

Donor Showcase

Postcards from Germany

No one loves getting postcards more than DeVere and Zita Sturm, who receive 8 to 10 postcards each year from students who are studying abroad in Germany.

DeVere and Zita had planned to create an endowment, but were unsure how it could best be used. While three of their four children were attending the University of Michigan (2 of whom received internships in Germany), DeVere and Zita realized the value of a program that gives students the opportunity to work or study abroad. After seeing the effect that traveling abroad had on their own children, it was clear to them that their endowment should provide the opportunity to students to travel or study in Germany, thus uniting the Sturms' German heritage with their interest in the University of Michigan.

Since 2002, the Sturm Family Endowment has helped as many as 20 students to study or work abroad each year. Students travel to Berlin, Zurich, Freiburg, and many other German cities. For most, it is their first experience in a foreign culture, and they discover their untapped abilities and strengths. Many students describe a new awareness and a clearer focus in their studies and lives; the Sturms receive satisfaction knowing that these students' lives are enriched by the experience of foreign travel and culture.



DeVere and Zita Sturm look forward to their own adventures in retirement and, of course, postcards from Germany.

Following are excerpts from what some students have said about their experiences abroad made possible by the Sturm Family Endowment:



"The trip did expand my mindset and it helped me become more independent. Studying abroad should be mandatory at U of M because of how amazing an experience it is." –Garrett Lynam

"...I am now doing everything I can to do my master's abroad, in Zurich and definitely in German, and I know that I must at some point live in a German speaking country! Further the Fulbright proposal has really been a stepping stone in my architectural pursuits as well. The train of thought and theory that led me into writing my proposal has continued to influence my work quite strongly. In fact I think that I have really found the "thesis" that I want to dedicate my future practice to. All in all it was quite a successful trip..." –Hans Papke

"...the best best best part of Goethe Institut is the people you meet and the cultures you learn about and interact with. I made some of the best friends of my life, and soon I will be visiting my Hungarian friend who lives just outside of Budapest." – Abbey Morris

To read more about the Sturm Family Endowment, please visit our website at www.lsa.umich.edu/german/alums/donate and click on "Existing Funds and Endowments"

The Sturms were also featured in *Leaders & Best* (Spring 2005). The article can be read online at www.giving.umich.edu/leadersbest/spring2005/sturm.html