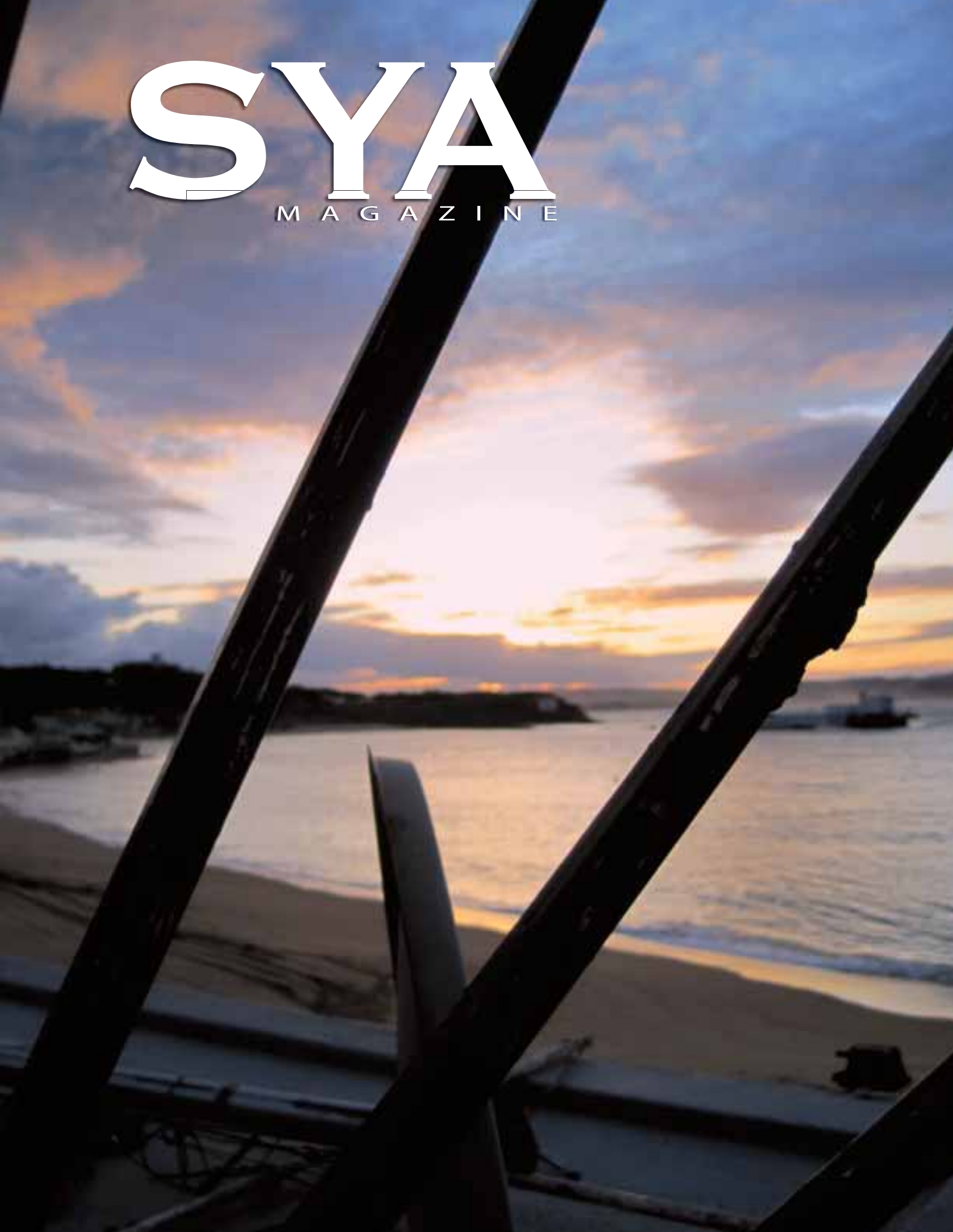


SYA

M A G A Z I N E





Trustees 2010-2011

Peter Esty FR'77F, ES'82P, IT'05RD,
VN'10RD, Chair

Woodruff W. Halsey II FR'81-'86RD FR'96P
FR'97P CN'99P FR'01P IT'04P
SYA President

Carlos Alvarez FR'00P

Natalia A. Bulgari ES'86

Paul Chapman
Head of School, Head-Royce School

Margaret Conklin FR'74

Margarita Curtis ES'95P

Stephen M. Foster ES'65

Bryan Garman

Head of School, Wilmington Friends School

William Gridley FR'75

Thomas E. Hassan

Principal, Phillips Exeter Academy

F. Lane Heard III CN'01P IT'06P

Jaye Morency FR'04P IT'06P

Bernie Noe, ES'06P

Head of School, Lakeside School

Diane Atwood Reilly FR'05P

Douglas Renfield-Miller FR'71 CN'01P
IT'05P ES'10P

Carolynn Rockafellow FR'77

Robert J. Schiller FR'69

Bruce Stewart

Spring 2010

President

W.W. Halsey II

Director of Development

Lynn Nathanson

Director of Communications

Cathleen Gable

Director of Alumni Relations

Susan McLean

Writers

Heather Millar

Stephen Morison Jr.

Design and Production

Crocker & Company

Published biannually

SYA Magazine chronicles the professional and personal lives of SYA alumni, faculty and staff, and provides current news from the home office and our schools in China, France, Italy, Spain and Vietnam. We appreciate receiving your news, photographs and suggestions for articles to broaden the scope of this publication.

Please send your contributions to:

School Year Abroad
439 South Union Street
Lawrence, MA 01843
fax to 978.725.6833

or e-mail to alumni@sya.org

Please direct comments about *SYA Magazine* to:
magazine@sya.org

©2010 Copyright. All rights reserved.

School Year Abroad does not and will not discriminate against any student participating in, or applicant for admission to, its program on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender, religion, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.



www.sya.org



Contents

2 Letter from the President

3 Home Office News

6 Campus News

18 Faculty Profile

22 Event Highlights

24 Alumni Profiles

29 Class Notes

51 Faculty News

ON THE COVER:

Cadaqués, a small town on the Costa Brava, north of Barcelona

By Luke Lorentzen ES'10 (Brunswick School)

Member Schools 2010–2011

(Asterisk indicates charter members of the consortium)

ALBUQUERQUE ACADEMY
Albuquerque, N.M.

