or about Latin America. Below are brief descriptions of a few of the awardees and their projects.

Rikki Abzug | Professor of Management **COSTA RICA | MARCH 2016**

The Natuwa Wildlife Sanctuary in Aranjuez, Costa Rica, has afforded many Ramapo College student groups an opportunity to engage directly in rescued animal and habitat sustainability. Yet, the institutional sustainability of this sanctuary has been a continuing concern. We aimed to understand how to best address the existential concerns of wildlife sanctuaries, and the broader nonprofit eco-tourism market in Latin America. Armed with capacity-building and financial health scanning tools, we brought our B-school analytical skills to the table. Engaging in an immersive sustainability consultation with Natuwa has inspired us to continue our work of building strong organizational infrastructure in support of a strong ecological bio-structure.

Ed Petkus | Professor of Marketing **COSTA RICA | MARCH 2016**

Ideally, the "ecotourism" industry should provide a mutually-beneficial relationship between ecological/ social benefits and economic sustainability. However, given that those two sides of the equation may at times be at odds, what is the most effective balance of "eco" and "tourism"? This was one of the fundamental research questions that prompted Professor of Management Rikki Abzug and myself to apply for a Year of Latin America Grant. Costa Rica's reputation as leader in ecotourism made it a perfect location for our short yet intensive immersion in the industry. Our time in and around Manuel Antonio National Park, Costa Rica's most visited ecotourism site, provided observational insights that embodied the "eco" vs. "tourism" conundrum: a world-class beach that allows the visual and combustion-engine pollution of parasailing services; a natural jungle-wildlife experience that, at times, is overwhelmed by cruise-ship crowds; a hotel made of reclaimed shipping containers that can only provide seasonal work for its employees. Our qualitative assessment of the ecotourism experience provided by this landmark of the industry will provide an invaluable case example as we continue our research into the "sustainability of sustainability."



Professors Petkus and Abzug meet with Rodolfo, Director of Natuwa Sanctuary.

Michael Bitz | Professor of Teacher Education / Director of Instructional Design Center **MEXICO | MAY 2016**

I traveled to Colima, Mexico where I worked with colleagues at the University of Mexico, Colima to explore innovative strategies for language instruction through the medium of comic books. We explored an exhibit of Mexican comic books; worked with youths to help them develop their own original comics; and presented our work at a conference for scholars, educators, and families. We then made plans for how to extend what we learned to a broader audience, including continued collaborations and an article to be published in a scholarly journal.

Michael Edelstein | Professor of Environmental Studies **PERU | JUNE 2016**

With the support of Paul Rosolie, a RCNJ alumnus and Amazon expert, I designed an expedition that balances the introduction to the biodiversity and wonder of the Amazon with a chance to see first-hand many of the key threats to its existence. The trip informed my teaching and writing on Sustainability and Environmental Disaster but also gave me a chance to witness the center Paul runs as a locus for study abroad or independent student trips.



Main square of Lima, Peru

Renata Gangemi | Professor of Communication Arts
BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | MAY 2015

I traveled to Argentina to present my film *Stories of Courage: Argentinean Political Women*. The film was presented in several venues in Buenos Aires, Rosario and San Juan, Argentina. It was also screened several times in TeleSur a pan-american TV channel and was presented recently in the Museo de la Memoria and in the Argentinean Consulate in Madrid. In June of 2015 Argentinean Congress declared the film of National Interest, a special award given to works that represent the values and idiosyncrasies of the country. The film has also been presented in Cuba, Europe and USA.

Amruth Kumar | Professor of Computer Science
PERU | JULY 2016

Innovation and Technology in Computer Science Education (ITiCSE) is an annual conference run by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), the premier professional body in Computer Science. The conference is international, peer-reviewed, and top-rated. It is being held in Arequipa, Peru in July 2016. I am serving as the Poster Chair on the organizing committee of this conference and I will also be presenting a paper at the conference on "The Effectiveness of Visualization for Learning Expression Evaluation: A Reproducibility Study." This presentation will provide international exposure to my work as well as promote the name of Ramapo College in international computing education and research circles.

Iraida Lopez | Professor of Spanish Language and Literature
CUBA | OCTOBER 2015

I attended a Casa de las Américas conference - III Coloquio Internacional del Programa de Estudios Sobre Latinos en los Estados Unidos. Within the framework of the conference, I presented my book, *Impossible Returns: Narratives of the Cuban Diaspora* (University of Florida Press, 2015) and a paper on the representation of returning migrants in Cuba derived from the book.

Edna Negron | Professor of Journalism
CUBA | JANUARY 2016

I attended a 10-day faculty development seminar, "Contemporary Cuban Transformations: Social Inequalities and Social Policy" sponsored by the Council on International Educational Exchange in January 2016. The seminar, conducted by Cuban economists, sociologists and local community organizers, covered topics affecting modern day Cuba from race, the role of women and young people, the rise of small businesses, and local Cubans' views about future relations with the U.S. In 2014, President Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced plans to normalize relations between the two countries after more than 50 years. I plan to update a unit in my course, "New York as a Latino Cityscape" covering the current state of Cuba during this historic time of change. I am also interested in the niche topic of a Cuban community-building dance called, "Rueda de Casino" that is growing in popularity worldwide.

Additional grants will be available during academic year 2016-2017 to celebrate Ramapo's Year of Sub-Saharan Africa.

JOSE PEPE

photo contest

photo contest

week one

winner
Amira **RACHOUH**
Bangalore, **INDIA**



photo contest

week two

winner
Natalie **CIAMPI**
Florence, **ITALY**

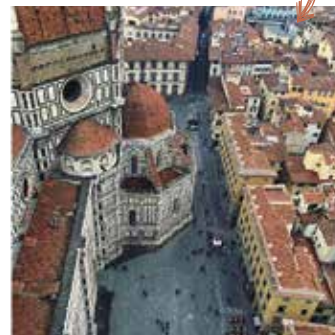




photo contest week three

winner
Noel **GORDON**
Dublin, **IRELAND**



photo contest week four

winner
Sarah **GALLOPO**
Naeroyfjord, **NORWAY**



photo contest week five

winner
Kristina **BRUNO**
ZIMBABWE

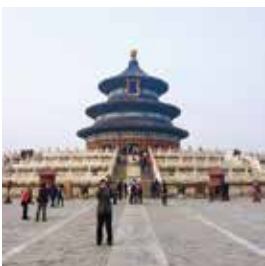


photo contest week six

winner
Sarah **KEIR**
Florence, **ITALY**



#RAMAPOABROAD

Students were asked to submit photos while they were studying abroad. Each week the contest was hosted, one photo was selected by the RCIE Team and posted on Ramapo's Study Abroad social media.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO
BE FEATURED IN OUR
NEXT EDITION OF
RAMAPO UNPACKED?



Any current student, faculty, or alum is welcome to submit an article which discusses their reflections, opinions and reactions to an international experience. Article submissions should be limited to 250 words.

Photos should be appropriate, good quality and portray the location you visited.

Deadlines are as follows:

Fall edition – August 1

Spring edition – January 15

Please complete the form accessible with the link at www.ramapo.edu/international/multimedia/magazine/submit-article-for-ramapo-unpacked/

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Roukema Center for International Education (201) 684-7533 or goabroad@ramapo.edu

