IDS ALUMNI ADVENTURES

Alumni Anna Stout has been busy since graduating from the University of Montana with a degree in Social Work and an IDS minor in 2006. First she did a 6 month project in South Africa developing a case study of a community-based development organization called Refilwe Community Project. Anna was sent as a consultant for a US-based foundation, Project High Hopes, to conduct an assessment and draft the study while living with the organization and among the communities they served. While there, she also served as a volunteer, tutoring and mentoring orphaned and vulnerable children, teaching informal settlement dwellers basic life skills and HIV prevention, and assisting with voluntary HIV testing and counseling at a local clinic.

When Anna returned to the states, she began a graduate program in Global Practice at Boston College. Her master’s work was centered on human rights, social justice, gender, global health and sustainable interventions. Anna spent 5 months with JSI Research and Training Institute in Monrovia, Liberia (http://www.jsi.com) for her graduate international field placement. The internship at JSI provided Anna with the opportunity to focus on her interest in women’s reproductive health in an international development and post-conflict context. During her four-month internship, she worked on two JSI projects: Rebuilding Basic Health Services (RBHS) and the Astarke Project.

RBHS supports Liberia’s National Health Policy and Plan by increasing access to basic health services and strengthening the decentralized management of the health system. Under the guidance of the reproductive health and family planning advisor, Anna worked on community-based reproductive health projects, key national policy and strategy documents, health workforce trainings, and family planning services evaluation in rural areas.

At the Astarke Project, a small grants and technical assistance program for local NGOs who provide or enhance reproductive health services in crisis-affected areas, Anna connected with leaders of Astarke’s NGO partners and provided assistance on funding proposals, monitoring and evaluation plans, resources for project planning, and facilitated links with other NGOs and reproductive health networks.

The internship experience with JSI in Liberia exposed Anna to the world of international public health and gave her hands-on reproductive health experience on multiple levels. Through this internship Anna was able to indulge her passion for women’s health in the developing world while enhancing her professional capacity and cultural competence.

Anna is currently working domestically in Cambridge at the Regional Center for Healthy Communities, providing technical assistance to local groups working to address health disparities and the social determinants of health.

NEW IDS PROGRAM COORDINATOR:

This summer saw a change in Program Coordinators for the International Development Studies program at the University of Montana. Marian Palaia was accepted into a Creative Writing doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Though we are sad to see her go, we wish her well in her new academic quest.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new IDS Program Coordinator, Delyla Wilson. Delyla, most recently Program Coordinator for the Skills Tour, a traveling sustainable-education project, has extensive experience in community organizing, facilitation, outreach, and program development. With a BA from the University of Montana in Political Science and an International Development Studies minor (first cohort of graduates, spring 2006), she is excited to be part of our cutting-edge IDS program. The Masters in Interdisciplinary Studies program Delyla began this fall complements her responsibilities as IDS Program Coordinator. Her program of study combines Public Administration with an International Development focus and Public Health in order to complete a resilient communities’ disaster preparedness needs study. Her Master’s work will be used as a basis for further graduate studies devoted to creating an international resilient communities disaster-preparedness curriculum. Her primary area of geographic interest is Central Asia.

We are fortunate to have someone with Delyla’s skills, experience, and first-hand knowledge of the IDS program join us. Delyla’s office is LA410 and she can be reached through email at delyla.wilson@mso.umt.edu if you have any questions or just want to find out more about what is going on with the IDS minor.
IDS FACULTY AND INTER-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

Members of the IDS faculty are not only busy bringing quality development classes to UM, but are also sharing the knowledge with UM university partners throughout the world. Here is a taste of what IDS professors are doing with partner universities across the globe. Through sharing with international universities, our IDS professors are enhancing the international perspective they provide UM students and keeping up to date on the latest happenings in International Development.

PROFESSORS JILL BELSKY & STEVE SIEBERT

IDS faculty members Jill Belsky and Steve Siebert received Fulbright Senior Specialist grants to continue their partnership work with the Ugyen Wangchuck Institute for Conservation and Environment (UWICE) in Bhutan this fall.

