FROM THE ASSOCIATE PROVOST
FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this year’s Global Report, which highlights key accomplishments in international activities during 2019–20 at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. It was a year in which external circumstances challenged our ability to carry out our usual array of programming and activities. Nonetheless, we hope that this issue demonstrates the University’s deep commitment to international education through stories that focus on the formidable response and resilience of our students, faculty, and staff to the COVID-19 pandemic. As these stories attest, it was also a year to reflect on our mission, to be creative with respect to the social and environmental issues of our time, and to reassert the value of international education on our campus and in our communities.

I hope you will enjoy learning more about the International Programs Office and the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

With best regards,

Kalpen Trivedi
Associate Provost for International Programs

ON THE COVER
Rongbing Shen ’21 takes the stage at the Fine Arts Center. Shen, who studies music performance and music education, was one of the students profiled in a video series celebrating International Education Week November 18–22, 2019. Photo by Samm Smith ’08.
Turning Lockdown into an Opportunity for Service

When the COVID-19 pandemic began gripping the U.S. in March, Aashish Yadav ’21MS found himself in a similar position to everyone else: wondering what was next. UMass Amherst had suspended in-person classes, and Yadav saw several summer internship opportunities vanish due to COVID-related closures. Adding to his anxiety, his family in India was under strict lockdown. This meant that his father, an engineer in the shipping industry, was forced to stay out to sea indefinitely instead of coming home.

It was during this time of duress that Yadav came across an internship at Boston-area startup The Ventilator Project (TVP). Founded by robotics entrepreneurs, TVP seeks to offer immediate help in the global ventilator shortage caused by the pandemic. Staffed entirely by volunteers, the nonprofit is working vigorously to prototype a globally distributed, low-cost ventilator specifically designed for COVID-19 patients.

Yadav was so excited when he saw the position listing that he used LinkedIn to get in touch with everyone associated with TVP that he could find. “I needed to make sure they noticed me,” he says. “My whole family is affected by this pandemic—if I’m able to help and contribute in a positive way, that’s amazing.”

TVP saw a fit, and Yadav began interning in May 2020. An engineering management major, he is able to put his diverse skill set honed at the university to use. A typical day for Yadav might involve everything from sales calls to supply chain management to engineering design review.

He says he finds the work—and the people—inspiring. “There are people volunteering from every field,” he says. “They’re from reputable schools, and they have many years of experience. They’re here, working on this without getting paid—they just want to help.”

Learn More
theventilatorproject.org
1.27.2020 /
When Director of Education Abroad Mark Eckman’s phone rang at 10:30 pm on January 27, 2020, he had an inkling that something big was waiting for him on the other end. The Caller ID displayed “UMPD,” the UMass Amherst Police Department, never a good thing for the head of a study abroad office to see displayed. The call, about a concerned student abroad in China whose program had just been suspended, would become the International Programs Office’s first direct dealing with the novel coronavirus that was soon to become a global pandemic.

The next few months at IPO were dominated by similar calls and emails, and the need to deal with understandably apprehensive parents, study abroad participants, and international students who were at the mercy of a new virus that wasn’t yet understood.

We recorded the stories of several key IPO staffers to provide a record for what will undoubtedly be remembered as an exceptional time period for IPO, and the world at large.

WE STARTED HEARING THINGS about COVID-19 from some of our Chinese students, and students from Wuhan in particular, when they began returning to campus for spring semester in January. Students would come to our office and ask us what we thought was going to happen, like they were trying to get our attention. It wasn’t as if we weren’t sympathetic, or paying attention. At that point, no one grasped the gravity of the whole thing.

They were asking why the University didn’t provide more masks, and shouldn’t we be doing something to promote better hygiene? People were offering to quarantine themselves. We were caught off guard like most of the planet.