BELMONT HILL SCHOOL
Belmont, Mass.

THE BISHOP'S SCHOOL
La Jolla, Calif.

THE BLAKE SCHOOL
Minneapolis, Minn.

THE BRANSON SCHOOL
Ross, Calif.

BROOKS SCHOOL
North Andover, Mass.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL OF NAPLES
Naples, Fla.

CULVER ACADEMIES
Culver, Ind.

DEERFIELD ACADEMY
Deerfield, Mass.

EPISCOPAL HIGH SCHOOL
Alexandria, Va.

GREENHILL SCHOOL
Addison, Texas

HARVARD-WESTLAKE SCHOOL
North Hollywood, Calif.

HEAD-ROYCE SCHOOL
Oakland, Calif.

THE HILL SCHOOL
Pottstown, Pa.

HOLLAND HALL
Tulsa, Okla.

THE HOTCHKISS SCHOOL
Lakeville, Conn.

ISADORE NEWMAN SCHOOL
New Orleans, La.

LAKE FOREST ACADEMY
Lake Forest, Ill.

LAKESIDE SCHOOL
Seattle, Wash.

THE LATIN SCHOOL OF CHICAGO
Chicago, Ill.

THE LOOMIS CHAFFEE SCHOOL
Windsor, Conn.

MERCERSBURG ACADEMY
Mercersburg, Pa.

MILTON ACADEMY
Milton, Mass.

NEWARK ACADEMY
Livingston, N.J.

NORFOLK ACADEMY
Norfolk, Va.

THE PEDDIE SCHOOL
Hightstown, N.J.

PHILLIPS ACADEMY*
Andover, Mass.

PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY*
Exeter, N.H.

PUNAHOU SCHOOL
Honolulu, Hawaii

SAINT MARY'S HALL
San Antonio, Texas

SAN FRANCISCO UNIV. HIGH SCHOOL
San Francisco, Calif.

SIDWELL FRIENDS SCHOOL
Washington, D.C.

ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL
Houston, Texas

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL*
Concord, N.H.

THE TAFT SCHOOL
Watertown, Conn.

THE THACHER SCHOOL
Ojai, Calif.

THE WESTERN RESERVE ACADEMY
Hudson, Ohio

THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS
Atlanta, Ga.

WILMINGTON FRIENDS SCHOOL
Wilmington, Del.



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by W. W. Halsey II



The Honorable Charles H. Rivkin FR'79, left, and Woody Halsey at the U.S. Embassy in France

It didn't take me long in my first year at SYA to realize how far off the mark my naïve assumptions about our students were. No, they were *not* all training to be language teachers like me! Most had no idea where they were headed, and the 10 to 20 who thought they did probably had 20 to 30 different career paths in mind.

Everyone wanted to master French, of course, but each had his or her own idea of what that might lead to. The traits students shared were a sense of adventure, a willingness to throw themselves into the unknown and a desire to adapt, observe, adjust and figure things out on their own.

Some 30 years later, those are still the threads that tie SYA students together, and every imaginable profession is represented among our more than 6,000 alumni. Engineers and artists; doctors and writers; museum curators and botanists; pilots and college professors; venture capitalists and intelligence agents; lawyers and nonprofit directors; bankers and antiques dealers; filmmakers and columnists; actors, restaurateurs and sommeliers . . . the roll call could go down the page, as could the list of countries where SYAers exercise their talent.

The point is that although the ability really to speak and write another language does set SYAers apart, it's not that specific skill that drives their career choices. Rather, it is the self-confidence they gained from achieving something difficult and the taste for trying new things in new places. They (you!) really are "at home in the world."

Of course, some of our alumni do use their language skills daily in their work. Sometimes it's a third language like Russian or Japanese that they learned after SYA; sometimes it's the language they learned with us. A very public example of someone in the latter category is the new U.S. ambassador to France, Charles Rivkin FR'79.

When I had the honor of meeting him recently in his office at the Embassy in Paris, Ambassador Rivkin was quick to credit SYA not only for giving him a fluency in French that astonishes his diplomatic counterparts, but also for teaching him what rigorous academic work felt like. The taste for hard work served him well through college and graduate school, then in the business career he pursued before being tapped for the diplomatic post by President Obama. The French he learned from M. Bierry and his host family was still there when he needed it. The Ambassador's skill will surely inspire the students of FR'11 when he visits Rennes in the fall. (See page 24.)

Some SYA alumni, I'm happy to report, do indeed teach the languages they learned at SYA. We know, because year after year their schools send us some of our best-prepared and most enthusiastic students!

It's also interesting to note that just as SYA's graduates head out to success across the full spectrum of careers, SYA's RDs and home office administrators come not just from teaching, but also from a wide variety of backgrounds that include business marketing, law, financial planning, the Peace Corps, nonprofit leadership and environmental work. On the next few pages you'll learn more about the four newest members of SYA's administrative team: three RDs for SYA in Asia and a Director of Admissions back in the home office.

With warm regards to all who read these lines and with the hope of seeing many of you either at the SYA Homecoming on July 22 at the JFK Library in Boston or at other events we'll schedule around the country.

SYA WELCOMES NEWLY-HIRED RESIDENT DIRECTORS TO CHINA, JAPAN AND VIETNAM

Unprecedented in SYA's 46-year history, three Resident Directors will take the helm of three schools in Asia this summer. Replacing Jeff Bissell in Beijing is Frances Fremont-Smith, and taking the reins from Peter Esty after a successful inaugural semester in Hanoi is Vu-duc Vuong. Already on the ground in Ichinomiya, Mika Fukutomi is working with host families and staff as they prepare for SYA Japan's class of 2011. After

attending a five-day training seminar in Beijing with Executive Director Nelson Chase and Director of Finance and Operations Steve Kirk, the executive staff is even more assured the most excellent selections have been made.

