



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Education Abroad

traverse

2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT



TAKE THE 
AGGIE SPIRIT
ANYWHERE



What's Inside

About Education Abroad.....	2
Our Team.....	3
From the Director	4
2021-22 Snapshot.....	5
Year in Review	6
Contributions to the Field.....	11
The Path Forward.....	12
Retrace	14

◀ Mildred Santiago gives a Gig 'Em after a three-hour hike on Huascarán - the tallest mountain in Peru. She is sitting in front of Laguna 69, the 69th lake discovered in Huaráz, and is wearing a traditional Peruvian headband.

Program: 2022 A&M Peru Urban Planning (USAR) Summer Faculty-led

On the Cover: Angelica Salazar is mesmerized by the tall, soft pink grass on a roadside in Asan-Si, South Korea. *Muhlenbergia capillaris*, also known as pink muhly grass originated from the U.S. but has become an Instagram obsession across Korea.

Program: Fall 2021 A&M All-Majors Exchange - Soonchunhyang University, South Korea

About Education Abroad

Education Abroad at Texas A&M University is proud to promote and facilitate transformational, diverse, and inclusive international experiences for thousands of Aggies each academic year. With offerings ranging from one week to one year in more than 100 different countries worldwide, we help Texas A&M students from freshmen to doctoral candidates find study, intern, research, or volunteer programs that fit their academic and personal interests, career goals, and budget.

International experiences actively prepare students to be global citizens, immersing them in foreign languages and cultures to foster intercultural knowledge and competence. Participating in education abroad experiences while at Texas A&M allows students to expand the intellectual and personal horizons, better navigate different environments, and build a more impressive resume.

Education Abroad is dedicated to supporting students before, during, and after their experiences abroad.

Mission Statement

Education Abroad promotes and facilitates student access to meaningful, diverse, and inclusive international experiences.

- We guide and support students before, during, and after their transformational credit and non-credit experiences abroad.
- We prepare students to be global citizens by fostering intercultural knowledge and competence.
- We develop and promote programming through collaboration with internal and external partners.

Diversity Statement

Education Abroad firmly believes that racism and discrimination in all forms are in stark contrast to our mission, and therefore, is committed to combating social injustices through the following actions:

- We will embrace diverse cultures, skills, and experiences of others;
- We will provide equitable access to diverse, meaningful international experiences;
- We will guide and support students before, during, and after their transformational credit and non-credit experiences abroad;
- We will prepare students to be global citizens by fostering respect, understanding, intercultural knowledge, and competence.
- We will develop and promote inclusive programming through collaboration with internal and external partners.
- We will cultivate a welcoming environment for all individuals, in which people feel empowered to inquire about our services regardless of their age, background, citizenship, disability, education, ethnicity, family status, gender, gender identity/expression, geographical location, language, military experience, political views, race, religion/spiritual belief, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and work experience.



Our Team

Dr. Holly Hudson
Assoc. VP for Global Engagement

Sarah Pattison
Director of Education Abroad

Pascale Parker
Senior Associate Director

Irene Scott
Program Manager

Trish Winkle
Program Manager

Corinne Beverly
Program Coordinator II

Erin Kibler
Program Coordinator II

Jessica Meado
Program Coordinator II

Amaris Vázquez Vargas
Program Coordinator II

Rebekah Bell
Education Abroad Advisor I

Phillis Brown
Education Abroad Advisor I

Annie Carr
Education Abroad Advisor I

Rachel Ehmke
Education Abroad Advisor I

Maricarmen Jaimes
Education Abroad Advisor I

Essynce Lewis
Education Abroad Advisor I

Catie Martin
Education Abroad Advisor I

Spenser McGowan
Education Abroad Advisor I

Melanie Rogers
Administrative Coordinator II

Melissa Burns
Administrative Coordinator I

103

Presentations, sessions, and events hosted by Education Abroad staff.

1,092

Student meetings and appointments with Education Abroad Advisors.

2,063

New and renewed passports processed through Education Abroad office.

◀ Gabriel Herrera spends some free time exploring the historical Plaza de España in Seville, Spain. Used primarily for government offices, the plaza boasts some incredible tile and ceramic work. Gabriel had to return early from his Spain abroad trip in 2020, but returned two years later.

Program: Spring 2022 A&M Spain Architecture Faculty-led



From the Director

“Nothing could be worse than a return to normality. Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.” *-Arundhati Roy, 2020*



The pages of this annual report tell a story. It is a story about Education Abroad at Texas A&M University emerging from the pandemic. It is a story of students empowered to discover themselves in a new place, in a new era, and in a vast and beautiful world that they will navigate and shape.