2.2.2020 /
On February 2, 2020, President Trump restricted travel for non-U.S. citizens coming from China into the United States.
Kenneth Reade: Three members of the UMass community were traveling in China for an academic conference and attempted to return to the U.S. once the travel ban from China was announced by the President. Of the three, one was a naturalized U.S. citizen, one was a U.S. permanent resident with a green card, and one was an international student under UMass student visa sponsorship. [Out of those three], only the student was not allowed to board the flight home because its arrival in New York was scheduled for 45 minutes after the ban was to take effect on February 2. I think this shows the disconnect between infectious disease and the notion of immigration. All three had been together traveling in China during the COVID-19 outbreak. I’m no infectious disease expert, but I can’t see how a person’s immigration status would make any difference on the potential spread of the virus. COVID-19 doesn’t ask to see a passport when choosing its victims.

WE STARTED GETTING CALLS in the Advising Center from parents of students in Italy around February 10, and we got more calls the week of February 17. I still didn’t realize how serious things were and made sure the Student Peer Advisors were letting parents know that we constantly monitor health, safety, and security. The intensity of the calls increased the week of February 17, so we began forwarding all calls to Kimberly Stender [Executive Assistant to Associate Provost Kalpen Trivedi] and Monica Bun [Front Desk Receptionist] to track. Parents had a lot of questions and were understandably concerned.

Kenneth Reade: Coincidentally, I was all set to go to Wuhan, China in March. The Admissions Office had asked me to assist with some international recruiting work in Asia. We receive a lot of students from Wuhan—it’s a well-known place to UMass. I was also scheduled to go to India, Vietnam, and China. As we all saw this story about this emerging health issue in Wuhan, and things kept getting worse and worse, we started curtailing the trip—canceling China, then Asia, and finally making the decision to cancel the whole thing.

On Monday, February 24, Emily Ostenson started her day with the news that many of our partners in Italy were canceling classes. It was only the beginning of a tumultuous week.

I WAS DRAFTED TO help with messaging students Monday morning and from there nearly all I did was COVID-related that week.

Italy is an extremely popular study abroad destination, especially during spring semesters. We had 168 students in Italy in spring 2020 across many programs and locations in the country. Once COVID jumped from Asia, my main objective was to provide information about our students’ whereabouts and helping to centralize information from international partners and questions from our students abroad and their families.

That Friday evening, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) raised the alert level for Italy to Level 3, resulting in the immediate suspension of all education abroad programs in Italy. Kalpen Trivedi, Associate Provost for International Programs, Carol Lebold, Director of Education Abroad Advising & Student Success, as well as Eckman, Ostenson, and LeBlanc, immediately set to work facilitating the return of students in Italy.

AJ LeBlanc: Emily texted me at 7:13 pm letting me know we were suspending programs in Italy. It was an immediate physical reaction—I went cold and my stomach dropped.

Emily Ostenson: Suddenly, your weekend was completely gone. If you had students, you were messaging them. We were working all day Friday, Saturday, and Sunday to get students out safely. I was attached to my phone, I had to shut it off at 11 pm at night, but it was the first thing I looked at when I woke up in the morning.
Even just looking at Italy alone, the numbers of students were too large for us to be able to really engage at the individual student, or a family member level. We made a difficult call to say we really would not be responding individually, though there were some exceptions to that. We had staff looking at emails in our general accounts, extracting common questions—those questions were going into email updates we were sending out, once a day, sometimes more frequently.

AJ LeBlanc: The decision to suspend any program is not done lightly, and knowing how many students we had in Italy was when things came into focus for me that we were dealing with something we’d never dealt with before on such a large scale.

Mark Eckman: We tried to be gentle and understanding of the disruption, but firm that there were no exceptions being made.

What we were messaging them is that they needed to come home. Academic and financial questions would be answered later. We were confident in our ability to fix academic challenges because, as a university, we have solutions available to us that partners and providers wouldn’t otherwise have access to. Students’ academic needs, and how we could solve those problems were important, but not immediate considerations. We needed them to focus on the logistical problem of leaving. There was no wiggle room—we just needed them to get on a plane.