Professor Belsky and Professor Siebert were in Bhutan for six weeks this time visit. They supervised and assisted in the field research of three Bhutanese graduate students they are supervising: Sangay Wangchuk and Wangchuk Dorji, who are faculty members at UWICE, as well as Ugyen Namgyel, who works in the Government of Bhutan’s Nature Conservation Division. They also explored future collaborative faculty development needs and research opportunities with UWICE.

PROFESSOR PETER KOEHN

This summer and fall, Professor Peter Koehn, the IDS program chair and UM Political Science faculty member has been researching inter-university partnerships for sustainable development in Africa. Part of this involves a small research project jointly with Marisa Griffith, Political Science major and IDS minor (see side bar). Another part of his inter-university research is a background paper co-authored with Montague “Tag” Demment of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU) for the Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture in Africa held in Kampala, Uganda, 15-17 November. The title of their paper is “Higher Education and Sustainable Development in Africa: Why Partner Transnationally?” Tag was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia when Professor Koehn started his academic career at the university there, although they never met until 2007. The envisioned Part 3 of this project is a book on transnational higher-education partnerships involving African universities to be co-authored with a young Kenyan scholar named Milton Obamba. One of those partnerships is ours with Addis Ababa University (AAU). At AAU’s invitation, Professor Koehn will spend the bulk of semester break teaching six seminars for Ph.D. students in Political Science enrolled in courses in Comparative Politics and Comparative Foreign Policy. This will be a special opportunity for Professor Koehn to reconnect with his academic “roots” – that is, to be full-circle back on the same campus where he started this daunting adventure called university teaching and in the same city where he conducted his dissertation research.

PROFESSOR PHYLLIS NGAI

IDS faculty Phyllis Ngai is also traveling to Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia during winter break as part of the UM’s partnership with AAU. During the visit, Professor Ngai will work with graduate students in the Faculty of Education. She will teach two workshops to Master’s students on instructional strategies and qualitative research methods for development in education. For Ph.D. students, Professor Ngai will conduct six seminars in the areas of multicultural and global education, instructional strategies for 21st century schools, research methods for curriculum design, and information and communication technologies for education and development.
FEATURED IDS CLASS:
MEXICO SUMMER STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM IN
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Each summer for the past 11 years, Professor Paul Haber has taken a group of UM students to Mexico for a summer study abroad program. Students who participate in the program enroll in three summer school classes. Students take a Spanish language class (student to faculty ratio averages three to one) and two political science classes, both of which count toward the IDS minor. Politics of Mexico focuses on Mexican migration to the United States, the implications for both the US and Mexico. Development Administration is a core class for IDS minors and in Mexico this class focuses on sustainable development efforts. Both of the political science classes are taught as small seminars with field trips. Students get the opportunity to discuss development and migration issues with Mexican citizens, government employees and with people working with non-government organizations. Students live with host families. Many students make deep bonds with their host families that last for many years.

Patzcuaro is located about 200 miles to the west of Mexico City. It is an old colonial town with a large indigenous population. It is about the same size as Missoula and just as safe. Violence in Mexico has been much in the news as of late. Increased violence is unfortunately a fact of life in some places in Mexico, mostly along the border. Students who have attended the program in Patzcuaro have not encountered public safety issues more serious than do students in Missoula. The primary reason that students interested in study abroad programs decide not to go on them is because they conclude they cannot afford them. Professor Haber argues that if you can afford to be at UM you can afford to go on this study abroad program and most others offered through the university as well. As long as one plans in advance, there is almost always a way to figure it out. He is always happy to work with students to figure out financing.

Student aid applies to summer study abroad programs and there are a number of scholarship resources available to UM students through the Provost’s Office, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, individual department scholarships (for example, political science has a number of them for which students applying to study abroad programs qualify), the Office of International Programs, and the Davidson’s Honor College. Furthermore, because students in the Mexico program average 10 credits (four for Spanish and six credits of political science), if a student adds an independent study project total credits earned is close to what would be earned in a normal semester. Some students have found it advantageous to go on the Mexico program and then take a semester off to work, without delaying graduation.

