Photos: (cover) A row of Garudas and Nagas adorn the Temple of the Emerald Buddha in Bangkok, Thailand; (Inside) A ninth-century statue of Buddha in Central Java, Indonesia; (Back) A dragon *becak* in East Jakarta, Indonesia. Cover photo by IES advisor David Cole, inside/back photos by Beyond the Classroom Director Dr. James Riker.
AGNR Launches Inaugural 2+2 Program with China
Eight Chinese students are spending two years living and learning in College Park as part of AGNR’s newest international program. In the end, they will return home with UM degrees and memories of their time as Terps.

Acting Ukrainian Ambassador Speaks at UM
Appointed only hours before, Dr. Viktor Nikitiuk highlights Ukrainian priorities - namely, joining the EU and NATO, facilitating exchange programs, and building upon the already-friendly rapport with the U.S.

PUAF Professor Wins Prestigious National Grant
OIP travel award helps Dr. Nathan Hultman win a National Science Foundation grant to fund his continued research on the sugar and cement carbon markets of Brazil & India.

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8 OIP News UM students fuel love of reading in Nicaragua; New Peer Mentor Program helps prospective study abroad students.
10 Around Campus Fulbright workshop teaches ins and outs of application process; International recruitment efforts intensify; New Dean appointed to School of Journalism; ENST professors go global with environmentalism; START surveys Muslim opinion of U.S. initiatives; Noted scholar links study abroad to conflict resolution; Former Diplomat discusses U.S.-Africa relations.

MARYLAND INTERNATIONAL is the newsletter of the Office of International Programs (Saúl Sosnowski, director; Joseph Scholten, associate director) and the interconnected group of offices under its auspices, including International Education Services (Valerie Woolston, director), Study Abroad (Michael Ulrich, director), the Institute for Global Chinese Affairs (Robert Daly, director), the Confucius Institute at Maryland (Chuan Sheng Liu, director), Global Communities (Kevin McClure, coordinator) and the Maryland English Institute (Marsha Sprague, director). Issues are published twice during the fall and spring semesters and once during the summer. To submit story ideas and/or photos, please contact the editor, Kellie Corcoran, at corcoran@umd.edu or 301.405.4312.
For the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR), a budding partnership with China Agricultural University recently blossomed into an inaugural 2+2 degree program. Eight Chinese students arrived this past August to spend two years living and learning as Terps; in the end, they will return home with a UM diploma – and a thousand memories to cherish.
No matter where you go, it is always helpful to recognize a friendly face. When the Chinese students arrived in College Park, they knew not just one face, but a whole slew of them. A few weeks earlier, a delegation of UM administrators – made up of President C.D. Mote, Jr., Dean Wei, and colleagues – traveled to Beijing to meet with the program applicants, answer questions, and abate fears. This meeting put the students at ease and, indeed, was paramount in some decisions to come to UM.

“CAu has partnerships with Cornell and UM, and I was admitted to both programs. But I chose to come to UM because Dean Wei and President Mote came to our college to talk with us,” explains Haoying Wang, a 21-year-old Food Science major from Kunming, Yunnan province. “They were so nice and helpful and provided much more personal attention to us.”

Before setting foot in College Park, CAu students first take two years of coursework in China. They then apply to a partner program, and are rigorously vetted based on English language abilities and academic performance. In the end, only CAU’s top performers are chosen for the program, which will culminate in a University of Maryland degree.

The program not only benefits CAU students, but the UM campus community as a whole, says Dean Wei. It helps fulfill a University goal of increasing international student numbers; may offer a pipeline to UM graduate programs; and encourages mutual understanding between cultures.

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“Someday, these students are truly going to be leaders in their country – and they will also always remember they are Terp alumni,” Dean Wei says.

ACADEMIC CURRICULUM
Growing up, 21-year-old Zheng An lived in a number of tiny towns and large cities in China. After experiencing such a broad view of Chinese curricula, he decided to step outside his borders to explore another culture’s educational system. “American education is the best in the world, I believe, which is why I chose the U.S.,” An says. “And I chose UM because they have the best program for my major, Agriculture and Resource Economics.”