3.11.2020 /

On March 11, President Trump severely restricted travel from Europe to the United States, although U.S. citizens were exempt. In response, the University announced suspension of study abroad programs in the Schengen Treaty Area of Europe. Affected countries included Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Mark Eckman: As the President made his statement, emails were already coming in from concerned parents of students. There was a lot of panic that night, from students, parents, and family members about their potential inability to return. We also had concerns from several non-U.S. citizens who were abroad on our programs and would’ve been subject to that travel ban.

We also had to contend with time zone differences. A little more than 300 students abroad woke up to that news the next morning.

AJ LeBlanc: Being the one responsible for monitoring the inboxes was the hardest part of this. Students and parents were understandably upset, and this often came through as anger and accusations. It was also heartbreaking knowing that students had to come home early, even though it was to keep them safe. They work so hard to go abroad and to have it cut short was really hard to carry. I wanted them to know they were being heard, but our priority was getting everyone home and we couldn’t respond to emails unless it was an emergency situation. It was emotionally exhausting.

Mark Eckman: There was nothing you could do to stop the direction things were going in. It was about trying to anticipate what issues and questions are going to come up from students, parents, and families, and devise answers to them. It really becomes a communication challenge and a race to field questions, synthesize answers, and get those answers back out to students in a timely fashion.

For the next three weeks, I fielded hundreds of phone calls and emails from concerned parents and students.

Parents were extremely anxious, agitated, and concerned about their children so you can imagine the range of emotions that emerged during these conversations and email exchanges. As a parent myself, I understood what they were feeling and knew the safety of their child was paramount. Ultimately, it became clear that IPO staff was simply doing what we do best—assisting and supporting our study abroad students and the UMass international community.
Perhaps the piece of humor that got me through these calls was that most everyone I spoke with stated they personally knew President Marty Meehan or Chancellor Subbaswamy! Now that’s a very small world indeed!

While many international students left campus earlier in the semester, most of the remaining students began leaving campus ahead of spring break, the week of March 15.

Kenneth Reade: March is right in the middle of the new admissions wave, and it’s all-hands-on-deck issuing new visa paperwork for the incoming fall class. In regular times, that’s already an apprehensive time for students. On top of that, visa services were suspended, and at the time there was no official plan about what fall semester campus operations were going to look like. It was a double whammy for us.

3.13.2020

On Friday, March 13, the University announced that all in-person classes were suspended, with most staff to work remotely indefinitely.

Kenneth Reade: Within minutes of the campus announcement, we had lines literally out the door of the IPO. Over the course of that weekend, it was all email traffic since the office was closed. It was nonstop communication. I was out of town, but still in close contact with the staff. The biggest questions were what would happen to students’ visa status. The University was moving to remote online learning, and traditionally online education is not something that’s compatible for student visas.

Students were understandably concerned that moving to remote instructional delivery would somehow violate their status. Fortunately, the Department of Homeland Security was very prompt in giving us updated guidance allowing them to remain enrolled if they were doing remote learning for the rest of the semester.

After devoting much of March, April, and May to the pandemic, IPO has largely turned its attention to the future. Some fall education abroad programs will continue, and we are pursuing virtual options to stay connected with students. International students have been invited back to campus this fall, along with all undergraduate students who have reserved on-campus housing for the upcoming semester, and for whom there is space available.

The tumultuous circumstances allowed staff to reflect on our role in the campus and international community, as well as the changes students face in response to the pandemic.

Emily Ostenson: As I’ve communicated with students returning from spring 2020 study abroad or planning for fall 2020 there’s a new level of empathy and humanness. Even if students are asking tough questions about program refunds and what-if scenarios, they ask for any information IPO can share with gratitude; they always ask how I’m doing, too.

Kenneth Reade: It’s a good reminder of how globally connected we all are. We have people from 115 different countries at UMass and this event showed that we are all in this uncertainty together. Everyone has their own personal concerns, whether it be the health and safety of loved ones, or the ability to study or work. It doesn’t matter where you’re from: we’re all sharing the same apprehension or worry about the condition we’re in.