This is also the story of how our team has played a critical role in their journeys, and their emergence from this pandemic. Though new to the Education Abroad team, I can attest that their commitments, professed on these pages, are real. There is intentionality and action behind each point of our diversity statement. And I assure you, that to us, behind every number and each accolade that we share in this report, there is a student’s face, a story of courage and yearning for a place and a purpose in this world that is no longer defined by boundaries and binaries, and the shortcomings of our past. This is a story of the one—and of the many—stepping through a portal, emerging from a pandemic that continues to shake humanity to its core and reshape the world in which we live.

This is a story of what Texas A&M students have achieved despite a pandemic, and the opportunities that this Education Abroad team have seized because they believe that the pandemic—with all of the social, political, and economic upheavals associated with it—presented possibilities, and more so, an obligation to enact their commitments to inclusive excellence and global learning for all.

As we emerge, we are seeing that Aggies are very eager to go abroad—maybe now more than ever. This means that more than ever, the quality of the programs and services that we provide MUST be the product of critical examination.

Indeed, this team’s accomplishments

this year are the products of the critical examinations of the last two years. This year, our staff have keenly focused on laying the foundation to radically diversify student participation in our programs. With nearly 3,000 students having participated in international study during yet another year complicated by COVID, we are proud to have essentially matched pre-pandemic statistics for diversity in study abroad participation at Texas A&M. Furthermore, this team has received national and international recognition for our contributions to excellence in diversity and inclusion and access to international study. Importantly, we’ve made significant changes to improve our systems and provide robust international health & safety support.

Now, it is my distinct honor to further the progress that this team has made under the leadership of Dr. Holly Hudson, as she takes up her role as Texas A&M’s inaugural Associate Vice President for Global Engagement. It is my deeply held commitment to ensure that diversity and inclusion not only remain at the forefront of our work, but also to guide the Education Abroad team to reach even deeper, push the boundaries even further, and emerge from this pandemic even more capable of delivering high-quality, inclusive, and affordable Education Abroad programming to every Aggie.

Welling up with pride in this EA team, I look forward to our future, and a very near time when every Aggie has participated in a global learning experience, where we have helped them in a myriad of ways to form deep and meaningful connections with people and ideas that were once foreign to them.

- Sarah Pattison, Director

Together, we will:

Raise awareness of issues of race, gender, class, and other salient aspects of identity abroad

- By expanding the concept of healthy campus climate to all places of learning
- By building trusting relationships to support student success

Cultivate critically reflexive practitioners

- By enhancing faculty and professional staff capacities to formulate, evaluate, and revise their own practices
- By improving program capacities to meet all student needs and contribute to their integral development and career readiness

Grow academically embedded programming

- By developing tailored, high-impact international learning experiences
- By crafting global learning goals and assessments for a continuous cycle of improvement

Increase grant funding to support the above efforts in alignment with our commitments.

Invest in and leverage our strengths in teaching, research, and scholarship for Global Education, with the goal to expand Texas A&M recognition regionally, nationally, and internationally as the shapers of theory and practice in the field of International Higher Education.



2021-2022 Snapshot

2,983

of students who participated in any Education Abroad program.

↑ 256% increase from 20-21

↑ 28% increase from 19-20

Of all participants:

43% were students of color

17% were first-generation students



793

of incoming exchange students coming from 23+ countries.

