

## “The Field Experience Edition”

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# Director's Letter: Program Evolution



Greetings, and welcome to the spring edition of Crossroads. As we prepare for a relaxing summer, let us take a look at the past year, during which PitE has undergone some exciting changes. You will also find that this newsletter is filled with some insightful information from those who know the program all too well- the students!

In the past, the Program in the Environment focused on developing an interdisciplinary curriculum, spanning the humanities to natural sciences, to enhance students' understanding of the complexity of environmental programs. Today, the Program continues to offer an array of courses, but we have expanded the scope of the curriculum to include additional specialized courses, in which students examine environmental issues through the lenses of multiple disciplines, such as policy, health, education, and economics. By collaborating with schools and colleges beyond LS&A, we are able to offer additional advanced courses that students can use for their three

course specialization. This specialized understanding of an environmental topic increases the student's marketability in the eyes of graduate school programs and employers alike, in a world where an education in environmental issues is becoming more and more mainstream.

PitE students are also exploring opportunities which reinforce their specialization by taking their studies beyond the classroom, and often times, beyond our national borders. An increasing number of students are choosing to study abroad or attend residential field programs, in order to fulfill the field experience requirement. This immersion experience requires students to integrate skills learned and develop their understanding of environmental issues by actively working to solve an issue; practicing theory in a real world setting.

As the Program continues to expand, so do the possibilities available to students to study abroad or conduct research through field stations. Through contributions of alumni and friends, as well as previous awards, PitE is able to help defray some costs for our students as they complete their field experience requirement. The Program is fortunate to have a generous young alumni base, who make contributions, even early on in their careers.

The contribution of the faculty and staff of the Program was yet again recognized when PitE was recently awarded the Departmental Award for Contributions to the Undergraduate Initiative, which recognizes "reinvigoration of undergraduate education" by a unit within The College of Literature, Sciences and the Arts. The Program will put the \$25,000 award amount towards the Program's Endowment Fund, which serves as the main contribution to scholarships that we award to students.

We trust that you will enjoy this edition of "Crossroads," as we feature the field experiences of our current and former students.

Respectfully,

Robert M. Owen

## A closer look at the Field Experience Requirement

As part of the PitE curriculum, concentrators are required (while minors have the option) to spend time off campus learning about a particular environmental issue. Through this immersion experience, students put theory into practice, as they work with other members of a community, which can consist of fellow students, researchers, faculty members, and other community members, to explore aspects of an environmental issue and their possible solutions.

Students have the option to complete the field experience requirement by one of three ways: participation in a residential field course; completion of an environmental

internship; participation in a study abroad course that focuses on the environment. A majority of our students complete a residential field course by taking classes at either the University's Biological Station or Geological Field Station, each located in Pellston, MI and Jackson Hole, WY, respectively.

In this edition of Crossroads, we feature past, present and future internship and study abroad opportunities of our students. So kick back and enjoy your literary travel!



Sarah Gilmore and Student



## ProPeru Internship 2008

Gianna Fazioli

**P**roWorld Service Corps is an International NGO that has developmental programs in Peru, Mexico, Belize, India, Thailand, and Ghana. Last summer, I worked on a project where I built stoves in Peruvian's homes to support wood conservation as well as eliminate indoor air pollution. The cleaner burning stoves project gives the interns the ability to make a difference in the environment as well as the health of people throughout rural Peru. *This project taught me so much by being in the field and learning about these very real and pertinent issues.* As PitE students we are given an incredible opportunity to work in the "field", whether it is in our backyard or across the globe. They have many environmental projects that you can intern on. Some of these include: Conservation & Environmental Protection, Environmental Education, Sustainable Agriculture, Clean burning stove project, Ecotourism. As well as interning, you are required to take one-on-one spanish classes that enhanced my spanish skills tremendously.