Mark Eckman: This need not be viewed as a total loss. When talking about their study abroad experience, in a job interview, or at a graduate school—wherever they go—they can talk about how they were abroad when the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the planet like wildfire. This is a generational touchpoint; 50 years from now, 25 years from now, 10 years from now, people will talk about how they were impacted, what they were doing.

We talk about the soft skills that students develop by virtue of a study abroad experience, even though their program was truncated, or significantly disrupted; I don’t think they lost out on those personal developments. Things like the capacity to understand different cultural contexts, those are still very much present, those were imbued in our spring 2020 students, imprinted in some pretty dramatic ways not in spite of the disruption, but because of it.
Conversation with Newly Appointed Director of Education Abroad

In October, the International Programs Office named Mark Eckman Director of Education Abroad. Eckman comes from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) where he most recently served as the Senior International Officer/Director of Study-Abroad at the Center for International Education.

Mark Eckman

What was attractive to you about UMass Amherst?
It was a fortuitous combination of a desirable position at a prestigious institution, and a destination where my family and I were interested in living. UMass is a leader in education abroad, and IPO has an approach that I think is ideal and that I want to be a part of. It was clear during my interview process that international education is an institutional priority.

Additionally, my wife and I both have connections to the east coast, and so western Massachusetts is a place we identified as wanting to live. We’re still settling into our new area, but we’re happy to be here.

What has stood out to you the most in these early months here?
I am impressed with how thoroughly international education is integrated into the fabric of the institution. This is not easily achieved, and while there is always room for improvement and growth, it is a testament to the administration, faculty, staff and students that so much has already been accomplished. There are many different people across the institution who are actively engaged in all manner of international education activity, and I have my work cut out for me getting to know all of them. But that is a good problem to have!

What opportunities do you see to help expand studying abroad here at UMass?
There are students who, for reasons of curricular barriers, still struggle to incorporate a study abroad program into their time here at UMass. To break down this type of barrier we, the International Programs Office, must work with their departments to identify the ways to match the curriculum with offerings abroad. Even the most straightforward of curricular alignments is a lot of work, but the already high level of faculty engagement makes that task dramatically easier.

There are also students on this campus who don’t know about the international education opportunities available to them, or think that those offerings are out of reach to them. These are myths that, time and again, can be dispelled. But to do so we need to engage them in a dialogue about the benefits of study.
abroad, and how to make it work for them. I see the high level of commitment and strong connection to international education across the faculty and staff at UMass as a major asset in achieving greater access to international education for all students.

How is IPO coping with the new reality of the COVID-19 pandemic this spring?
As the suspension of the spring programs moved toward resolution, the Education Abroad team began to shift our focus to future programs. We ultimately had to make the difficult decision to cancel all summer programs, but with the benefit of hindsight it is clear that was the right call to make. We have not made a blanket cancellation of fall study abroad programs, as I believe that there are opportunities for students to study abroad with either the same, or even lower, risk levels. It’s not clear how many students will elect to participate, but the assumption is that it will be a significantly smaller number than previous fall semesters. We are looking to the spring term, and planning how to engage with students and guide them through the process of deciding.

What measures is IPO taking to stay connected with students?
As the spring term wound down, we were able to utilize some of our wonderful student advisors to maintain similar levels of peer-to-peer advising. Our returned participants are an invaluable resource for assisting students and can do a wonderful job of facilitating applicants’ vision of themselves actually studying abroad. We will be expanding on distance-based advising, and are pleased with how the technology has worked. Finally, email and social media will continue to be important ways for us to recruit new applicants, as well as communicate about the application requirements with students already moving through the process.

If you had one message for returned students, what would it be?
I would encourage students not to view the disruption of their study abroad experience as exclusively a negative outcome. There is no doubt that the suspension of so many programs was massively disappointing—and as international educators, we were similarly crushed by how things unfolded. Studying abroad is an experience that develops resiliency and adaptability in participants, among other skills. These skills have always been valuable, but are even more so in a post-COVID-19 world. I hope that students are able to look back at how the adversity they encountered has impacted them, how by overcoming the myriad challenges encountered along the way, they grew in positive and meaningful ways.