43

of countries with Education Abroad programs. *2020-21

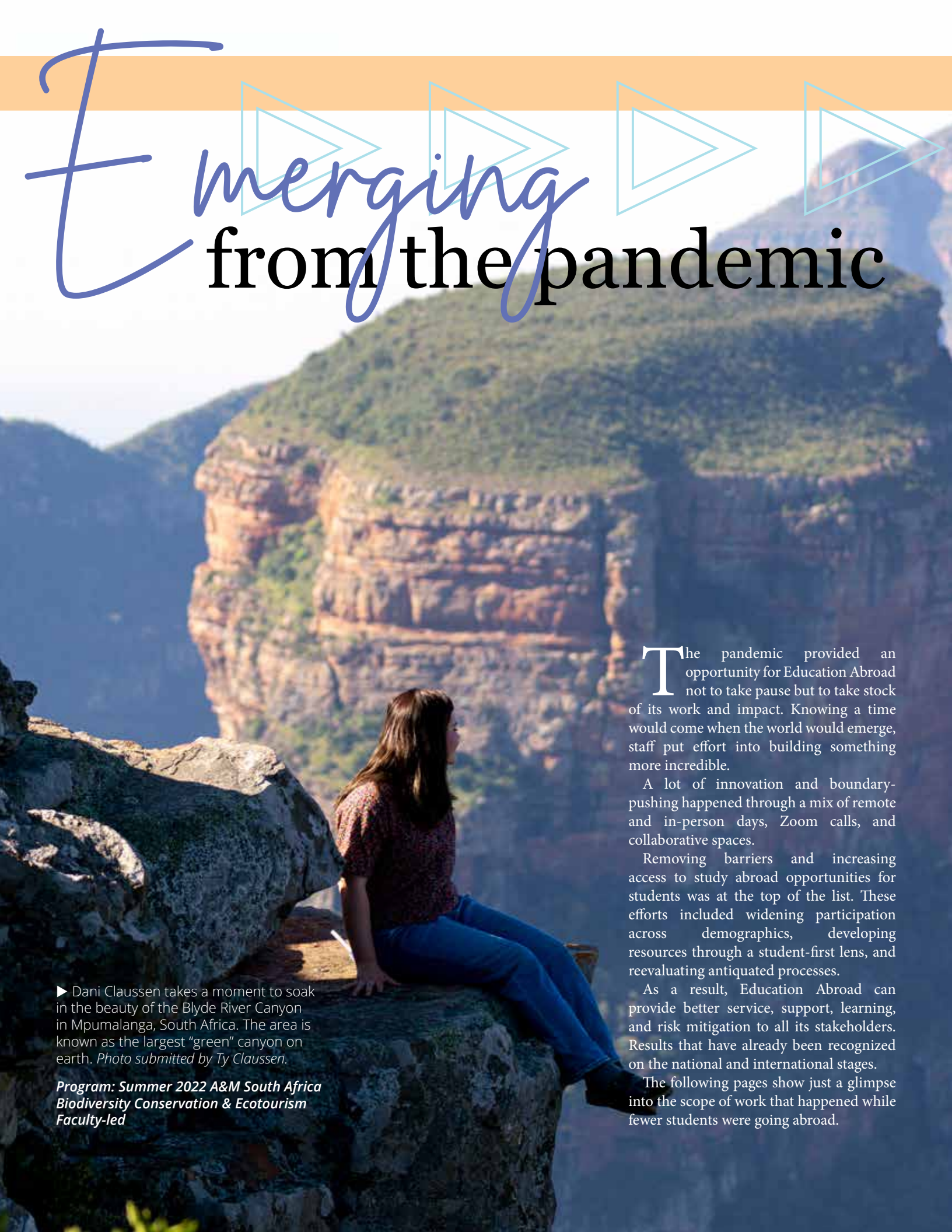
TOP 5



◀ Jazmin Robinson shows off her Aggie pride in front of Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Germany. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the gate has become a symbol of German unity.

Program: Fall 2021 A&M Germany INTS Field Trip

Emerging from the pandemic



► Dani Claussen takes a moment to soak in the beauty of the Blyde River Canyon in Mpumalanga, South Africa. The area is known as the largest “green” canyon on earth. Photo submitted by Ty Claussen.

Program: Summer 2022 A&M South Africa Biodiversity Conservation & Ecotourism Faculty-led

The pandemic provided an opportunity for Education Abroad not to take pause but to take stock of its work and impact. Knowing a time would come when the world would emerge, staff put effort into building something more incredible.

A lot of innovation and boundary-pushing happened through a mix of remote and in-person days, Zoom calls, and collaborative spaces.

Removing barriers and increasing access to study abroad opportunities for students was at the top of the list. These efforts included widening participation across demographics, developing resources through a student-first lens, and reevaluating antiquated processes.

As a result, Education Abroad can provide better service, support, learning, and risk mitigation to all its stakeholders. Results that have already been recognized on the national and international stages.

The following pages show just a glimpse into the scope of work that happened while fewer students were going abroad.

Awards & Honors

- Received the Excellence in Diversity & Inclusion in International Education (EDIIE) Award for Outreach, Marketing, and Recruitment.
- Recognized by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for being a top 20 producer of Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship recipients among large institutions. Texas A&M ranked 16th among all institutions with an enrollment of more than 15,000 students. Since 2001, 258 students from Texas A&M have received Gilman awards.
- Named a 2022 PIEoneer Award Finalist for the Championing Diversity category. This award recognizes organizations that have successfully increased access and widened participation in international education opportunities across student demographics. Winners of the PIEoneer Awards will be announced on Sept. 9, during a ceremony at London’s Guildhall.