So far, An has not been disappointed with the curriculum. He is currently taking 19 credits, maintains a strong GPA, and has even added a Mathematics minor. Although he says he has an incredible academic burden, it has been worthwhile. “My department gave me a scholarship based on my academic performance – it was such a surprise!” An says with a laugh. “I now encourage all my friends in China; if you work hard, it pays off.”

Like An, all other CAU students have embraced their studies. They are enrolled in Core courses in addition to major requirements; three students currently have straight A’s; and one even requested a 23-credit course load.

Apart from his studies, An finds time to complete independent research with AGNR professor Dr. Charles Towe.
An collects data, which helps Towe determine how governmental policy influences agricultural land use. Faculty interactions like this, says An, are his favorite part of UM. “The helpful faculty are really the best,” An says. “They help me with academic questions, and social questions too, which helps broaden my view of my academic pursuits and American culture.”

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT
As dedicated as the students are to their academics, they are also devoted to immersing themselves into American culture. Some join clubs, some attend University events, and others, like Haoying Wang, take part-time jobs for a unique flavor of college life.

Wang works at the Art & Learning Center in the Stamp Student Union as a front desk receptionist, but has recently been given the responsibility of scheduling shifts. It has given her a glimpse into the business side of American culture, which she says is totally different than in Asian society. “People who work in China are very tired – their whole day is devoted to their job, as they have to go to a business dinner after work, or deal with phone calls all night,” she says. “But here, the time is more your own. After eight hours, the work stops for the night.” So which does she prefer? “Definitely the style here,” she says, with a laugh.

Besides her job, Wang belongs to a Christian Fellowship, went on a winter retreat to Pennsylvania, and has decided to add a minor. Despite a lack of free time, Wang says she prefers it that way. “When I am busy I feel like I am fulfilling my life, and not wasting any time,” she says. “And with all my activities, I feel much more involved this semester – I am much more satisfied now.”

An has also thrown himself into University life, joining the Chinese Student and Scholar Association and a bible fellowship. He was also recently inducted into Alpha Zeta, a professional fraternity for agriculture students. “I didn’t have access to many Americans before, so this is a great opportunity to make friends,” he says. “It’s also a great way to make friends that have similar academic interests and career goals, to network.”

Wang has also made a number of other international and American friends, but had to go about it in a different way. “In China, we have more connections with our classmates, as we take classes together, do activities together, live together – seldom in America do you make friends with classmates,” she reflects. “Instead, you make friends through activities, or clubs, or with your neighbors, so that is what I have tried to also do.”

CAREER PLANS
Internships are the current buzzword for the group – nearly all are desperately searching for one as summer fast approaches, and it seems there is a scarcity as of late. No matter if they find internships or not, however, they have already set their sights on life after graduation. Some will enter graduate school – maybe even at UM – and others will stay in the U.S. for a while before eventually returning to China. An hopes to take his American education and apply it back home in China as either a researcher or professor. “I am still looking for the exact career I am interested in – but I do know I would be very happy to stay here for a few years and then go back,” he explains. “The technology is very mature here, so the perfect thing is to bring that back to China.”

FUTURE PROGRAMS
Looking forward, Dean Wei and AGNR will welcome another cohort of CAU 2+2 students for Fall 2009, although exact numbers are unconfirmed. Eventually, the program may expand to encompass other countries.

Dean Wei is also working to cultivate a number of other AGNR projects: a new 2+2 program that is currently being finalized with Northwest Agriculture & Forestry University in Shaanxi Province, China; a summer program with China Medical University; and two courses with National Taiwan University in which the American and Taiwanese students will learn environmental science or nutrition science together via video conferencing. Dean Wei also plans to stay in close contact with his 2+2 students, to ensure they make the most of their time as Terps.

With September classes only a few months away, An and Wang look forward to meeting their new group of Chinese peers. And both have some valuable kernels of advice: “Study hard!” cautions An. “Your GPA is the most important thing!”

“You should think about it first, before you come, as to what kind of life you will choose here at UM,” Wang says. “You can party every day, or study every day, but you have to decide beforehand – it’s up to you to make your own experience.”