MWANGI JOINS IPO AS LEADERSHIP FELLOW

Associate Professor of Higher Education Chrystal George Mwangi is joining the International Programs Office as a Chancellor’s Leadership Fellow. Mwangi will work with Associate Provost for International Programs Kalpen Trivedi for the 2020–21 academic year to help IPO develop and coordinate a global engagement strategy.

“I am delighted to have the opportunity to collaborate with Professor George Mwangi in furthering IPO’s work,” says Trivedi, Associate Provost for International Programs. “Given her exciting academic work in equity and inclusion in international higher education, Professor Mwangi is ideally suited to helping us develop a global engagement strategy grounded in social justice.”

Mwangi’s scholarship broadly centers on structures of opportunity and issues of inequity that impact the trajectory of diverse students into and through college; internationalization efforts within higher education, the transnational nature of universities, and the use of higher education as a tool for international mobility/migration; and African and African Diaspora populations in higher education with emphasis on the impact of race, racism, and coloniality on their educational experiences.

Mwangi is currently the principal investigator on a grant from the Worldwide Universities Network focused on comparatively understanding how higher education systems across six countries are pursuing diversity, equity, and inclusion for student success in their policies and practices. She serves as associate editor for the Journal on Diversity in Higher Education. Mwangi has received multiple research awards from the Comparative & International Education Society and was the 2018 recipient of NAFSA’s Innovative Research in International Education award.

Chancellor’s Leadership Fellowships cultivate future campus leaders by offering a half-time, one-year, temporary appointment to an administrative area on campus and by providing shadowing and mentoring from the leaders of the host units. Fellows are expected to launch a significant program during the fellowship year. They have the opportunity to participate in university decision-making and to develop and demonstrate capacity for leadership in arenas that are not a usual part of day-to-day faculty life.
Andy Danylchuk (right) and local collaborator Sunjan Panwar (left) searching for trout in the Assi Ganga River, Uttarkashi, India.

Danylchuk Research Experience Informs Risk Management

**PROFESSOR OF FISH CONSERVATION** Andy Danylchuk
PhD’s research has a global reach that touches even the smallest local pond. Danylchuk studies how fish use their environment, and the impact of angling on a variety of popular fishing targets—bass and trout among them. The goal, as he puts it, is to “ensure that fish are around for future generations to enjoy.”

The fish Danylchuk has worked with span the entire globe: striped bass and brook trout in Massachusetts; Atlantic tarpon and permit in the South Eastern United States; steelhead in British Columbia, Canada; bonefish in The Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and French Polynesia; golden mahseer in India; golden dorado in Argentina; arapaima in Guyana, and giant trevally in the Seychelles.

Utilizing advanced electronic tags, Danylchuk monitors fish movements to better understand their behaviors, their critical habitats, and how they respond to human disturbances. He also uses a range of techniques to understand how fish caught by anglers respond to being handled. For example, his research has shown that catching fish with a line and taking them out of the water can have negative effects on its post-release activity and even survival. Therefore, he says best practice is to minimize or even eliminate air exposure when anglers handle fish they intend to release.

“One thing to remember is that many more fish are released than are kept in recreational fisheries,” he says. “So simply keeping fish wet can do a lot to improve the outcome of catch-and-release for the fish.”

Danylchuk draws from his extensive field research experiences to advise IPO on problem-solving in his role on the campus International Risk Management Committee.

“Given that I both worked for and developed international place-based experiential education programs, I understand the push and pull between offering students exciting and informative programs while also balancing risks,” he says, adding that his experience is especially useful in risk management for research faculty and graduate students traveling to and immersing themselves in international settings.
21st Century Leaders Selected

The International Programs Office was well represented when the university announced its 21st Century Leaders this spring. International student Daniela Molina Palacios and Education Abroad alums Christopher Clark and Jonathan DeMarco were all recognized for their exemplary achievement, initiative, and leadership ahead of this year’s commencement ceremony.