We warmly welcome Mika, Frances and Vuong to the SYA family!



"I speak the language of business. I speak the language of students. I speak the language of host families and the local community. I speak the language of educators. I speak the language of global education."

Selected from a diverse and esteemed group of well-qualified candidates, **Mika Fukutomi** will lead the charge as Resident Director for SYA's inaugural year in Ichinomiya, Japan. A native speaker of Japanese, Fukutomi is also fluent in English, having studied and lived for many years in the United States, and is conversant in Mandarin, Spanish and Italian.

She earned a bachelor's degree in international economics from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in 1987. There she studied Mandarin and spent a summer in the Georgetown Italian language and culture program in Florence, Italy. She went on to earn a law degree from the University of Hong Kong. She became a trainee solicitor and was admitted as Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Hong Kong and the Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales before the handover of Hong Kong back to China in 1997. She practiced law at the Hong Kong office of Clifford Chase. She returned to Japan in 1998 and joined White & Case LLP as an attorney, and was later recruited to join Deutsche Bank in Tokyo where she was vice president and business manager.

As a working mother of a young child, Fukutomi felt there were many challenges facing families who were raising bilingual and bicultural children. Out of this desire to serve families who want their children to become global citizens, Fukutomi established a dual-language after-school program, Global Kids Academy. Crafting the mission statement, fund-raising, developing the curriculum, planning the budget and overseeing daily operations, from 2002 to 2008 Fukutomi was involved in every aspect of this unique language immersion program, the first of its kind in Tokyo.

Fukutomi holds a master's in education from Harvard University, where she focused on school leadership and, before coming to SYA, she managed a consulting firm in New York, advising clients on cross-cultural issues in the workplace. Possessing an ideal fusion of academic, legal and financial acumen, Fukutomi's depth of knowledge is rightly complemented by her heart and soul, that of a mother of a teenaged son.



“SYA offers the best curriculum and integration to the host environment of any program available in China today. I look forward to working with the amazing team to find ways to further engage our students in community service initiatives and environmental science and action.”

One of the first *foreign experts* to teach in China in 1978, **Frances Fremont-Smith** is a seasoned educator with more than 30 years of leadership experience in cross-cultural education and conservation projects in China.

Born and raised in Boston, Fremont-Smith attended The Brimmer and May School, where she first developed her passion for foreign languages and other cultures. Her first homestay experience was with the Experiment in International Living in 1974 in Reims, France; the next summer she honed her French-language skills at the University of LaRochelle.

While earning her bachelor's degree in Chinese language and Asian studies at Connecticut College, Fremont-Smith worked at the Harvard-Yenching Library and studied Chinese at the Middlebury School for Languages. In December 1978, the normalization of relations between the United States and China was announced and five days later, she was hired as the first American to teach in northeastern China since the revolution.

In 1980, Fremont-Smith transferred to Beijing to translate at the Chinese Academy of Agricul-

tural and Mechanization Sciences and teach at the Capital Normal University. After earning an EdM at Harvard University, she was hired to launch the Chinese-language program at Milton Academy, where she designed and directed the first homestay and intensive language program between China and U.S. high school students.

For 11 years Fremont-Smith worked for the Chinese International School of Hong Kong, where she also initiated homestay language and culture programs in China and service learning programs. Since 2004 she has been the executive director of Future-Generations/China. There she developed and led a nationwide environmental awareness, leadership and education program with participation of more than 50 universities from across China as part of the Green Long March, a youth-led environmental movement.

Fremont-Smith brings with her decades of experience steeped in the language and culture of China, as well as the language and culture of high school students. Her keen sense of humor and good-hearted nature will serve her, her colleagues and her students well as they enter in to what will be SYA's 17th year in Beijing.



“Looking back at four decades of adjusting, balancing and promoting good relations between my country of birth and that of adoption, I’m convinced that in this century, trade, collaboration and the steady pursuit of human dignity will replace much of the misunderstanding, wars and abuses that characterized the previous one. It is a privilege to work with SYA in preparing new, empathetic and effective citizens of the world.”

Fluent in English, Vietnamese and French, **Vu-duc Vuong** has had successful careers in both nonprofit service organizations and education. For nearly 20 years, he has taught courses in politics, sociology, social welfare policies and international relations at several colleges and universities. He has also led many student groups to Vietnam each summer to study international relations and the sociology of globalization.

Prior to his teaching career, Vuong was the regional director of the American Friends Service Committee and the executive director of the Center for Southeast Asian Refugees Resettlement in California. Since 2004, his social and political commentaries have appeared in publications such as *Asian Week* and *Vietnam Net*.

“Vuong will bring to SYA his deep commitment to Vietnam and the Vietnamese people, and his inherent awareness of the

importance of international education for our youth,” said SYA Executive Director Nelson Chase. “He has had significant experience as a professor of sociology and political science, as well as executive experience leading a nonprofit agency dedicated to serving the Southeast Asian community in the San Francisco area.”

His network of connections across Vietnam and his skill at arranging educational travel and other experiences for international students will ensure that SYAers receive a rich introduction to the country, its economy and its environmental challenges.

Vuong holds a bachelor’s degree in political science; an MSW and a JD, each earned at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, and a master’s in political science and international relations from the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Meet Rachel Keegan Kelley, SYA Director of Admissions



School Year Abroad is pleased to announce the appointment of Rachel Keegan Kelley as Director of Admissions. This marks a return to schools for Keegan Kelley as the first nine years of her career were spent in administrative roles in independent schools. At Miss Porter’s School, she spent four years as associate director of admission and director of financial aid. Following a year at Harvard’s School of Education, she returned to admissions at Episcopal High School. In addition to her admissions responsibilities at EHS, she was an advisor to junior girls and a dormitory assistant dean. After returning to the Boston area, she joined the development office at Milton Academy, where she held a number of roles including major gifts officer and stewardship director, and was instrumental in planning Milton’s 1999 bicentennial celebration.

