

# Student Profile: Chelsea DiPaolo

The College of Arts and Sciences, University of Toledo

## Costa Rica: A Study Abroad Experience

Chelsea DiPaolo has caught the travel bug. This summer the graduating senior will embark on a year long mission trip with the interdenominational group, Adventures in Missions. The organization, a faith-based social justice group, will travel to Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. How did this dual major in Communication and Spanish become so adventurous? The spring semester in 2008 that she spent studying in Costa Rica had a lasting impact.

Chelsea has always been interested in travel. She had been a Spanish minor and wanted to learn more about the language and culture. After speaking with teachers, friends and UT's Study Abroad Office, she decided to spend the semester living with a host family in the Costa Rican city of Puntarenas. Living with a host family, as opposed to the option of living with other English speaking students in dorm style accommodations, was one of the most rewarding aspects of the experience. Not only was she comfortable and embraced by her host family

family as a welcome addition, but living immersed in the language improved her Spanish greatly.

With 40 other students from all over the world also spending the semester in Costa Rica, Chelsea made many new friends and also had the opportunity to take weekend trips throughout the country. Her courses in language, literature and culture were taught in Spanish and prompted Chelsea to upgrade Spanish from a minor to major, a perfect complement to her Communication major.

Chelsea came to the conclusion that travel would be a big

part of her future career plans. The experience has given her the ability to adapt to new situations, whether it be learning to salsa dance or investigating how she can use her education to benefit Teach for America upon her return next year. The liberal arts values of diversity and community outreach inform each new adventure she begins.

What advice does Chelsea have for students considering a study abroad experience? "Take a chance. When else would you ever have the opportunity to do this?"



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### *Special points of interest:*

- Studying Abroad and citizenship
- Changing your academic program
- Future plans



If you or an Arts and Sciences student you know has completed an internship, research project, service learning opportunity or study abroad semester and would like to be profiled for an upcoming newsletter, please contact:

Melanie Dusseau  
Academic Adviser  
The College of Arts and Sciences  
419-530-2671  
Melanie.dusseau@utoledo.edu