PHOTOS: Page 5, Left to Right: Yixuan Sun plays frisbee at AGNR’s Fall Bash; Zheng An rubs Testudo for luck; Haoying Wang enjoys springtime at UM. Page 6: College of Agriculture & Natural Resources Dean Cheng-i Wei.
On the eve of last October’s Ambassadorial Lecture by the Georgian Ambassador, he was appointed Minister of Defense and sent his acting replacement to UM in his stead. This March, the Lecture Series continued this “tradition” of advancing the careers of its participants – Ambassador Oleh Shamshur of Ukraine was nominated Foreign Minister only 24 hours before his scheduled talk, and the acting ambassador kindly came to the University in his place.

Dr. Viktor Nikitiuk, Minister Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission, centered much of his talk on Ukraine’s desire to join the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Ukraine fulfills all membership requirements, Nikitiuk explained, and would be an attractive ally for both in terms of its consumer market, manufacturing, and gas pipeline that provides heat and electricity to neighboring countries. In return, Ukraine hopes for a security alliance in today’s volatile atmosphere of terrorism threats and potential weapons of mass destruction.

“For a country like Ukraine, geographically separated from other EU countries, NATO membership is an objective requirement that would help ensure national security,” Nikitiuk explained. “So part of our desire to belong is security. But part is also the choice to join an alliance of states that stick to values in terms of human rights and democracy.”

According to Nikitiuk, another priority of his country is to support faculty and student exchanges with the U.S. and other countries. In 2005, Ukraine unilaterally waived all visa requirements for stays up to 90 days, in an effort to encourage a wider exchange of people and ideas. “Exchanges are particularly useful in obtaining different points of view, experiencing different cultures and languages,” he said. “And they are extremely important as we broaden our participation in the EU and NATO.”

Nikitiuk also discussed his country’s economic state of affairs, and outlined Ukraine’s plans to weather the current world financial crisis. The country has secured loans, is passing a series of anti-crisis legislation, and is working on a free trade agreement with the EU to boost exports.

Moving forward, Nikitiuk said, Ukraine hopes to build upon its friendly rapport with the U.S.; his country’s leadership has already been in close contact with President Obama, Vice President Biden, and Secretary of State Clinton. “We look forward to building a strong, close relationship with the Obama administration, and so far we have a great start,” Nikitiuk said.

The Ambassadorial Lecture Series capitalizes on UM’s “unfair advantage” of proximity to Washington, D.C. to invite high-level members of the diplomatic community to speak about their country’s perspectives on current world conditions and future developments.
The group of 13 people – 10 students, iSchool Professor of the Practice Dr. Weeks, and two UM librarians, Patricia Herron and Lily Griner – set off for Nicaragua this past winter 2009. Their destination? The town of San Juan del Sur, a tiny jewel nestled on the Atlantic Coast. Although not terribly impoverished, the town borders rural areas that lack plumbing, electricity, sidewalks, and even roads. Yet, despite a certain level of destitution, the local people remain full of optimism – and are hungry for whatever literature they can get their hands on. Many residents visit Mirandette’s library – Biblioteca San Juan del Sur – to check out books, but many others are unable to make the long trek to town. Enter the Bookmobile – a truck outfitted as a traveling library, with hundreds of books for all reading levels. The group of study abroad students – all graduate students and aspiring librarians themselves – were able to make two trips aboard the Bookmobile to the outlying rural areas, where they were met with hoards of excited students.

“School was not in session, but the kids had a schedule to know when the Bookmobile would come – and they would be waiting for us as we sat on top of the truck, to chase after us,” recalls Griner. “Apart from helping to check out books, we had several activities for the kids that our students created – a puppet show with stick figures, bookmark design; they even read books to them in Spanish.”

The Bookmobile makes it possible for students to check out academic reading material to help with their schoolwork. Since many students cannot afford to purchase textbooks, Mirandette also stocks a selection in the Biblioteca. “Students have textbooks in school, but often don’t have the funds to purchase them for their homes,” Herron explains. “They would be forced to memorize things in school, and have no way to reinforce that information. The Biblioteca now allows them more of a chance to study.”