Having spent the last 10 years in business, Keegan Kelley also brings to SYA a wealth of corporate marketing experience. She has worked two stints for BT Conferencing, most recently in brand marketing, where she led a multinational group in redesigning the company’s website and developed other marketing campaigns that helped the company more than double in size. Previously, at Kronos Software, Keegan Kelley managed a staff of five responsible for running marketing campaigns for six different business lines.

Keegan Kelley is a graduate of St. George’s School in Newport, R.I., Wellesley College and received an EdM from Harvard. She spent her high school junior year at a public school in England and personally knows how transformative a year abroad can be. She and her family now live in Andover, Mass.



SYA CHINA'S EXTRAORDINARY SPEAKER SERIES

By Stephen Morison Jr., SYA China faculty



From left: Angela Sako, Lili Pike, Anthea Viragh, Steve Mufson CN'10P, Dylan Kaplan, George Boyar, Margie Tanner, Claire Mufson, Rebecca Montgomery, Charles Corpening and Laura Lachman

Visits by award-winning journalists, authors and consultants are sure to excite interest on high school campuses, but this year such visits have become commonplace at SYA China. Having forged strong contacts among the Beijing community, SYA China's faculty and administrators have often invited outside experts into their classrooms, but this year Resident Director Jeff Bissell formalized the process, creating an SYA China Speaker Series that has resulted in frequent visits from notable writers and professionals.

Since the beginning of the year, students have benefited from lectures and Q&A sessions led by Ellen Carberry, founding partner of the China Greentech Initiative; Evan Osnos, writer for the *New Yorker*; Michael Wines, China bureau chief for the *New York Times*; Steve Mufson, journalist for the *Washington Post*; Ian Johnson, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist for the *Wall Street Journal* and author of *Wild Grass: Three Portraits of Change in Modern China*; Jim McGregor, former China Bureau Chief for the *Wall Street Journal* and author of the best-selling *One Billion Customers: Lessons from the Front Lines of Doing Business in China*; Charles Hutzler, China bureau chief for the Associated Press; and a panel of journalists and editors from the local Beijing newspaper *Huangqiu Shibao* (*Global Times*).

Students were particularly thrilled when they finished reading Johnson's *Wild Grass* in their English classes in November then three days later sat down with the author and discussed the book.

Resident Director Jeff Bissell says one of the benefits of the series is

that it offers students a chance to meet role models. "By spring, the students have been bit by China, right? They know they want to come back. So I thought it would be great to parade some successful adults before them to get them thinking about future possibilities."

The only compensation Bissell offers visitors is a canvas tote containing a couple of SYA T-shirts and mugs, yet he's had few rejections to his invitations. Bissell feels the reputation of SYA China's students has percolated through the greater expatriate community and even busy journalists are curious to come and see the program firsthand.

Additionally, the journalists help students adopt a "sleuthlike learning model," Bissell says, one that helps them succeed during SYA China's Integrated Learning Program, an across-the-curriculum, monthlong research project that students undertake in May.

"For example, Evan Osnos [of the *New Yorker*] explained to the kids how he tells a big story by focusing on the smaller stories of a few individuals," Bissell recalls. "And Steve Mufson reminded them that since they have only a month to complete their projects, they need to find a topic that's small enough that they can research it in less than a month."

Whether the students are learning about clean-energy initiatives from one of China's most successful clean-energy consultants, hearing about business strategies from a former CEO or picking up journalism tips from a winner of the Pulitzer Prize, one thing is certain: at SYA China, the extraordinary has become a weekly event.



SYA Q&A

What were your first impressions upon arriving in China?

While the change in the air quality and the sheer size of the city stood out to me in our first days in Beijing, I think it was actually the days we spent in quarantine that left the most vivid impression in my mind. I had envisioned spending a week confined in a government hospital. Instead I woke up the next morning to see the Great Wall and a cloudless blue sky out of my window in Jinshanling.

In what ways have those impressions changed?

I think of those first few days as summer camp. Only when we moved to Beijing did I get a real idea of what my life was going to be like. I think I expected living in China would be relatively easy; meet the host family, learn Chinese, what's so hard about that? Over the first few nights with my host family I began to realize that I was in for a much greater challenge than I had expected. I quickly realized that the best part of the SYA experience is learning to work with the challenges that get thrown at you everyday, adapting to a new environment and learning to love it all.

What was the most challenging adjustment?

I think the hardest thing for me was adjusting to life with my host family. We might not be the perfect fit but I've grown to love my family, and now my mom and I chat over noodle soup as if we're mother and daughter.

Three words that describe SYA China are:

It's hard to think of three English words to describe this experience. In Chinese I would say;

Liaojie (understanding): for those nights spent living with ethnic minorities in their village traveling, barely understanding their foreign dialects but having the times of our lives.

Lihai: invincible, infallible, incredible.

Maoxian (adventure): for weekends spent exploring the hutongs and hitchhiking in the countryside.

Do you have a solid grasp on speaking Chinese?

While I can't say I have mastered Chinese, I feel like I have come a long way from the beginning of the year. I remember nights spent with my host family eating dinner when I literally couldn't understand a word my family members were saying.

Will you return to China to visit, study or perhaps live here one day?

I would love to come back to China for college and maybe to work in the future. After I graduate from SYA, I will be spending a part of my summer working for a Chinese 'green-tech' company with two of my best friends in Beijing, so I look forward to getting a feel for what it's like to live independently in Beijing. It's so exciting to be in China right now and see the potential and hope in everyone's eyes.

What are you feeling as you anticipate going home in a few months?

As my good friend Anthea says, "all good things must come to an end." As we are leaving for our last train trip to Tibet this afternoon I know we will all be reminiscing about this year and all the unforgettable experiences we've shared with our Chinese teachers, host families and friends.



Lili Pike CN'10

(The Thacher School)

Lili and her mom, Amanda North, hiking the Great Wall

What is your favorite Chinese food? What is that one item you'll crave that you can't readily get back home?

Mom's eggdrop noodle soup or *jianbing* (a giant egg pancake with a crunchy wafer vegetables and meat inside), moon cakes, the comforting smell of chestnuts and sweet potatoes in the winter.

Your one piece of advice to enhance the SYA experience would be?

