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University Relations

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**STELLAR introduces international students to campus, community, and Minnesota**

*Summary: STELLAR is a holistic approach to preparing for attending college in an English speaking country.*

(August 16, 2011)-The University of Minnesota, Morris hosted its inaugural Summer Transition for English Language and Liberal Arts Readiness (STELLAR) program during summer 2011. STELLAR is designed to provide international students with a holistic approach to attending college in an English speaking country. A comprehensive, living and learning program, the three-credit course seeks to improve students' English skills to introduce students to American campus life and academic culture to help students gain a better understanding of a liberal arts education and to familiarize students with the campus, the community of Morris, and the state of Minnesota.

STELLAR classes in environmental studies, studio art, history, and communications, media, and rhetoric, taught by Nancy Pederson and Matthew Zook complemented by "real-world" activities that help international students "live" the language, including excursions with academic focuses. Faculty members Margaret Kuchenreuther, Michael Eble, Stephen Gross, and Barbara Burke served as consultants.

This year's STELLAR students learned about the Minnesota prairie. They visited Minneapolis where they attended a play and a concert, and visited the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Walker Art Museum. During "history week," they learned about American history, including American Indian history and culture. They visited the Stevens County Historical Society and learned about the campus's history as an American Indian boarding school. During the final week, the students were taught strategies for good public speaking, skills that will serve them well as Morris students. As a service-learning component of STELLAR, the students taught area elementary students about their home countries. They also traveled to Duluth to learn more about Minnesota history and to attend a Pow wow.

[STELLAR](#) is a program of the [Office of Equity, Diversity and Intercultural Programs](#), dedicated to working collaboratively with campus and community partners to meet the needs of students, foster inclusive diversity, and promote intercultural competence. EDI strives to ensure a supportive environment for the students by providing academic, social, and cultural support services and programs. The programs of EDI provide an access point for students to engage as global citizens in the areas of leadership, civic engagement, and social justice.

Enjoy a [slideshow](#) of STELLAR activities.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at [morris.umn.edu](http://morris.umn.edu) or call 888-866-3382.