Notables

- Moved from the Office of the Provost and is now part of the new Global Engagement Department within the Division of Academic & Strategic Collaborations. Global Engagement is led by Dr. Holly Hudson, Associate Vice President & Senior International Officer.
- Implemented and launched Via TRM – Education Abroad’s new application database and travel risk mitigation software. This change was essential to provide increased access for non-traditional education abroad participants. The software was implemented in record time, taking a nine-month implementation and completing all necessary items in five weeks.
- Awarded a \$5,000 mini grant from the Academic Affairs Climate and Diversity Committee to develop the Intercultural Change Leadership Program and Digital Badge which launched a pilot in fall 2022.





► Nicholas Gusler analyzes and sketches the layers of history found within the walls of the ancient Roman Colosseum. Located in the center of Rome, Italy, the structure is still the largest standing amphitheater in the world. *Photo submitted by Mailee Shaw.*

Program: Fall 2021 A&M Italy Architecture Faculty-led

Depth over breadth

Guided by three pillars to Inform, Support, and Provide, Education Abroad continued its efforts to enhance service and increase access in its post-pandemic regrowth phase. Focusing on the experience instead of the numbers, Education Abroad has strengthened its programming and created a more holistic experience for both student participants and faculty leaders.

Here are a few examples of what Education Abroad accomplished within each pillar in 2021-2022.

Inform

- Hosted a Program Development Workshop for faculty and staff interested in leading or supporting faculty-initiated programs that advised them of important policies and updates and connected them to affiliate providers.
- Coordinated COVID-19 Informed Participant Meetings prior to faculty-led program confirmations to ensure students and families were aware of current COVID guidelines in programs' host countries.
- Improved accessibility on the Education Abroad website. It now surpasses industry standards for Quality Assurance (QA) and Accessibility. The QA score for the site increased from 59.3 to 96.3 during the fourth quarter. The industry-standard accessibility score also increased from 76.7 to 83.7 during the quarter.
- Implemented Ivy Chat Bot "Ms. Rev" on the Education Abroad website to provide more immediate access to information found on the website.
- Redesigned and added information and resources on the website for departments and faculty interested in developing programs for students abroad.
- Created a Student Planning Guide to better assist students in the process of researching, finding and applying for education abroad programs; as well as information for on the ground, in country and after their return.

Support

Program Development

- Added program orientations for faculty-led programs to share updates on COVID-19 policies and in-country guidelines. Also provided guidance on navigating travel changes.
- Launched resources for proposing trips coordinated by recognized student organizations.
- Established holding courses for TAMUG students participating in affiliate provider and exchange programs.
- Developed new proposal process

for unit-led trips coordinated by non-academic units.

- Founded the Program Development Team to increase support to faculty during the program proposal process. Collaboration with vetted providers also ensures programs meet Education Abroad's risk and safety requirements.
- ### Students First
- Continued expansion of the Education Abroad advising team.
 - Revised Pre-Approval Form for Transfer Credit to align with current Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on

Colleges (SACSCOS) accreditation guidelines.