When you arrive in your new home for the year lose all your self-consciousness and embrace humility; know that you will make mistakes, but also know that it's just part of learning your way around.

Would you recommend SYA to a student interested in studying abroad?

I honestly think that SYA is the best thing you could possibly do during your junior year; it's truly a unique experience.

What would you say to that student to assure them they were making the right decision to study abroad for a full year?

I know you are probably hesitating thinking about what you'll be giving up while you're away. I had the same doubts about losing a year of playing lacrosse and soccer and being away from my friends; but I have no regrets about coming to China. The life lessons you gain from living on your own in a foreign country for a year are invaluable.



A TASTE OF RENNES AT LE MARCHÉ DES LICES

By Stephanie Millner FR'10 (Council Rock High School North)



Zoe Mackay FR'10 (Governor's Academy) at Le Marché des Lices (Photo by Frankie Clifford FR'10, Denver School of the Arts)

To market, to market, to buy some *fromage*, perhaps *Raclette*, and, of course, a *baguette*! Ok, ok, you caught me. That is not how the beloved nursery rhyme goes, yet it was the variation I was singing as I headed out the door early one Saturday morning. Surprised to see me awake, instead of emerged in the deep slumber of my typical *grasse matinée*, and out of my usual Saturday morning ensemble of slippers and pajamas, my host parents asked me where I was off to. Inspired by the ditty I replied in a singsong voice: “*Au marché, au marché, bien sûr!*”

A trip on the number nine bus, and 10 minutes later, I found myself in the heart of Rennes, surrounded by the bustling activity of Le Marché des Lices. This foodie heaven attracts thousands of visitors each year and has roots that date back to 1622. Like many of the great French wines and cheeses that can be found there, Le Marché des Lices has only become better with age. Each Saturday morning, in a square encircled by ancient timbered buildings that speak to the city's rich history, about 300 vendors set up shop. The traders' tables are filled with exotic fruits, multitudes of mushrooms, white fish, red meats, and blue cheeses, not to mention typical products of Bretagne, such as cider and *galettes*. Everywhere you look there is something scrumptious to be found.

Little old ladies wheel nylon shopping carts overflowing with ingredients for the next day's presumed feast. The chatter of merchants and patrons fills the air, tickling my ears with the melodic

vowels and consonants of what has come to be my second tongue: *le français*. An inquiry I make about a type of fruit turns into a friendly conversation with a vendor. Fellow classmates and locals sit with guitars and belt out the famous Edith Piaf and Jacques Brel lyrics. For this is truly *la vie en rose*. I am deeply immersed in the heart of French culture and tradition. It is a heart that is beating and alive and makes my own beat in sync, bringing me into the tempo of the French way of life; one that I am proud to have adopted as my own.

As the sun's rays wrap me in a blanket of warmth that mimics the glowing contentment I hold within, I make my way to my favorite part of the market: the flower section. Rows upon rows of daisies, roses, orchids, lilies, tulips and carnations create a magnificent wave of color. Hues of pink and red intertwine with soft white petals, resting upon leafy plants, all tied up in yellow paper. As I select a bouquet I cannot help but relate to these flowers. Aren't all of us at SYA plants that have been transported to root ourselves in a new world? A world where we have found ourselves blooming, unfurling our petals to expose our extraordinary buds, filled with possibility and newfound awareness. Together, imported from across the country, we have converged to make a bouquet more intricate and brilliant than even the most talented florist could have composed.

To France, Spain, Italy, China, Japan, Vietnam, and yes, to market we go, discovering knowledge, friendship, language, culture, and ourselves along the way.





Eric Falcon FR'10

(Princeton Day School)

SYA Q&A

What were your first impressions upon arriving in France?

I was really tired when I arrived, robotically going through the motions; all I wanted was a nice meal and to go to bed. I remember being petrified after getting into the car with my host family as they took me home—it was difficult to make conversation. There were elements of my first meal that I didn't like, but I didn't say anything because I didn't want to be a hassle. The wonderful hospitality of the French people was immediately apparent.

In what ways have those impressions changed?

Now I am really starting to appreciate French culture, and I am more aware of the differences between American and French culture. I am figuring out what I prefer about France versus what I prefer about America after having exposure to both cultures. In addition, my political and cultural opinions have been reshaped by the year I've spent here—I have a better sense of what I believe in.

What was the most challenging adjustment?

Getting accustomed to the French laundry cycle! Laundry is done a lot less here since utilities are much more expensive in France than America. It took time to recalibrate.

Three words that describe SYA France are:

Rennes
Language
Commitment

What experiences are most outstanding?

The time I spent with my host family, exploring the city of Rennes and the school travel opportunities.

Do you have a solid grasp on speaking French?

Yes, definitely.

Will you return to France to visit, study or perhaps live here one day?

I would consider all three. I already have plans to come back to visit in July to attend my host sister's wedding.

What are you feeling as you anticipate going home in a few months?

It will be nice to see my friends and family because I miss them a lot. But instead of thinking about it as one month until I get to go back, it's more like one month until I have to leave France.

What is your favorite French food?

My favorite food is *galette saucisse*; a buckwheat crêpe with sausage inside. I will really crave Breton salt butter.

Your one piece of advice to an SYA newcomer would be?

Make the most of the SYA experience; you have to really put yourself out there. Make French friends, you must make an effort; they won't just come to you. Speak French as much as you can! If you find yourself having problems with your host family, try thinking about the situation from their perspective. Lastly, admit you're wrong when it's appropriate, don't take things personally, and embrace laughing at yourself.

What would you say to that student to assure them they were making the right decision to study abroad for a full year?

A full year of study abroad really builds your character. The SYA experience will not be handed to you, you will have to work for it and earn it. It takes time to do this. By learning to be outside of your comfort zone for an extended period, you are learning how to navigate situations that will come up frequently in life.