Palacios, a Commonwealth Honors College student and member of Phi Beta Kappa, is graduating with a degree in biochemistry and molecular biology. A native of Venezuela, Palacios has participated in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) COVID-19 Challenge in April, assisting with UbiquiTest, a virtual platform that can advise healthcare professionals and companies on which populations can benefit from group testing.

She has also worked as a summer research intern at MIT and in the lab of Professor John Stoffolano, with whom she did her honors thesis. She also worked as a teaching assistant in biochemistry, a resident assistant and an academic peer advisor in biochemistry and molecular biology.

Palacios’s leadership extended to projects off campus, where she served as a tutor for Eureka! Girls Inc. in Holyoke. She also was a member of the Workplace Climate Committee in biochemistry and molecular biology. Her future plans include working as a research associate at MIT and eventually pursuing a PhD.

Clark, of Westfield, is a Commonwealth Honors College student receiving a degree in environmental science and STEM-German. He plans to pursue a master’s degree in environmental health sciences from the University of Michigan’s School of Public Health and eventually a PhD. Clark worked in the research lab of Alicia Timme-Laragy in environmental health sciences doing toxicology research. Clark’s leadership experience includes working on the steering committee and as a community organizer for Westfield Residents Advocating for Themselves, which led an effort that resulted in a CDC-sponsored exposure assessment and an increase in regulation for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Clark also served on the Student Government Association as chief of staff and undersecretary of sustainability. He has received numerous academic awards, including a Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship awarded by the U.S. State Department to study abroad in Germany.

DeMarco, of Hopkinton, is a civil/environmental engineering major who begins work as an environmental engineer in New York City upon graduation. He plans on studying for a master’s degree from UMass Amherst as well. DeMarco has worked as a student ambassador in the Dean’s Office of the College of Engineering and worked as an Engineering Essentials study abroad coordinator with the International Programs Office to implement a long-term IPO program that will assist engineers to engage in studying abroad. He was involved in the Engineers Without Borders chapter on campus and traveled to Kenya and Ghana to assist communities by implementing various water-related infrastructure.

CHEN RECEIVES FIELD STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP

Jinyu Chen ’21 has earned the School for Field Studies (SFS)’s Diversity Scholarship for 2020. Chen, a pre-veterinary science major, is studying in Tanzania for the spring semester.

Chen says the funds will help him take courses in Swahili language and East African culture, environmental policy and socioeconomic values, wildlife management, and wildlife ecology.

A member of the Commonwealth Honors College, Chen hopes to attend veterinary school upon his graduation next year. He is hopeful that his studies in Tanzania will help him to further understand the connection between humanity and nature, as well as fortify his leadership skills.

SFS has provided intensive study abroad programs for 40 years, helping students research pressing environmental issues and develop practical skills through experiential learning.
THE BARBARA BURN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP MAKES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE

Phung Pham ’20 is this year’s Barbara Burn Memorial Scholarship recipient.

The $1,000 scholarship was established in memory of International Programs Office founder Barbara Burn, who devoted her career to making international education accessible for any student. Any currently enrolled international sophomore, junior, or senior UMass Amherst undergraduate is eligible.

Pham, who has studied accounting at UMass Amherst since 2018, hails from Vietnam, where she was first inspired to study accounting while working in her parents’ retail store. She fulfilled a lifelong dream by studying in the United States, starting at Holyoke Community College before transferring to UMass Amherst. Since arriving, she has interned at Deloitte accounting firm; been a member of the Beta Alpha Psi accounting honors society; volunteered to help low-income taxpayers and students file tax returns; and served as an active member of Phi Kappa Phi, a prestigious honors society. Pham also earned two academic excellence awards from the Isenberg School of Management.

“Deciding to leave my hometown to study abroad is the biggest decision I have ever made, and it changed my life completely,” Pham says. “I would not be here, studying at one of the best business schools in the U.S., and having interned at the biggest public accounting firm if I did not make that decision.”

Pham is pondering several graduate accounting programs to further her education after graduating this spring.