**CRAFT FAIR**

Besides assisting with the Bookmobile program, the study abroad students also devised another way to make a positive impact on the children – by organizing an Arts & Crafts Fair in downtown San Juan del Sur. Prior to departure, the students planned activities and gathered materials for the one-day event, which drew a crowd of more than 50 children. “Our students painted faces, taught hip hop dance, and helped make bookmarks, masks, maracas and bubbles,” Herron says. “There was even a truck that went out and brought the kids from the rural areas so they could participate in the event.”

Nearly a decade ago, Colorado native Jane Mirandette founded the first-ever lending library in Nicaragua. Now, years later, UM Professor Ann Carlson Weeks has led a study abroad group to Mirandette’s library to take notes and lend a hand. Ultimately, they found that love of learning – and a lot of goodwill – can really go a long way.
Fair.” In the end, the Fair provided more students access to reading materials, and fostered a sense of community, pivotal to both the children and adults of the town.

**ANIBIPA MEETING**

The study abroad students were also able to interact with local librarians through the Asociación Nicaragüense de Bibliotecarios y Profesionales Afnies (ANIBIPA) association meeting. Fifty librarians and staff from across Nicaragua attended the event, to collaborate with the UM delegation and learn more about both starting a library and maintaining it.

A number of UM students presented at the conference, including second-year Masters student Julie Brophy. “The presentation I gave was called *From Trash to Treasure: Creative Crafts Using Recycled Materials*,” Brophy explains. “I wanted to provide them with one concrete example of how to use trash to make an inexpensive but creative craft program, and they had a chance to make a craft themselves.”

“We were able to bring together a somewhat divided community of librarians and educators in Nicaragua, to hopefully further communication and collaboration in the future,” explains Caitlin Rolston, a student at San José State University of California. “Ultimately, this could benefit the entire country’s library and the library education infrastructure.”

Rolston says she was so moved by the experience that she plans to apply her education towards improving a library she is connected with in El Salvador. “People [in Central America] have touched and inspired me, and that is a great gift I would like to reciprocate,” she says. “I want to show solidarity with people everywhere who are working to promote – not oppress – culture, art, literature, education, peace and equality.”

**FUTURE COURSES**

Ultimately, says Dr. Weeks, the course left an impact not only on the children and librarians of Nicaragua, but also on the UM study abroad students. “I was expecting this to change their lives, and I really think it did,” Dr. Weeks says. “It changed perceptions of what is possible; the students found that people of goodwill can really make a difference in seemingly small ways.” Dr. Weeks plans to run the library and information studies course to Nicaragua again in Winter Term 2010. For more information and application instructions, visit the Study Abroad Website: www.umd.edu/studyabroad.

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**‘Straight Scoop’ from Peer Mentors Makes Study Abroad Decisions Easier**

Choosing where or when to study abroad can be a daunting task - who better to give advice than former study abroad students? This idea, formally known as the Peer Mentor Program, is a new form of advising the Study Abroad Office adopted this past September 2008. So far, the advice is making worlds of difference.

The seven current Mentors have studied in locations across the globe, and offer unique perspectives to their fellow students. The Mentors help navigate resource materials, clarify goals, and provide outreach support at events or class presentations. Prospective students will meet with regular Study Abroad Advisors once they have chosen two to three program options. So far, the feedback is extremely positive for the program, which will repeat next year. “The Mentors have a contagious enthusiasm for studying abroad that other students really respond to, and they are a critical source of assistance for students as they search for the best possible program to meet their needs,” explains Lisa Tenley Alton, Program Specialist and supervisor of the program. “Students seem to respond very positively to the ‘straight scoop’ from their peers - they like getting a student’s perspective on studying abroad.”

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Photos: (Top) Caitlin Rolston reads with local children. (Left) UM student helps perfect a mask at the crafts fair; (Middle) UM group gathers in front of Mirandette’s Biblioteca; (Right) Local children gather for the arrival of the Bookmobile. Photos courtesy of Caitlin Rolston.
March is always a month of new beginnings: the first buds of Spring, the return of baseball, the opening of the annual competition for Fulbright awards for scholars and professionals. On the 25th, two dozen UM faculty and professional staff gathered for a two-hour workshop, “Successful Fulbright Applications,” to learn the ins and outs of the application process.