Please feel free to contact ProWorld or myself for more information at:  
<http://www.myproworld.org/>  
[giannfaz@umich.edu](mailto:giannfaz@umich.edu) ■

## Udall Scholarship

PitE is pleased to have three of its students representing the University of Michigan in the Morris K. Udall Scholarship competition. A faculty committee advanced juniors **Christine Doman** and **Sarah Pendergast** to the national selection process. Christine, double concentrating in Geological Sciences, is a PitE Honors student, and member of the newly established Student Advisory Committee. Sarah, working towards her joint degree with the Ford School of Public Policy, is currently participating in the Michigan in Washington Semester Program. The scholarship is sponsored by the Udall Foundation, which Congress created in 1992 to honor the work of Senator Udall. Each year it identifies 80 U.S. college students as scholarship winners. They are chosen based on their promise as leaders in either the environmental field or the area of Native American health care. Winners receive a \$5,000 award and an all-expenses-paid, 5-day trip to Tucson, Arizona. PitE alumna **Brittany Fox** (B.A. '07), was the last UM Udall Scholarship winner in 2005.

## Environmental Education in Adrian, MI

Sarah Gilmore

**“D**o I know what I want to do with my future degree?” Sound familiar? That is how I felt when I arrived at Michigan, aimlessly wandering through courses and potential majors until I found Program in the Environment (PitE) or should I more accurately say Environ 382: Environmental Education for Sustainable Development. With my penchant for teaching, Dr. Michaela Zint really hooked me into environmental education and seeking out an internship to provide that experience.

That opportunity is at the Stubnitz Environmental Education Center (SEEC) in Adrian, MI where I am interning this spring during the field trip season. This internship allows me the opportunity to lead groups of elementary kids through an activity where they dress up like beavers or gather acorns like squirrels in the

“Squirrelympics” to learn about adaptations. In addition, I will to lead them on trail hikes to interpret nature that surrounds us. This opportunity fulfills the field experience component of the major while I get to play and learn with kids 5 days a week! What could be better?

I am very much looking forward to having 30+ kids come through the doors of SEEC everyday, anxious to learn in a new setting. **One of the best parts of environmental education is that the kids can readily apply what they have learned because it is happening all around them everyday and everywhere!** For instance, they see squirrels everyday and after the “Squirelympics” activity, they will be able to identify adaptations of that animal! I hope to engage kids in the environment to make them empathize and experience nature positively to keep them curious about the outdoors. Maybe even teach their friends a thing or two from what they learned from their day at SEEC! It's a lofty goal for a day's work, but only in PitE could you be able to learn with kids and get credit for it. Go Blue! ■

# Study Abroad

**S**tudying abroad is another option for completing the field experience requirement, which many of our students undertake. Despite the often high tuition and transportation cost, and being off campus for a semester, students often seek

## Environmental Internships 'Down Under'

Will Ludlow

**T**his past summer I worked in Sydney, Australia for PricewaterhouseCoopers and Ogilvy Public Relations on two separate six-week sustainability internships. This opportunity to work for two different firms provided an outstanding first-hand, holistic overview of the market for sustainable business in Australia. The work I engaged in was useful primarily because it gave me a taste of the tremendous environmental work opportunities that could become available in the U.S. in coming years, if federally enforced emissions regulations are approved. Likewise, this experience opened

my eyes to some of the dramatic changes towards more sustainable everyday living that would likely be realized by all Americans, again, if such regulations were approved.

Australia's impending Emissions Trading Scheme, which is set to launch in 2010, will cap emissions allowances and, thus, transform the way every Australian business goes about its day-to-day activities. In turn, Australian companies are looking to firms like PWC to help transform their business plans to suit economically feasible emissions reductions. Ogilvy PR, on the other hand, maintains their position in the sustainable business market by providing site- and worker-evaluations in order to suggest emissions reducing technologies and educate workers in waste, water and energy reducing methods in their daily tasks.

### What's New with PitE?

Original Program Coordinator Alicia Farmer has bid the Program a fond farewell. Through her guidance and thoughtful insight, Alicia has helped PitE students capitalize on educational and professional opportunities. We thank Alicia for her contributions, and wish her well in her new position.

Succeeding Alicia as Program Coordinator is PitE Alumna, Kimberly Smith (B.A.'06).

PitE Alumna Kat Superfisky (B.A. '07) has joined the ranks as the Interim Concentration Advisor.

Winter '09 has seen the addition of three peer advisors, who provide guidance to fellow students by navigating the program requirements and course planning.

The PitE Student Advisory Committee was formed during the winter term. This student group will serve as the link between staff, faculty and students by hosting and promoting PitE events.

Fall 2008 brought the creation of a new website. Be sure to check it out! <http://lsa.umich.edu/pite>

educational opportunities abroad to provide perspective to their studies, especially those students with an interest in global environmental issues.