IPO Hosts First Virtual Graduation Celebration

In April, the International Programs Office hosted its first virtual international student graduation celebration. Held over Zoom, the event featured speeches by Kalpen Trivedi, Associate Provost for International Programs, Kenneth Reade, Director for International Student & Scholar Services, and Brandi Hephner LaBanc, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life.

The event also featured a speech by Phung Pham ’20, this year’s Barbara Burn Memorial scholarship recipient.

WATCH THE FULL EVENT tinyurl.com/IPOGradCeremony20

The “Green Team,” a staff-led advisory group that helps IPO to lower our carbon footprint, launched in 2019. The group, consisting of IPO staff as well as student representatives, has launched initiatives all over the office, including composting, elucidating recycling guidelines, creating eco art challenges, and advocating material reuse and the overall reduction of waste.

The team recently helped IPO to earn a “Green” certification—the second-most advanced level offered by the UMass Green Office Program. From their desks at home, the Green Team is working on monthly newsletters and creating at-home-challenges to keep staff’s habits green.
IPO Celebrates International Ed Week with Gallery Show and More

Justin Risley ’20 did some redecorating in the International Programs Office when he launched “Wander: Excerpts from Asia,” his solo photography exhibition. Beginning November 19, the show doubled as IPO’s kickoff for another successful International Education Week (IEW).

Risley, an award-winning photographer, studied abroad in Asia through IPO during spring semester 2019. He says this collection of photographs faithfully captures the spirit of curiosity he felt during his abroad experience. “In an urban environment, I believe the eye cannot resist the urge to wander,” he adds. “Wandering allows an individual to see the country from the perspective of those who call it home.”

In addition to Risley’s exhibition, IPO celebrated IEW with a meet-and-greet with new Director of Education Abroad Mark Eckman, film screenings, legal advice sessions, and career information panels for international students.

SEE MORE OF RISLEY’S WORK justinrisley.com
IPO STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BY THE NUMBERS

EDUCATION ABROAD

STUDENT STATS

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENT STATS

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Pamela Dutta ’05, ’14 CTPG, ’17 MPA, Associate Director for International Student and Scholar Success

PRESENTATIONS

"Increasing International Students’ Early Engagement” (with Gillissen Green and Sarah Renn) NAFSA Region XI Conference, October 29–31, 2019, Worcester, MA

"How Does Our Racial Identity Help Us Navigate Global Education?” (with Carriana Field and Malaika Serrano) NAFSA Connecticut Workshop, December 5, 2019, UConn School of Law, CT


Mark Eckman, Director of Education Abroad

PRESENTATIONS

"Considering EA Operational Funding Models in the Current Context” (with Miko McFarland, Amanda Maurer, and Dr. Tony Ogden) virtual event hosted by International Studies Abroad (ISA), June 5, 2020

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Code of Ethics Working Group, The Forum on Education Abroad

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Academic Programs International (API) Abroad Advisory Board

CIS Abroad Advisory Board

Nichole Hunley, International Scholar and Student Advisor

PRESENTATIONS

"CIS Ombuds and More Navigating Changes and Finding Support,” NAFSA Region XI Spring Immigration Workshop, March 9, 2020, Worcester, MA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Treasurer-Elect for Massachusetts Council for International Education (MaCIE) 2019/2020

Suzan Kommers, Project Coordinator Assessment and Evaluation

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

"Are Some Horizons Broader than Others? Study Abroad, Inequality, and the Influence on Careers and Education.” University of Massachusetts Amherst, February 1, 2020

AJ LeBlanc, Education Abroad Advising Center Coordinator

PRESENTATIONS

"Professionalizing Education Abroad Alumni Engagement” (with Emily Ostenson, Meaghan Murphy-Rennie, and Ilene Tillman) NAFSA Region XI Conference, October 29–31, 2019, Worcester, MA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

CAPA: The Global Education Network Advisors Council

Emily Ostenson, Education Abroad Advisor, France and Italy Programs

PRESENTATIONS

"Professionalizing Education Abroad Alumni Engagement” (with AJ LeBlanc, Meaghan Murphy-Rennie, and Ilene Tillman) NAFSA Region XI Conference, October 29–31, 2019, Worcester, MA