Co-sponsored by the Office of International Programs and the Division of Research, the workshop featured Dr. Andy Riess of the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars. Based in Washington, D.C., CIES administers Fulbright grants programs for scholars and professionals for the U.S. Department of State. Dr. Riess, who currently serves as Senior Program Officer for Recruitment, walked participants through the history of the Fulbright program; the broad array of opportunities for research and/or lecturing outside the U.S. that now fall under the general rubric, “Fulbright;” the application process and timeline; and best practices for successful applications. He indicated that the Fulbright vetting process is one of the most thorough among competitions for international scholarly awards, and that UM applicants have a long record of success. Many of these UM Fulbright alumni have offered to act as local resources for colleagues who are thinking of applying—visit www.international.umd.edu/oip/5470 for a listing.

The deadline for applications is August 1, 2009, for awards beginning in Fall 2010. Those unable to attend this workshop who need more information should contact OIP Associate Director Dr. Joseph Scholten, the campus Fulbright representative for U.S. faculty/professionals, at scholten@umd.edu. Students interested in Fulbright programs may consult the National Scholarships Office website, www.scholarships.umd.edu/scholarships/fulbright7.html. Graduate students are also urged to apply to the Fulbright-Hayes Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad competition, administered by UM’s Office of Research Administration and Advancement, at www.umresearch.umd.edu/ORAA/memos/68.html.

By Joseph Scholten, OIP

UM Expands Efforts to Enroll International Students

The 3,600 international students currently enrolled at UM enrich the campus with global insight and cultural flavor. The new University of Maryland Strategic Plan has established the ambitious goal of quadrupling their ranks by 2018, and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions is joining the established efforts of OIP’s International Education Services to bring additional academically-motivated international students to campus.

Admissions and IES have worked to establish relationships with high schools and advising centers across the world, showcasing UM’s dynamic campus and curriculum. They have also created and disseminated a new international student brochure, Discover Your Maryland. The brochure promotes UM’s reputation as one of the top universities serving overseas students.

Faculty, staff and students are vital in helping to reach out to talented students from all over the world. If you would like to assist with international outreach efforts, contact Min Thu Myo, Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions, at (301) 314-8365 or mmyo@umd.edu. If you have questions about the international application process, contact Barbara Varsa at (301) 314-7745 or bvarsa@umd.edu.

If you or a student you know is interested in enrolling at Maryland as an international student, please visit www.admissions.umd.edu or www.international.umd.edu/ies for more about the process. Information for high school counselors and college advisors is also available on the admissions website.
Kevin Klose, President Emeritus of National Public Radio, has been appointed Dean of the University of Maryland’s Philip Merrill College of Journalism, effective April 13, 2009.

“The University of Maryland is excited to welcome Kevin Klose as Dean of the Philip Merrill College of Journalism,” said University of Maryland President C.D. (Dan) Mote, Jr. “Kevin brings to us the perfect blend of seasoned journalism, highest integrity, a global perspective, and a passion for building institutions. He’s a builder. His record foretells that he is a perfect fit for the university’s strategic intent to lift its colleges by leveraging assets through partnerships. Kevin’s vision will guide us in educating the next generation of journalists, as well as in redefining journalism.”

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- UM President C.D. Mote Jr.

Kevin Klose is an internationally respected journalist, broadcast executive, author and lecturer. He most recently served as President of National Public Radio, Inc., a member of its corporate Board of Directors, and a Trustee of the NPR Foundation. He has built a leadership career that spans local and national news reporting and editing, foreign correspondence, and service as president/CEO of three separate international news organizations.

During his tenure at NPR, the news and cultural radio service was transformed into America’s premier non-profit provider of fact-based, contextual journalism for radio, the Internet, mobile phone, and satellite delivery systems. NPR’s national radio audience doubled from 13 million weekly listeners in 1998 to 26 million weekly listeners today, a growth rate unmatched by any U.S. broadcast or cable network. More than 10 million segments are downloaded monthly from NPR’s innovative public radio podcast portal.