Two of the most popular study abroad programs are located in New Zealand and Costa Rica. During the 15-week EcoQuest Program in New Zealand, students work closely with faculty, policy makers, planners and mentors to learn about the natural and anthropogenic (human) processes that have shaped the natural environment of the country. Through numerous field trips and classes, students' problem-solving and field skills are put to use to gain a hands-on

understanding of environmental issues, which span socio-economic, cultural, and natural science disciplines, which must be addressed in order to achieve sustainable development.

Participation in The Institute for Central American Development Studies (commonly known as ICADS) allows student to develop their research skills and gain a greater understanding of requirements for sustainability. Focus of study spans forest ecology and soil science, to economics and anthropology. Students travel to biologically and culturally rich regions of the Costa Rica. ■

During my time at PWC, I focused on doing web-based research of Fortune 500 companies and the Australian Stock Exchange's Top 100 companies who marketed 'green' products. This research culminated with the release of a public document outlining the current direction of the corporate sustainability market in Australia. At Ogilvy, I handled a wide variety of more hands-on tasks. For example, I was put in charge of writing and organizing one edition of Ogilvy's bimonthly eco-newsletter, which is sent out to clients. Most of my time, however, was focused on clients' site-audits, which ranged from factories to more formal office settings. These site visits were especially intriguing, because I was able to get an exclusive 'backstage' look at how a cap and trade system can affect everyday activities for the workers and businesses that drive a nation's economy.

As a result of having completed these two internships, I now feel much more prepared for entering the career field after college. I learned how to act as a professional in two very different professional office settings. I discovered a new way of looking at both sustainability and economics, from a foreign viewpoint. And most importantly, I learned that careers in sustainability are self-rewarding and reflect a very relaxed working environment in which people enjoy working for a cause we can all believe in.

For further question or comment, please contact Will Ludlow.  
whludlow@umich.edu  
(616) 446-0361

## Study Abroad Stats for 2008-09:

Number of PitE students who are studying abroad\*: 13  
Number of PitE students participating in EcoQuest (New Zealand): 4  
Number of PitE students participating in ICADS (Costa Rica): 5

*\*For students participating in programs sponsored by the UM Office of International Programs.*

*This is a photo [Will Ludlow] took from the Sydney Harbour during [his] first week in Australia.*

# Alumni Feature: Conservation in Hawaii

## Anne Rosinski, PitE '08

**D**uring our senior year at Michigan, *Sarah Mussoline*, *Lindsey MacDonald*, and I received the same email asking PitE students if they wanted to come to Hawaii and save sea turtles. It turned out that we all had the same reaction, which was basically “Umm, YES!” and less than a year later, the three of us were on an isolated Hawaiian beach waiting to ensure a safe emergence for hundreds of honu’ea (hawksbill sea turtle) hatchlings at two in the morning. As members of the *Hawaii Hawksbill Turtle Recovery Project*, we were

responsible for monitoring nesting and hatchling activity at beaches within and around *Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island of Hawaii*. We worked mostly at night five days a week stationed at any one of four field sites taking data on the turtles and performing invasive species control. It was great having our smaller PitE alumni team during this time because it allowed us to connect what we were experiencing in Hawaii to everything we had learned at Michigan. Besides getting to hike more than I ever have in my entire life, sleep every night under the stars, form a backcountry

**A**fter a couple year hiatus, *Brewing Hope at the University of Michigan* is in the early stages of its triumphant return.

## Brewing Hope Internship in Ann Arbor, MI

Matt Gacioch

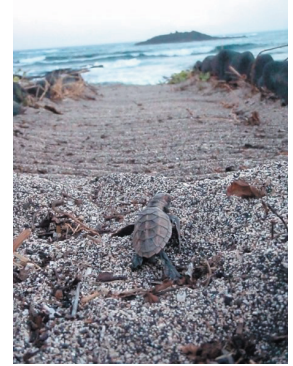
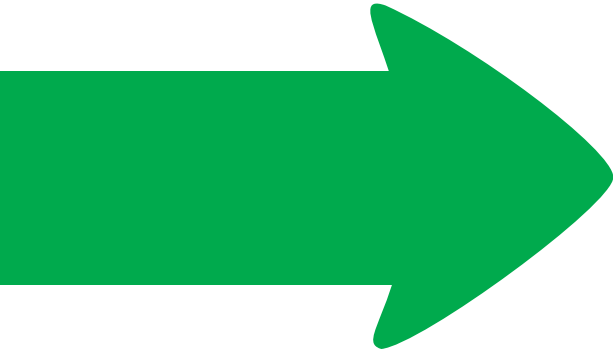
This semester, a group of other students and I have begun to regenerate the program to bring fair trade, organically shade-grown coffee from the YachilCo-op in Santa Catarina, Chiapas, Mexico to Ann Arbor. This organization, which incorporates aspects of marketing, financial organization, and community outreach, is meant to familiarize consumers with a socially and environmentally responsible (and high quality) alternative to conventional coffee.