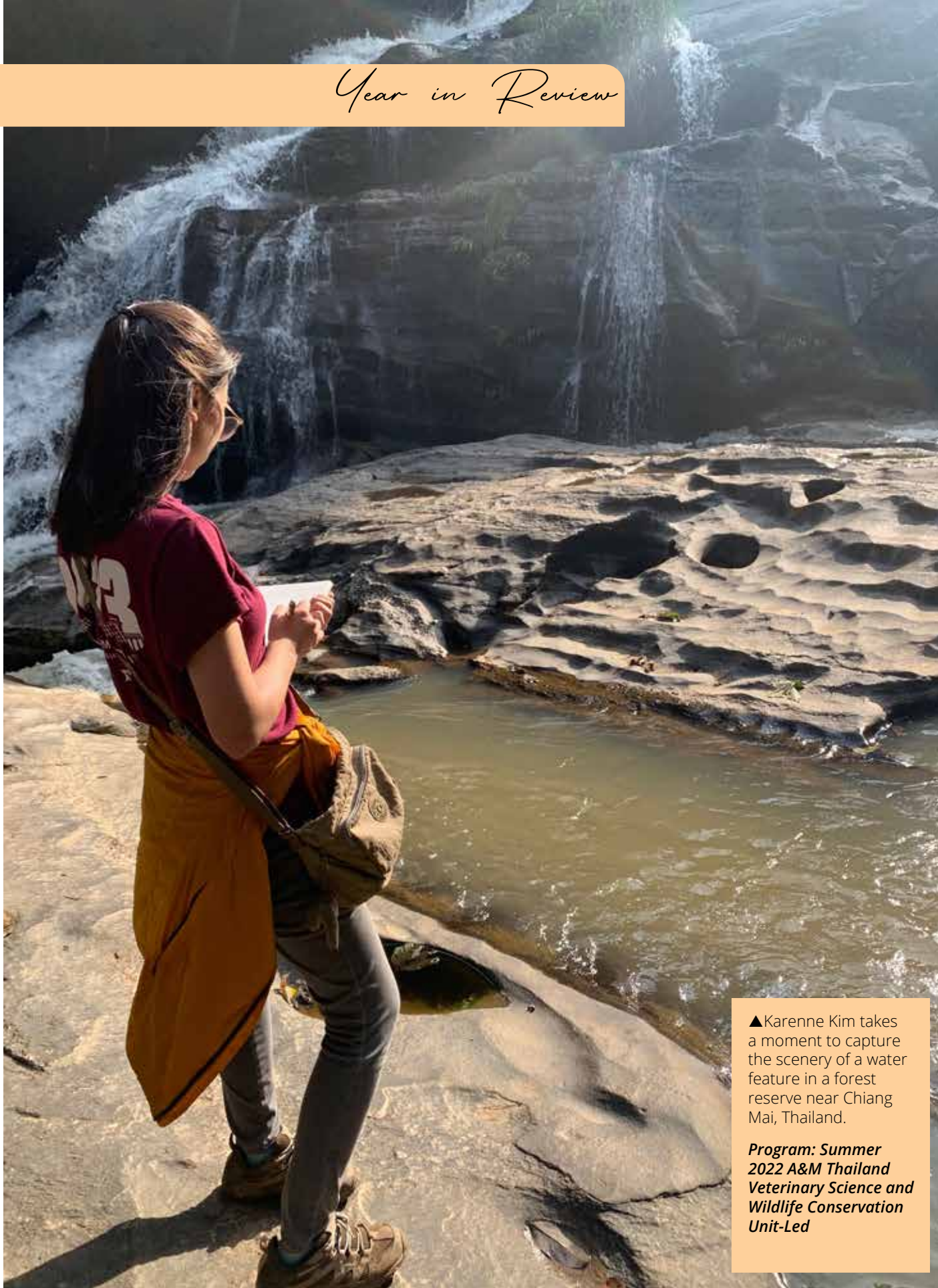
- Signed MOA with Residence Life to guarantee 20 on-campus beds for incoming exchange students.
- Expanded the peer mentor program for incoming exchanges students
- In collaboration with Student Business Services, created a process for students participating in affiliate provider programs to access Texas Tuition Promise Fund benefits.
- Enhanced targeted outreach efforts to first-generation students and other marginalized groups.

Health & Safety

- Developed risk assessments for locations and program activities, as well as response plans for COVID-19 and travel-related restrictions.
- Provided support to relocate students who were studying in Russia when the war on Ukraine began. One student returned to the U.S. to finish program virtually. Three students were relocated to Kyrgyzstan.
- Updated trip leader training content and developed scenarios to assist them and students navigate travel, entry changes, COVID testing, and restrictions.

Provide

- Launched online pre-departure orientation modules in its 2022 application cycles for students. The virtual content ensures all education abroad students receive standardized guidance on health, safety, cultural adjustment, finances, and other information important for outgoing students.
- Developed a Diversity and Global Learning offering of Texas A&M's FYEX 101 (Hullabaloo U) course. Because of its popularity, Education Abroad was able to double the number of sections to four for Fall 2022.
- Welcomed the first cohort as part of the National Student Exchange Program with six students from around North America and U.S. territories during the fall 2021 semester and two in spring 2022.
- Completed the "Welcome to Texas Fund" crowdfunding initiative in conjunction with Texas A&M's Spirit of Giving campaign. Money raised was used to serve incoming reciprocal exchange and National Student Exchange students.
- Hosted "Abroad and Back," an informal, social event for recent education abroad participants. The event was initiated by an Education Abroad Ambassador and has become a bi-annual event. A newly created resource guide is provided, and discussions are held centered on how to articulate their experience abroad on their resume and in job interviews. Students are also provided details about how to explore post-grad work and careers abroad.
- Participated in the Gabon Government delegation hosted by the College of Engineering to discuss collaborations and future student projects. The goal is to have more than 20 sponsored degree-seeking international students enroll at Texas A&M as part of their Country Leadership program. The first cohort is projected to arrive in spring 2023.