“In his decade with NPR, Kevin came to embody the passion for excellence and dedication to quality that is NPR,” said NPR CEO and President Vivian Schiller. “Under his leadership, NPR established 9 foreign bureaus, earned journalism’s top awards, including 15 Peabodys and 11 DuPont awards, opened NPR’s West Coast Production Center, and welcomed the $235 million bequest from the late Joan B. Kroc that has helped secure our long-term future. We thank him for his years of service and wish him well in his new role at the University of Maryland.”

A former associate director of the U.S. Information Agency, Klose has been a leader in profit and nonprofit news organizations. Prior to NPR, Klose’s career in journalism includes more than two decades as a reporter and editor at The Washington Post and leadership positions at U.S. Government-funded civilian broadcast services in the post-Cold War era.

“It is a great honor to serve as dean of the Merrill College of Journalism,” said Klose. “News media everywhere are in tumultuous transition from long-established formats and business models. We will use this opportunity to ensure the future of reliable, trustworthy, independent journalism we can use in our everyday lives. We will explore new formats and delivery platforms to prepare the next generation of journalists for the digital world rising around us. And, we will concentrate on the immutable ethical standards of gathering and reporting reliable, credible, contextual news. We will envision how the new technology can be used to strengthen and protect the freedom and veracity of information.”

By Millree Williams, Senior Director of Public Affairs Strategy in University Communications/Marketing
Armed with travel gear, maps, and a Portuguese dictionary, UM Professor Dr. Nathan Hultman and his research associates set off into the heart of Brazil’s sugar producing São Paulo state this past summer to study the motivating factors behind local sugar refineries’ involvement with the carbon market. Now their research trip – which was funded in tandem by an OIP Travel Grant and the School of Public Policy – has led to a coveted National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.

“To be competitive for an NSF award for international research, it really helps to have some kind of pilot study to demonstrate the feasibility of the project. I think that is one potential application of the OIP Travel Grants,” says Hultman, Assistant Professor in the School of Public Policy. “It was really a key component to getting this award.”

The NSF grant funds a three-year comprehensive study into carbon market participation (or lack thereof) of Brazil and India’s sugar and cement industries. The carbon market is a policy that seeks to reduce pollution by providing an economic incentive for firms that achieve carbon reductions. By allowing companies that produce more pollution to trade credits with those that pollute less, emissions reductions can theoretically be achieved at lower overall costs to society.

To compile initial research, the team – consisting of Hultman, his colleague Simone Pulver, Assistant Professor at UC Santa Barbara, and UM graduate student Leticia Guimaraes — spent three weeks trekking around the Brazilian agricultural countryside in search of sugar cane factories. They spoke with firms that participated in or abstained from the Brazilian government’s carbon market program, to determine the motivating factors behind their engagement; they also spoke with local officials to garner a sense of how the carbon market appears across all sectors.

“People frequently assert that carbon markets will have an effect on motivating investment, but little study has been done as to how the markets influence behavior,” Hultman explains. “Very few people have actually gone out in a systematic, academic way to talk to people who’ve made decisions like these, to determine how big of an effect the market was in their decision.”

This study is only a portion of the overall piece of their research puzzle. They will eventually sample a total of 60 sugar firms and 60 cement firms in both Brazil and India. They chose these countries not only for their similarities in terms of engagement with democratization and international financial markets, but because of the integral role developing countries play in the prognosis of the world’s environmental systems.

“Yes, developed countries are important; but, in a way, even more important are decisions that are happening in quickly growing and large developing countries,” Hultman explains. “The U.S. per capita emissions are five times those of the developing world — so if everyone brings their levels up to the U.S. level, we’re in trouble.”

So what’s up next for the team? They’ll head back to Brazil this Summer for interviews with cement firms, and will also complete more phone interviews in both countries. They also hope to present their findings at UN climate conferences, and will host multi-country workshops on their research.
Environmentalism has truly gone global, and a number of UM professors from the Environmental Science & Technology Department have set off across the world to prove it. Whether studying the effects of “green” insulation in Italy, or renewable energy in Costa Rica, all are showing that environmentalism spans far beyond the borders of College Park. Now, these global environmentalists are bringing their research back to UM, to share with the campus community - and hopefully make a difference in the world.

