

Thinking Study Abroad is Not for You? **THINK AGAIN**

by Kamilah McGuire, Transfer Student, UC Irvine

The idea of attending college is intimidating, yet will be one of the most rewarding decisions of your life. After high school, I carelessly put my education on hold and started a family. I was left to raise a three-month and a one-year-old as a single mother. Being conscious of the fact that my lack of education would limit my opportunities for professional development, I enrolled at a local community college and began to embark on a challenging educational journey. During my first course my professor described his keys to succeeding in college. Sitting in the first three rows of the classroom, communicating with your professor via email and hour offices, and taking advantage of resources offered by the institution were tips I took away from his course. These tips helped me transfer to UC Irvine and explore educational opportunities I never thought were possible, like studying abroad.

Prior to deciding on whether or not to become an Anteater, I attended the Discover UCI workshop. The most compelling moment of the day was the discussion of studying abroad. The panel explained that students have the capability to live overseas for a specified amount time and earn units toward their major. I was intrigued by the idea of going beyond the traditional classroom setting and studying in a foreign country. As a public health policy major, I was introduced to The Bali Institute for Global Renewal Program. This institution offers universities the opportunity to custom design curriculum surrounding service learning programs while immersing students into the Balinese culture. During a workshop, I came to learn about the Benjamin Gilman Scholarship. I applied and was awarded \$5,000 dollars. This paid for three-quarters of the program.

Studying in Bali, Indonesia was an incredible experience. The five-week excursion was loaded with intellectual and action-packed adventures. It was extremely stimulating and allowed me to expand my critical thinking abilities. We worked with local non-governmental organizations, which broadened my perspective on various cultural and health care practices. Furthermore, I gained a new extended family, which expanded my network greater than I ever thought.

Every student should make it a point to travel abroad! Scholarships are available, so do not let finances be your excuse. It is a privilege that I am the first person in my family to study abroad. As an African-American, non-traditional transfer student, I have the opportunity to lead by example and tell others who may have thought their chances to take part in unique experiences had passed them by, that amazing opportunities still await them.

Top five tips for college success:

1. Visit Study Abroad Center
2. Develop an academic Study Abroad plan with a counselor
3. Research scholarship opportunities
4. Research foreign country/language
5. Apply! 📌



STUDY ABROAD

The act of a student pursuing educational opportunities in a country other than one's own. This can include primary, secondary and post-secondary students.

TRANSFER STUDENT

A student who enrolls in a college after having attended another college.