

Planning for Knowledge Crossing Borders Kicks into High Gear

Junior nursing student Hailey Sherman traveled to the southern Indian state of Kerala as part of a Winter Session study abroad program led by Rachel Joseph and Marcia Welsh, assistant professors in the department of nursing. She observed Indian nursing students and their professors working to tackle the region's health issues, which include malnutrition and infectious diseases.

"The trip changed my life," says Sherman. "I'm always going to remember the experiences I had and the people I met, but most importantly, I'm going to try to implement what I learned into my nursing practice. Everyone comes from different backgrounds and cultures, but everyone is equal and deserves equal rights."

Sherman will talk about what she learned in India during a presentation at the 4th Knowledge Crossing Borders (KCB) conference, to be held May 31-June 3 on the campus of WCU. Co-sponsored by West Chester University and Universidad Nacional in Heredia, Costa Rica, the conference is designed to share research and best practices in higher education worldwide. It was last held in Costa Rica in October 2014.

Sherman is one of the 60 presenters or co-presenters whose proposals were accepted by WCU's KCB conference planning committee. In all, 26 proposals were accepted. Additionally, Universidad Nacional is currently in the process of reviewing 40 proposals. Proposals have been submitted from authors in 11 countries, including Mexico, Italy, Ireland, Ecuador, The Bahamas, and Kenya.

"We received excellent proposals from a wide range of topic areas this year," says Linda Stevenson, a professor of political science and co-chair of the KCB planning committee at WCU. "I was pleased to see a number of students proposals, submitted in conjunction with, or under the supervision of, a faculty mentor, as well several staff proposals. The conference promises to be a week of thought-provoking presentations and conversations."

The major themes of this year's conference are:

Cultural Immersion Experiences and Learning Outcomes

Our Physical World: Sustainability and the Environment

International Business and Entrepreneurial Activities

Arts, Humanism and Culture

Health, Well-Being, and Quality of Life

The keynote speaker is the Honorable Pedro A. Cortés, secretary of state for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He previously served as secretary of the Commonwealth from 2003 to 2010. At that time Cortés was the first confirmed Latino Cabinet member and the longest serving secretary of state in Pennsylvania history.

In addition to the conference proceedings, there will be a Cultural Day on June 3. Participants will travel to Philadelphia for a private tour of the city's Mural Arts Program, visit the State System's center city site, enjoy free time for sightseeing and conclude with a group dinner.

For more info about Knowledge Crossing Borders, and to register, go to:
<http://www.wcupa.edu/knowledgeCrossingBorders/default.aspx>.