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Molly Kuether '08 to study in Costa Rica and maybe India...again

Summary: As an intern in the UMM Center for International Program, Kuether shares her love of study abroad with other UMM students.

(March 8, 2007)-There is no doubt where Molly Kuether '08, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, contracted the desire to travel—family. Visiting a military service uncle and a professional opera singer uncle in Europe has taken her to England, Ireland, Switzerland, France, and Germany. In January 2006, she and 20 other UMMers studied in India with Pareena Lawrence, associate professor of economics. During summer session 2007, she will study in Costa Rica. And her list of places in which to travel and learn—in Africa and South America—grows.

For five weeks this summer, Kuether will study Tropical Ecology and Contemporary Latin American Literature in Costa Rica. Both will “count” towards graduation and majors in Latin American area studies, political science with an emphasis in international relations, and a Spanish minor. She knows there will be challenges, but her trip to India to study globalization—or, in some cases, the lack thereof—has prepared her.

“India was amazing,” reflects Kuether. “Everyone was so open and so giving. No emphasis on material goods because so many had so little. It makes you appreciate what you have, and makes you consider the value we put on material things. I came to really appreciate basics like water and electricity. We take so much for granted.”

As a student intern for the Center for International Programs, Kuether “loves helping people decide where to study.” Her personal stories, even the lack of electricity and the “shock” of Indian toilets, help other students imagine learning about others and learning about themselves in far away places.

And while Kuether appropriately discloses the difficult parts, she also shares favorite memories, like the colors of brilliant saris and brightly painted homes contrasting against unpaved dirt roads. She captures the people’s vibrancy. Or they capture her. India is back on Kuether’s short list, a return trip with Lawrence in 2008.

Kuether (center of circle) and fellow UMMers at a school in India

Kuether's sari fitting

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