LAND OF SPICE AND STORIES

Drew Cabaniss IT'10 (Albuquerque Academy)



Rooftop view of Algira, on the isle of Sicily

The Arabic spice flows through the Sicilian air and throughout the culture as the clouds rise from Aetna's lofty peak. Marzipan and consonant endings fill conversations and storefront windows along a coast defined by the sunny green hills of the triangular isle. Magna Graecia unfolds before us and around us, the serene worn tan of temple columns reflecting the light to give an earthen hew to almond blossoms and cliff-side tombs. The blossoms provide a new, intoxicating scent that obscures the foreign spice yet enhances it, like the amalgamation of culture and time that the island and atmosphere now represent. From the Greeks to Garibaldi, people have come, gone, and founded cities on the shore, Aeneas and Arabs included.

Inland a view reminiscent of Tuscan hill towns envelops us, albeit with a peaceful volcano rising from the horizon. Stopped on a winding road at a gas station, the provincial governor welcomes us with a *benvenuto ad Agira* before we break the city limits. TV cameras and reporters greet us again with *salve*, leaving us to explore the town with local students, visiting the most important churches and sanctuaries and their library of ancient manuscripts and tomes, and a Jewish aron preserved in a Catholic church. A hill town by nature, streets becoming stairs over the course of paces, we spend a sun-blessed morning climbing among the panorama of hills and stone. The final *ciao* presents itself through a banquet of pizza and *panini*, oranges and olives, all cooked and grown at home. The neighboring

Leonforte introduces itself with a *buona sera* and once again we roam around through slightly less-vertical streets, encountering fountains, chapels and a soccer stadium. A parting *arrivederci*, and we venture to other lands, dusty coasts and ancient harbors.

Through the boisterous shopkeepers and light-blue doors of the market, a new flavor of spice floats, clustering around piled saffron and silver amulets. Arabic and French define Tunis, the city around us, a nexus of white plastered walls and alternating directions of text. Surrounded by the mix of ancient and modern, colonial and native, we explore through time as we pass by the same government signs and salt ponds for kilometers. The harbor of Carthage marks one chronological landmark. The fields salted by Rome are now covered with trees and water, the outline of a harbor haunting the coastline, baths built by the conquerors themselves. Following history we explore El Djem, monument of desert stone and towering arches, amphitheater exquisitely preserved in the desert south. We hide in the shadows of walls on the sandy floor before penetrating the thousand tunnels, concentric and connecting, that define the shell. Far from our home we find this nostalgic reminder of the empire that once made this *mare nostrum*, our sea. A unifying force, now faded, shines through at these few points as light through pinholes in a canvas, reminding us of a common past. Days of travel have lead us to exotic lands, filled with hills and sand, and have brought us closer to our common past than stagnancy at home could have allowed.



SYA Q&A

What were your first impressions upon arriving in France?

When I first arrived in Italy I was a bit in shock. Aside from the language and the terrifying drive home, I initially thought the country wasn't too different from the United States.

In what ways have those impressions changed?

It didn't take long for me to realize almost every aspect of this country is unique and individual. Whether it was asking for food to go or just walking down the street, I soon realized that the way in which the Italians live is totally unique.

What was the most challenging adjustment?

I kept trying to liken the Italian psyche to that of Americans, but it took me almost two-thirds of the year to realize that there is no comparison. The most difficult and hardest pill to swallow was that Italians are not Americans. Coming from liberal California, I took for granted the outcome of the Civil Rights and feminist movements. When I first arrived in Italy, I perceived the general political views of the people as narrow-minded, but I eventually realized Italians have a different outlook on their world, and it's not necessarily narrow; it's just hard for my own thoughts to squeeze through.

Three words that describe SYA Italy are:

Food
Noisy
Speaking Italian

What experiences are most outstanding?

My favorite experiences occurred during independent travel and school trips, or time spent with my host family; meeting new people, or just living life in a totally foreign setting. I'll always remember seeing the sun set in Sicily and those times I used words I didn't know I knew while talking with my host family.

Do you have a solid grasp on speaking Italian?

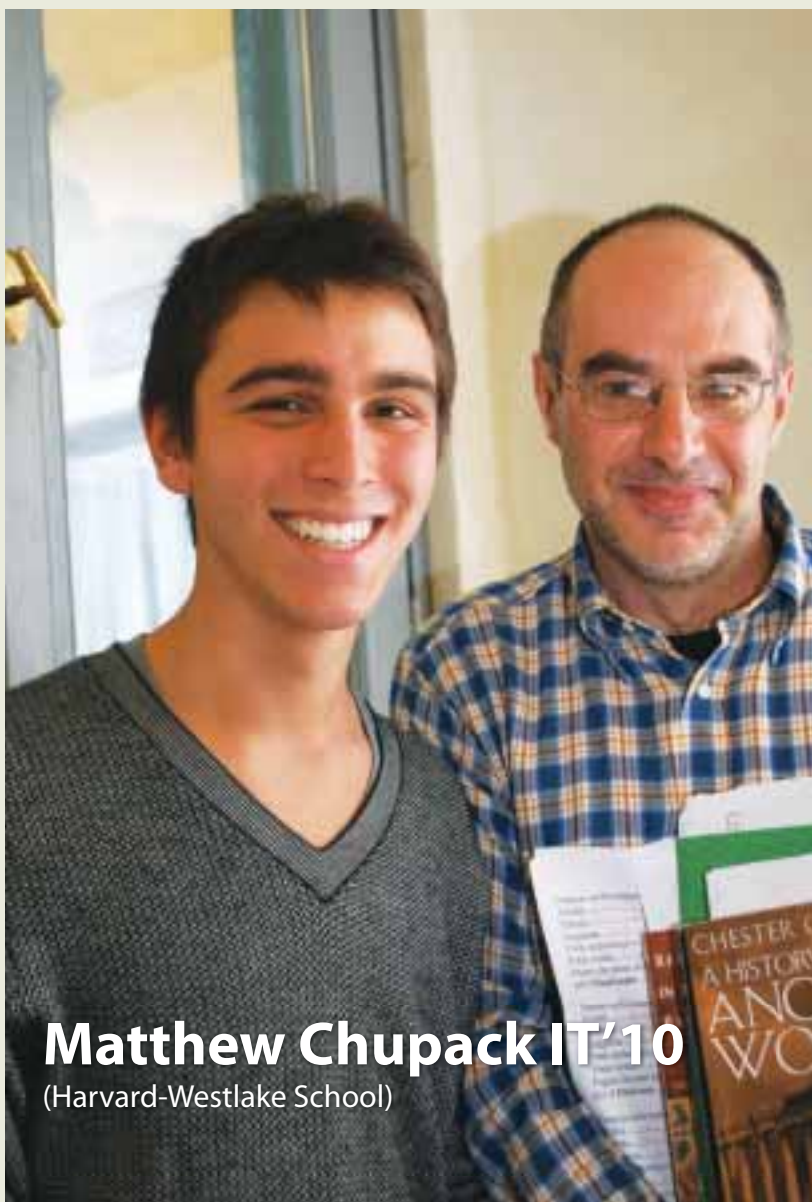
After nine months in Italy, I do feel very comfortable with the Italian language. Of course, there are always obscure words that I won't be able to think of while I speak, but when they're said to me I never have problems understanding.