**GREEN WALL INSULATION IN ITALY**

Vegetation-draped buildings are not only aesthetically pleasing, but they also are pleasing to the environment. Dr. David Tilley, an Associate Professor in ENST, is spending a sabbatical in Italy researching a number of topics, including the relationship between “green walls” and energy. He will analyze the effect green walls, roofs and vine canopies have on the surface and indoor temperatures of buildings, their effects on run-off water, and whether they can reduce the “urban heat island effect.” The results of experiments conducted by Dr. Tilley and his colleagues can be used to design future green buildings and estimate energy savings. The research team has also been conducting experiments on green walls in Maryland.

**RENEWABLE WASTE IN CARIBBEAN RIM**

Who says all waste is a waste? Dr. Stephanie Lansing, Assistant Professor of Ecological Engineering, doesn’t think so, and is working to use wastewater and anaerobic digestion technology to create a renewable source of energy. Her research couples wastewater with low-cost anaerobic digestion technology to provide the optimal environment for microorganisms to produce methane. In turn, the captured methane becomes a source of renewable energy, creates liquid fertilizer, and sharply reduces wastewater pollution. She is currently working on projects in Costa Rica and Haiti—both use local waste products, like cooking grease and sugar cane remnants, to produce methane. The energy harnessed in Haiti will be used to cook 3,000 daily meals, at a savings of over $1,000 a month.

**MOSQUITO RESEARCH IN NEW ZEALAND**

Swats and slaps often cannot protect against painful – and sometimes dangerous – mosquito bites. But Dr. Paul Leisnham may have discovered a trigger for why mosquitoes spread in the first place. This ENST Assistant Professor has collaborated with New Zealand researchers to link land use and climate change to the spread of invasive mosquitoes. The results? Disturbed wetlands appear to breed significantly more mosquitoes, which in turn travel to neighboring urban areas. He is now excited to collaborate with his UM colleagues, to further analyze the relationship between environmental changes and the spread of mosquito-borne diseases.

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES AROUND THE WORLD BY VISITING: WWW.ENST.UMD.EDU**
A recent survey by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) – a U.S. Department of Homeland Security initiative based at the University of Maryland – and WorldPublicOpinion.org shows a vast majority of predominately Muslim countries continue to renounce terrorism as a means of accomplishing political goals. However, results do indicate approval of al Qaeda’s goal of driving U.S. military forces from Muslim countries. The study, which surveyed populations in nearly 10 countries, raises questions about continued U.S. military presence in the Middle East.

“The US faces a conundrum. U.S. efforts to fight terrorism with an expanded military presence in Muslim countries appear to have elicited a backlash and to have bred some sympathy for al Qaeda, even as most reject its terrorist methods,” says Steven Kull, Director of WorldPublicOpinion.org. More information can be found at: http://www.start.umd.edu/start/media/start_in_the_news/

The benefits of study abroad experiences are numerous – but can they actually promote conflict resolution? Dr. David Bachner, a researcher and Scholar-in-Residence in the International Communication program at American University, recently visited UM to discuss the likelihood that overseas experiences play such a role in peacekeeping.

During his talk, “Conflict Reduction, Study Abroad, and International Youth Exchange: Some Research Findings and Their Implications,” Bachner highlighted a number of studies that have tried to quantify the macro-level effects of study abroad – the “bigger picture” of its impacts on economies, politics, and other factors. Ultimately, he says, analyzing the relationship between study abroad and reduced conflict is difficult without analyzing what is done in later life. Study abroad alumni’s involvement in civic engagement, philanthropy, volunteerism, and other peacekeeping methods may imply an intercultural program’s effects on conflict resolution.

An important component, says Bachner, is to prepare students for positive intercultural contact, both prior to departure and while in-country. A program must be initially structured to emphasize cooperation, respect for the host-culture, and common goals. Students who are prepared for positive intercultural interaction will fare better, have an increased engagement, and be more likely to return with a strong motivation to be helpful in conflict reduction.