▲Karenne Kim takes a moment to capture the scenery of a water feature in a forest reserve near Chiang Mai, Thailand.
 Program: Summer 2022 A&M Thailand Veterinary Science and Wildlife Conservation Unit-Led

NAFSA

NAFSA:
 Association of International Educators

is the world's largest non-profit association dedicated to international education and exchange. NAFSA serves more than 10,000 members and international educators worldwide at 3,500 institutions in over 150 countries.

Various Education Abroad staff are serving NAFSA in the following capacities:

- International Education Professional Competencies Review Working Group
- Education Abroad Regulatory Practice Financial Aid Subcommittee
- Education Abroad Knowledge Community's Diversity & Inclusion Subcommittee
- Trainer Corps Trainer in Intercultural Competency in Practice
- RISE Fellowship Application Review Committee
- Conference Session Proposal Review Committee
- Conference Poster Fair Organizer

FORUM ON EDUCATION ABROAD

Forum on Education Abroad

is a non-profit, membership association recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of Education Abroad.

Various Education Abroad staff are serving the Forum in the following capacities:

- Education Abroad Standards Consensus Body to update the Standards of Good Practice
- Membership Engagement Group
- Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) Conference Planning Committee



diversityabroad

Diversity Abroad

is the leading membership organization that inspires and supports educators, policy makers, industry professionals and other stakeholders in leveraging global educational programs to support students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.

Various Education Abroad staff are serving Diversity Abroad in the following capacities:

- Fellow for Diversity Abroad Global Leadership Institute
- Student Support and Advising Task Force



► Trevor Dunfee stands in front of the natural beauty of the island of Santorini. In the background is the famous Blue Domed Churches that overlook the Aegean Sea. The island is home to more than 200 churches and monasteries that have stood for centuries.

Program: Spring 2022
Exchange: Erasmus School of Economics, Netherlands



Growing our global impact

As part of the ambitious administrative reorganization of Texas A&M University, known as The Path Forward, the creation of a Global Engagement Department was included as one of the 41 institutional working groups. Beginning its work in February 2022, the working group was charged with creating a vision for the new department and developing an implementation plan, including the recommendation of units and services to be part of the centralized model.

In the months that followed, the working group established several key findings. First was the need to develop new reporting and support structures that will increase service to students, faculty, and staff. Second was the need to enhance campus collaborations and administrative processes to elevate communication and better streamline international functions. Lastly, was the need to implement strategic initiatives that position the university as a

leader in the field of international education.

As a result, the following units now comprise the Department of Global Engagement:

- International Student Services
- Scholar Services
- Global Partnership Services
- Education Abroad
- Passport Services
- International Risk, Health, and Safety

Moving forward, Global Engagement will continue to implement the recommendations of the working group. This will include securing resources and staffing, building partnerships, enhancing workflows and communication, and expanding programming.

Through these efforts, the department will help Texas A&M secure its place as the leading international institution by creating solutions that impact the world and prepare Aggies to successfully contribute to, and lead within, a global society.

Guiding Principles

Directing the vision and mission of Global Engagement are the following four guiding principles:

ACCESS

To prepare Aggies to be successful in a global society, we believe that students should have access to diverse and inclusive international opportunities to allow for the development of vital intercultural competencies needed to address complex global issues.

SERVICE

To ensure the most effective and efficient use of institutional resources, we commit to a high level of accountability that provides tailored support to faculty, staff, and students as they engage in int'l experiences and research opportunities.

PARTNERSHIP

To provide the greatest impact on both our local and global communities, we seek to cultivate and leverage partnerships that weave together members of our Texas A&M University community with others around the globe.

COMMUNITY

To promote an environment that fosters global curiosity and understanding.

retrace



My Aggie Ring is circling the Pointe du Hoc Ranger Monument which overlooks Omaha Beach near Normandy, France. Pointe du Hoc honors the efforts of Lt. Col. James Earl Rudder and his forces during World War II. Having the opportunity to visit Pointe - Hoc with my Texas A&M study abroad group made me feel extremely proud to be an Aggie. Having the opportunity to stand where our former Texas A&M president fought was something I will never forget."

-Alexis King

Program: Summer 2022 A&M Europe Marketing Faculty-led



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Education Abroad