Will you return to Italy to visit, study or perhaps live here one day?

I will definitely return to Italy to visit; although, since I don't know what profession I want to pursue, I'm not sure if I will return to study in college. I'm sure that I want to go abroad in college though, and maybe do a gap year.

What are you feeling as you anticipate going home in a few months?

The thought of going home is mixed with both the excitement of seeing my original home and the sadness of leaving my new one. I think it will be harder to leave Italy than it was leaving home. I left the United States knowing that I would see all my friends and family again. Leaving Italy I don't know for certain if I'll ever see some of these people ever again.



Matthew Chupack IT'10
(Harvard-Westlake School)

Matthew Chupack IT'10 and ancient history teacher Santo Sammartino

What is your favorite Italian food? What is that one item you'll crave that you can't readily get back home?

My favorite Italian food is lasagna, or any pasta *al forno*. The thing I'll crave the most at home is a morning or afternoon cappuccino. There really are no cappuccini like those you get in Italy.

Your one piece of advice to an SYA newcomer would be?

I would say two things: Expect nothing and *Ora sei italiano, parla l'italiano!* Don't expect anything like the Lizzie Maguire movie. Be realistic, and realize that you actually know nothing about this country or its people. You'll be totally surprised by the things that you'll love, like the friendliness of the people you meet and the way everyone knows one another.

What would you say to that student to assure them they were making the right decision to study abroad for a full year?

SYA is by far the best, most 'put together' program I considered. It combines the support of American students and close teacher-student relationships with the cultural immersion of a host family. I would tell them that the only way to truly learn a language is to stay in a foreign country for a full year, because I made the largest leaps in the language during second semester.



ZARAGOZANOS EN PARÍS

Jordan Kaneshige ES'10 (Punahou School)



Jordan Kaneshige ES'10

The Louvre, Orsay, Pompidou and l'Orangerie; what more could an art history student ask for? Especially when to this list of world-class museums you add boat rides down the Seine, dashes to the Notre Dame towers, the Eiffel Tower glowing in

the full moon's light, and delicious crêpes eaten hot off a street vendor's cart. We were lucky enough to have this incredible experience during our spring break, when our art teacher, Soledad Gutiérrez, and Resident Director Griffin Morse took 16 art history and contemporary art history students to Paris. We visited Paris's preeminent art museums and saw masterpieces only glimpsed on our classroom projector. Our five-day excursion took us through four major art museums in Paris, famous throughout the world for their incredible collections.

The first on the list was the Centre Pompidou, with its colorful inside-out building that offers spectacular panoramic views of Paris. Our class saw works by 20th and 21st century artists such as Picasso, Kupka, Dalí and Kandinsky. The museum had astounding collections of styles ranging from analytical cubism and lyrical abstraction to modern installation art.

The next morning we visited the Musée d'Orsay, an old train station converted into a beautiful museum housing art from the 19th and 20th centuries. Particularly inspiring was the collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works by artists such as Monet, Manet, Renior, Degas and Van Gogh. Continuing with the same time period we visited l'Orangerie, a small museum near the Louvre featuring Monet's water lily series, and works by Matisse, Cézanne and Picasso.

The most exciting museum was the Louvre. Its gargantuan size made it a feat to see just half of it. It truly was a stroll through history seeing everything from ancient Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman art, to 19th century paintings. Nearly everything we saw was related to what we had studied; such as the massive "Wedding Feast at Cana" by Veronese or the poetic "Lace Maker" by Vermeer. Seeing "The Death of the Virgin" by Caravaggio, the "Winged Victory of Samothrace", Michelangelo's "The Slaves" and, of course, the world-famous "Mona Lisa" by Leonardo Da Vinci was an unforgettable experience.

There is a particular feeling you get after studying a certain piece of art, learning the technique, the history, the meaning, and then being able to see it right there in front of you. It's a rush of overpowering excitement to actually see what the colors look like, to see the strokes on the canvas and the actual size. There is nothing like it and no better way to experience art. I am extremely lucky to have had this opportunity, which has shown me that here in SYA Spain there are no limits to what you can do or see; even if it means having to catch a plane to see the "Mona Lisa."

¡LUCES, CÁMARA, ACCIÓN!

Luke Lorentzen ES'10 (Brunswick School)

"Although I knew the courses I was going to take, I came with little expectations as to what I would do outside of the classroom. I had many interests in activities such as studio art, skateboarding, music and film. I love to make movies, from documentaries to shorts, and having the opportunity to work with José Ángel Delgado and the Cine Company Cosmos has been one of the best experiences I have had all year! The feeling that I am helping with major film projects is enlightening and inspiring, and has taken my filmmaking experience to a higher level."



Luke Lorentzen, left, with film producer/director José Ángel Delgado



RIDING THE RENFE RAILS

Amanda Bennett ES'10, Ángel Vilalta Scholar (Deerfield Academy)

"May I speak with you for a moment?" the train policeman asked me.

"Sure," I replied, grabbing my survey from the cafeteria car table and following him to the narrow sleeper car passageway.