Before departure, it is also vital to dispel any prejudicial stereotypes that may lead to anxiety or hostility. Regular meetings with study abroad students can be invaluable in moving students away from negative “stereotyping” towards more neutral “generalization.”

Although Bachner acknowledges there is much research yet to be completed, he feels the likelihood is great that study abroad plays a role in conflict reduction. And it is the programs that proactively set expectations for conflict reduction and positive intercultural engagement that yield a commitment to internationalism, and tolerance of other cultures and ideals.

Dr. Bachner’s lecture was sponsored by the College of Education; the Initiative on Education for Peace, Cooperation and Development; the Bahá’í Chair on World Peace; and the Office of International Programs.
Former U.S. Diplomat Discusses Africa & its Future

An overflow crowd gathered in early February to hear Constance Berry Newman discuss, “U.S.–Africa Relations: Current Challenges, Future Solutions,” the latest installment in the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership's ongoing “Academy Talks Speaker Series.” Ms. Newman has had a distinguished career of over 40 years in public service, including an appointment as the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, where she played a central role in U.S.–African policy. Sec. Newman is now Special Counsel for African Affairs at the Carmen Group, where she has worked to build partnerships between African governments, non-governmental organizations and multi-national corporations.

At the outset of her remarks, which focused on the 48 countries that make up Subsaharan Africa, Sec. Newman posed a question to her audience: “Where, on a spectrum from ‘dim’ to ‘bright’ should we place Africa’s prospects for the future?” In developing an answer, she noted a number of myths that impede Americans’ understanding of Africa, and thus their willingness and ability to work with African nations, institutions, and peoples. These myths arise in particular from the mainstream media’s philosophy that “Good news is no news;” consequently, news reports primarily emphasize Africa's human and natural disasters. The common (mis)perception of Africa is, therefore, of a resource-poor continent of religious and ethnic conflict, beset by corruption, poverty and afflicted by AIDS. Sec. Newman vigorously refuted these stereotypes using a variety of facts and figures, pointing instead to the wealth of Africa’s natural resources, industries, and the talents of its peoples.

In Africa, as in other locations across the world, many problems are rooted in struggles over wealth and power. The solutions to these problems, Sec. Newman says, are found in the strengthening of the institutions of civil society. She noted widespread—but underreported—progress in many of the Subsaharan countries, and suggested that the growing confidence and influence of regional organizations reflect a broad embrace of principles of democracy, accountability, and the development of local, African models for their implementation. Likewise, economic trends are encouraging, with the vast majority of Subsaharan African countries experiencing modest but sustained growth over the past decade.

In terms of Africa’s future, Sec. Newman sees agriculture as key to maintaining economic development, since 65% of Subsaharan Africans still live in rural settings. African agricultural exports, however, face a major hurdle in the form of subsidies offered to local sources against which they must compete. Additionally, Sec. Newman stressed the importance of a new generation of African leadership dedicated to transparency and accountability, and the world’s treatment of that leadership as equals. She concluded with a note of caution about the Obama administration’s commitment to Africa, expressing the concern that Africans’ expectations were likely to be disappointed, given the dire fiscal and political constraints that the current economic situation places on the new president.

By Joseph Scholten, OIP

Provost’s Conversation Series Features Talk on Darfur Genocide

Thousands upon thousands murdered. Millions more driven from their homes. In war-torn Darfur, the future may seem bleak. But many human rights activists around the world—like Constance Berry Newman—tirelessly continue to work towards peace and freedom for the Sudanese.

Humanitarian and author John Prendergast visited the University of Maryland on Wednesday, April 23, at 7 p.m. in the Hoff Theater of The Stamp to give his talk, "Stopping Genocide in Darfur: What You Can Do." This is the final installment of the Provost’s Conversations series, sponsored by Nariman Farvardin.

Prendergast has worked on crises in Africa for more than 20 years, and currently serves as the Senior Advisor of the International Crisis Group. He is also the co-chair of the Enough Project, which was founded in 2006 to work with individuals and policy-makers to promote peace and help end genocide and crimes against humanity. Mr. Prendergast also authored the recent publication, _Not on Our Watch: The Mission to End Genocide in Darfur and Beyond._