Our vision is to establish the support of our peers, to build momentum in the coming years to continue expanding *Brewing Hope*, and to spread knowledge about the many benefits of fairly traded products. We try to accomplish this task through a variety of

mechanisms: contacting local businesses to carry the product, selling *Brewing Hope* coffee to members of the University community, and simultaneously promoting and fundraising at off-campus events (e.g. movie screenings and benefit concerts).

To this point, we have experienced mixed success. While many of the local businesses we contacted to start carrying *Brewing Hope* have initially been hesitant or unwilling to take on the product, on-campus coffee sales to students, faculty, and staff are consistently expanding. These funds help support our events around campus as well as our *Music for Chiapas* program. As a growing movement, *Brewing Hope* has been a unique opportunity to become active in initiating positive change both locally and globally. ■





band, witness a nesting momma turtle, and many 2-inch hatchlings wiggle their way to the ocean, I was excited to be involved in a marine management project in action. I took away many lessons from this experience concerning the achievements possible through this type of management and also the constant challenges it faces.

When the Turtle Project ended, I was determined to stay in Hawaii to continue learning about marine resource management projects and begin to contribute to the scientific community. I am currently working for a non-profit in **Honolulu called Reef Watch Waikiki** helping to develop a community-based human impact monitoring program. My time with this organization has given me amazing opportunities to integrate my input directly into our outreach and volunteer programs. I have found that the environmental community in Hawaii is much like a big ohana (family) in the sense that once you become a part of it, the community is very open and eager for new ideas and contributions. I recently learned that my senior thesis was accepted at the **First International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas on Maui** later this month. This will be my chance to present what I found in my undergraduate thesis to not only marine resource managers here in Hawaii, but around the world. It is my hope that this venue for communication among marine mammal scientists and managers will lead to future collaborations and a more holistic view of **what we can do to help conserve the world's endangered species.**

My journey pursuing environmental work in Hawaii first started with the inspiration gleaned from the four years I spent with my ohana in the Program in the Environment.

I would encourage every PitE student to gain experiences that take lessons learned in the classroom, and bring them to life. Whether it was through a field class, a semester at the Biostation, or a senior thesis, I personally felt that these were the experiences that helped me bring everything together, and gave me ideas about what I wanted to do once I graduated. I am excited to be representing PitE at the upcoming international conference. As I think back to what I was doing at Michigan this time last year, I hope this might serve as a little bit of a needed boost for all those students writing theses this year and looking forward to graduation this spring!

Contact Information:  
Hawaii Hawksbill Turtle Recovery Project  
Will Seitz – Project Director  
808-985-6090  
[http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd\\_volunteer\\_opps.html](http://www.fpir.noaa.gov/PRD/prd_volunteer_opps.html)

Reef Watch Waikiki  
Jennifer Barrett – UH SeaGrant Extension Coordinator  
Reefmail@hawaii.edu ■

## Thank you.

PitE awards merit-based scholarships to its students to help defray the costs of field experiences. These scholarships would not be possible without the generous support of our donors. PitE would like to thank its current and past donors.

**I want to make a difference! Enclosed in my tax-deductable gift of:**

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*This form may be returned to: The Program in the Environment, 1120 USB, 204 Washtenaw Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2215*



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*Front cover photo: “U-M Students at the Grand Canyon;  
(from left) Lindsey McDonald, Matt Koski, Michelle Gomez  
and Rachel Okada.” Taken by Kat Superfisky*

*“(from left) Anne Rosinski, Sarah Mussoline, and Lindsey  
MacDonald at the summit of Mauna Loa on the Big Island of  
Hawaii. Three PitE grads on a 3-day, 43 mile backpacking  
trip on a break from work in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.”*