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Secretary, NAFSA Region XI New England (since January 2020)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Vice President, Massachusetts Council for International Education (MaCIE)

Kenneth Reade, Director of International Student and Scholar Services

PRESENTATIONS

"Change is a Constant: Perspectives from International Education Managers” (with Andrew Shiotani and Natalie Schlegel) NAFSA Region XI Conference, October 29–31, 2019, Worcester, MA

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Government Regulatory Affairs Committee, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, New England Region

Kalpen Trivedi, Associate Provost for International Programs

PRESENTATIONS

"European Universities Networks, the next step in Internationalization?” (with Meritxell Chaves and Ramon Ellenbroek) AIEA Annual Conference, February 2020, Washington, DC

"Lessons We’re Learning: How COVID-19 is impacting our Globalization Efforts” (with Deandra Beck) APLU Commission on International Initiatives Webinar, March 2020

"Higher Education Equity Summit: Navigating Local and Global Priorities to Achieve Success,” (with Amer Ahmed and Anna Branch) UMass College of Education Research Summit, April 2020

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

Association of International Education Administration Presidential Fellow 2019–20
Postcards from Germany: UMass ❤ Baden-Württemberg

In this column, we explore the International Programs Office (IPO) archive for the living history of international partnerships, scholarly exchanges, and student experiences.

If the reader will allow the common saying “distance makes the heart grow fonder” to apply as much to international education as to individuals, then the resumption of student exchange and faculty collaboration between the University of Massachusetts and the Universities of the State of Baden-Württemberg will surely be full of love. The COVID-19 pandemic has torn a hole in the heart and soul of international education. Yet after more than fifty years of partnership, IPO still proudly declares that UMass ❤ Baden-Württemberg.

On a recent trip to the headquarters of the exchange in Freiburg, Germany, IPO Education Abroad Advisor Regine John collected a postcard that nicely encapsulates this shared sentiment. Imitating Milton Glaser’s famous “I ❤ NY” logo, it is a postcard that reads “I ❤ FR” against a staid black background. Like its predecessor, it can be found in souvenir shops throughout the city.

What began in 1963 as an idea for a collaboration on Atlantic Studies between UMass Amherst and the Amerika-Haus of Universität Freiburg has since expanded into a robust exchange program between the five campuses of the University of Massachusetts and the nine campuses of Baden-Württemberg. 2020 marks the fifty-sixth year of partnership between the two institutions and will include yet another renewal of the student exchange agreement.

While the renewal will be signed at the highest institutional levels by Baden-Württemberg Minister of Science, Research and the Arts Theresia Bauer and University of Massachusetts President Marty Meehan, student and faculty narratives speak to the charming, if less celebrated, personal connections created during the life of the exchange. As one former student of the exchange, Christopher Clark, has written, “it is the people that make the exchange what it is.”

Some fifty years of highlights include students’ introduction to West German political activism prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall; visiting Tübingen’s Christmas market; eating spätzle (a soft egg pasta) with a host family in Stuttgart; and the induction of former Associate Provost for International Programs Barbara Burn as Ehrensenatorin (honorary senator) of Universität Freiburg.

More than a thousand faculty, scholars, and undergraduate and graduate students have participated in the exchange, focusing their studies in the humanities, engineering, social sciences, medicine, and business management, among many other fields. Because of the longstanding relationship between the two institutions, UMass students receive unique support in all aspects of German life during their stay, and scholarships are available on the basis of financial need and academic performance.

A postcard can be a traveler’s keepsake, the cover image for a memorable anecdote of time spent abroad, a bridge across great distance or long absence. To whomever is able to visit Baden-Württemberg next, we hope you’ll send us one.
IPO underwent an unprecedented change in March when University employees began working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff proved worthy of the challenge, setting up shop in our home offices—with a “little help”—as we continue to adjust to the new normal.

From top: Mark Eckman, Kate Smith, Claire Novotny, and Cristina Sosa