

expanding

STUDENT HORIZONS

Defiance College offers many exciting options for cultural experiences both locally and globally

by Kathy PUNCHES '96, Director of Public Relations and Marketing

Students at Defiance College are finding more and more opportunities to expand their horizons. Through its Imagine Initiatives, Defiance College is offering many new and exciting options for diverse cultural experiences and domestic and international travel.

These learning experiences transcend the classroom, and students are engaged in ways they've not previously known. President Mark Gordon notes that the Imagine Initiatives take the insight of

Harold and Helen McMaster and family, the founders of the pioneering McMaster School for Advancing Humanity, and combine it with long-standing Defiance traditions such as winter term "to create an even more expansive world of opportunities for our students."

Defiance College offers students the best of both worlds. Students are attracted to Defiance because of its small size, but many soon find themselves in cosmopolitan places across the continent. Through its cultural arts and humanities project, the College offers diverse cultural experiences via travel to places like Toronto, Chicago, New

York, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Detroit, and Cincinnati.

Many of these trips are already occurring, and some of them follow tradition such as the annual fall trip to Ontario for the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, an internationally recognized celebration of Shakespearean theater. Cultural trips during the 2010-11 academic year also included an opera and a performance of Alvin Ailey dance in Detroit, symphony performances of the Cleveland



Top right: Megan Puehler posed with Matt Lauer on the set of the "Today Show" during a DC trip to New York City. Above, business students (from left) Steven Switz, Josh Beaverson, Jordan Stinson, Michelle Schwab, and Charlene Williams visited sites in Cincinnati.

Orchestra in the world-acclaimed Severance Hall, a spring break trip to Manhattan which included a Broadway musical and a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a Civil Rights tour to Memphis, Birmingham, and Montgomery. A group of business students and faculty traveled to Cincinnati where they took a riverboat cruise on the Ohio River and visited the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Museum.

“These experiences truly open the eyes and minds of our students in some pretty incredible ways,” says President Gordon. Faculty members will submit proposals

for these and other trips including DC Edventures and DC Global. DC Edventures is a domestic travel initiative in which students will have an opportunity to travel domestically with faculty members for an enrichment experience related to the student’s major. This program retools the traditional winter term experience for the 21st Century.

DC Global, open to entering full-time freshmen who go on to successfully complete the full four-year program at Defiance College, provides funding to enable each student to have an international travel experience before he or she graduates.

Student travel experiences are expected to include opportunities such as trips designed by faculty in a student’s major, international service projects through the McMaster School for Advancing Humanity, travel with the Honors program or with a DC sports team, and scholarship support to help defray travel costs for a summer study abroad program.

“The possibilities are endless,” said President Gordon. “For example, imagine the ways that Defiance students will benefit from being able to conduct research in tropical countries, meeting with business leaders in different European capitals, seeing first-hand different countries’ approaches to education, law enforcement, or sport management, and much more. Our students can truly have a distinctive Defiance Resume which can help them to stand out in the job market and in applying to graduate school.”

Lynn Haller, a senior from Antwerp, Ohio, already knows firsthand the benefits gained from an international experience. She has traveled to Western Europe through the College’s Carolyn M. Small Honors Program. “I gained valuable skills traveling internationally and working as part of a team,” she said. “It helped prepare me for a career in the business world. I learned to adapt and interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, something that is discussed in class but has greater meaning when it’s experienced in real life.” ♦



On a 2011 honors trip to Greece, from left: Jordan Heiliger, Kirsten Frissora, Brittany Heaton, Courtney Vaughn, McMaster Dean Mary Ann Studer, Bryant Green, Brittany Coats and Thomas Studer.

The McMaster School welcomes some special guests

At the invitation of President Gordon, Ivan Gillett, ranger for the Programme for Belize, spent a week at Defiance College, meeting with DC students and faculty who would be traveling to Belize in December, and reuniting with students who worked with him on earlier Belize trips.

The Rio Bravo Conservation Management Area and surrounding communities in Belize have been the site of McMaster School projects for the past seven years. Gillett has been the school’s guide and partner during all of those trips, but this was his first visit to Defiance.

While in Defiance, Gillett also had the opportunity to meet with Helen McMaster and her daughter, Jeanine Dunn, who along with Harold McMaster and Jeanine’s brothers and sister provided the funding for creation of the McMaster School in 2002. The school serves as a focal point for teaching, service, scholarship and action to improve the human condition worldwide.

During a reception hosted by President Gordon, Helen McMaster was presented with a framed picture signed by current McMaster Scholar students.