Professor Haber is currently accepting applications for the 2011 program. If interested, you are encouraged to visit the program’s web site at www.cas.umt.edu/mexico/default.html Be sure to check out the photos – they give you a better feel for Patzcuaro, the home base of the program. Professor Haber is also always happy to discuss the program with you one on one. You can contact him at either 243-4862 or Paul.Haber@umontana.edu or just stop by LA 350 and see if he is in

PROFESSOR NGAI PRESENTS AT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE’S SOVEREIGNTY CONFERENCE

Phyllis Ngai, an IDS core faculty member from the UM Communications Department presented Indigenous Education: Local and Global Nexus as part of a panel on Indigenous education and health at the Conference on Indigenous People’s Sovereignty: Global and Local Perspectives at the University of Montana in Missoula this November. The conference was organized by the Department of Native American Studies in collaboration with the Center for Sami Studies, University of Tromso, Norway. Discussions at the conference addressed the local and global implications of the Declaration of Indigenous People’s Rights.

IDS SOCIOLOGY
PROFESSOR TRAVELS TO MALAYSIA AND CAMBODIA

In July, Teresa Sobieszczyk, an IDS core faculty member in Sociology, visited IDS student Jen Gursky at her international internship site Tenaganita (a Malaysian NGO promoting the rights of women, migrants, and refugees) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Following the site visit in Kuala Lumpur, they traveled to Penang, Malaysia, and together gave a presentation on human trafficking for the School of Social Sciences Seminar Series at Universiti Sains Malaysia, arranged by John Spores (Professor Emeritus, School of Social Work, University of Montana).

Additionally, as a part of her sabbatical year, Teresa Sobieszczyk, spent two weeks in November volunteering with a Cambodian NGO, the Ponheary Ly Foundation, which sponsors the education of 2,060 students in rural areas of Siem Reap province. Drawing on her English as a Second Language teaching skills from her Peace Corps service nearly 25 years ago, she taught night classes to twenty-five secondary school students and primary school teachers, focusing on demonstrating fun teaching activities that develop students’ listening and speaking skills. She is looking forward to arranging a service learning course with the Ponheary Ly Foundation in the near future (see www.thplf.org for more information on the Ponheary Ly Foundation).
IN OTHER IDS NEWS

PETER H. KOEHN AND PHYLLIS B. NGAI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT:
The International Development Studies is pleased to announce the first recipient of the Peter H. Koehn & Phyllis B. Ngai Scholarship. The 2010-2011 scholarship was awarded to Minsun Park. Minsun, from South Korea, is a sophomore Political Science major. She has traveled and done volunteer work in India, New Zealand, South Korea, and Australia. Minsun will receive a $1,000 scholarship to help cover the expense of attending the University of Montana and living in the United States.

Be sure to watch the IDS website for an announcement on the spring deadline for the 2011/2012 Koehn/Ngai Scholarship. http://www.cas.umt.edu/IDS/default.cfm

IDS STUDENT RECEIVES UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

IDS student Marisa Griffith received a UM Undergraduate/Faculty Research Award last spring by. Her research on U.S.-African higher-education partnerships supported by USAID funding is being conducted jointly with Professor Peter Koehn of the Political Science Department. Undergraduate student and faculty research is a great way for students interested in graduate research to develop foundational research skills. “Professor Koehn’s expertise on the subject and his advice in conducting the research has been rewarding in helping this project develop,” Marisa says. After completing the research project, Marisa will present her findings at the Undergraduate Research Conference in April 2011. To learn more about her project visit the IDS website.

ALUMNI UPDATE

As you know from the last newsletter, IDS Alumni Clark Beggar has been busy overseas in China and India since his graduation from UM in Political Science with an IDS minor. Now Clark has received a job at the SFYI International School in the south of France. The school is geared toward Americans 16-20 years old looking for a high school study abroad experience or a gap year between college. The school offers core coursework, math and science, as well as engaging internships, including winemaking, message therapy, and documentary filmmaking. Along with trips throughout France and Spain, the second semester begins in Morocco with a month long study tour, which he gets to staff! Clark teaches an economics course that is light on math and heavy on theory where he can introduce the concept of development. He is using a number of the concepts from IDS courses and even having the students create their own development projects.

The IDS program is supported, in part, by the University of Montana’s Office of International Programs

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