"You aren't doing a survey, ¿no?" he asked. I was independent traveling with a friend on the Spanish train-hotel, destination Santiago de Compostela. To prepare for a historic memory conference in Lyon, France, with seven classmates, our history and political science teacher, Antonio López-Piña, 23 students and two faculty members from the other SYA Europe sights, we Spaniards had drawn up a survey with a goal of interviewing 100 citizens between the eight of us. Stuck on a train for 12 hours while crossing the entire northern peninsula, I figured that it was an opportune moment to survey others who also had nothing better to do.

"Yes," I replied. "It's for a history project. I'm a student in a *colegio americano*."

"Well, conducting surveys on RENFE trains is illegal," the official explained. My heart stopped. Visions of handcuffs, being kicked off the train in a tiny Cantabrian town, banishment from all Spanish trains and a tearful phone call to Señor Morse from the backseat of a police car flashed through my mind.

"Oh, I didn't know. I'm so sorry, it's just for my history class," I explained again.

"Are the results going to be published anywhere?" the guard asked.

"No, it's just for my class," I said, thinking I was beginning to sound like a broken record. Not impressive, but in stressful moments Spanish didn't flow quite so easily. The officer asked me to hand over the survey and told me to wait. I did. He came back after what seemed like eternity, carrying my papers. Thank goodness, I thought—I had only interviewed two people and didn't want to lose their interesting answers.

"Vale, okay," he told me. "We'll leave this 'forgotten,' *entre comillas*. But don't do it again."

"I won't, *gracias*, I'm sorry!" I replied, eager to get back to my seat and stop trembling. The surveys had turned out to be a difficult

project involving brutal rejections from grumpy Spanish men, putting on poker faces as we discovered closet Franco supporters, and long hours typing up results and making graphics. But the work paid off. We had diverse responses and a thorough project we were proud to present to the French and Italian SYA students in Lyon. It was just another SYA project that turned out to be so much more than it seemed: engaging conversations during orchestra practice, sitting with three Galician girls in a grassy field and talking about politics,

being challenged to form our own opinions about the law of historic memory and facing the past.

And this was just the preparation for the conference! Once in Lyon, we spent hours in the Center of Resistance and Deportation with the other SYA students, an afternoon discussing everything from music to extreme right parties in a French high school, and another afternoon and night at the homes of French families. Being from Spain, the language barrier was a bit difficult, but we were well practiced at smiling and nodding our way through conversations.

At the beginning of the year, I thought about all the things my home school had that were sorely absent in Spain: co-curricular activities, good vegetarian food, marimba and jazz vibraphone, the grassy quad and extensive campus, the dorms, my car. But after a couple of months I found

that I'd begun to love Spain without even realizing it. Thanks to SYA's tremendous program and the Ángel Vilalta scholarship, I was able to spend a full year living and learning in Spain. Knowing that I had been chosen from all the applicants to receive the scholarship, I was determined to live Spain to the fullest. I *did*, I thought, as I realized that now the list of things that Deerfield didn't have was long: tapas, narrow streets, a terrace overlooking a *mudéjar* cathedral, school-wide trips to Andalucía, this very conference in Lyon. As I buckled my seatbelt to fly back to Spain and began to write a postcard to one of my new French friends, I realized that by deciding to live and study for a full year in Spain, I had made one of the best decisions of my life.



Amanda Bennett Meeting Ángel Vilalta



Nell Pinkston ES'10

(The Loomis Chaffee School)

What were your first impressions upon arriving in Spain?

Nervous excitement, exhaustion, anticipation. The food was hard to get used to at first. The people were really welcoming, warm and patient. Everyone spoke so quickly!

In what ways have those impressions changed?

I feel as if Zaragoza is my home—people ask me for directions and I know how to get there. I can speak Spanish quickly now, too.

What was the most challenging adjustment?

Communication was the most challenging. I wanted to be able to express gratitude to my host family, and to be able to make friends, but I felt like my personal interactions were limited by my language.

Three words that describe SYA Spain are:

New-found strength
New home
Unexpected adventures

What experiences are most outstanding?

The amount of time I've had to travel and really see Spain has been incredible! I feel like I've really seen the country. In fact, I've seen more of Spain than I have of the United States. And of course, my relationship with my host family, and the Spanish friends I've made through soccer—these relationships will last a lifetime.

Do you have a solid grasp on speaking Spanish?

Yes. Of course there is always room for improvement, but I can now speak about anything in Spanish that I would in English.

Will you return to Spain to visit, study or perhaps live here one day?

Definitely; possibly all three!

What are you feeling as you anticipate going home in a few months?

Thinking about going home is very difficult. The idea of going home doesn't feel real, just like when I arrived in Spain the idea of being here for a year didn't feel real. I can't believe it's already April.

What is your favorite Spanish food? What is that one item you'll crave that you can't readily get back home?

My favorite food is *paella*. The food I'll crave the most is my host mother's *tortilla de patata*. My host mother is going to help me by writing down some recipes, but I've tried to make some of these dishes already and they just aren't the same as when she makes them.

Your one piece of advice you'd give to an SYA newcomer?

I'd encourage future SYAers to remember that your friends at home will still be your friends after you come home. I'm glad my host family does not have Internet at home, so that I can spend as much time with them as possible. By spending hours speaking with my host family every day, I've learned Spanish much faster than some of my classmates.

Would you recommend SYA to a student interested in studying abroad?

Yes, I think you really need a full year, and why wait until college when you can have this experience in high school? The immersion experience you get with a host family at SYA makes all the difference.

What would you say to that student to assure them they were making the right decision to study abroad for a full year?

You need a full year away because you don't really hit your stride in Spanish until Christmas break. You need to give yourself enough time to really progress in your language ability. You'll be happy that you have a full second semester to continue to grow.





CURTAIN RISES ON SYA VIETNAM

Peter T. Esty, SYA Board Chair, and Resident Director SYA Vietnam 2010



Resident Director Peter Esty and College Counselor Happy Esty

I had the privilege and exhilaration of being the inaugural Resident Director of this latest SYA school for the first semester of the 2009-10 academic year. Hanoi, while in the Board's distant thinking for a long time, really received the green light on March 1, 2009. After deciding to shutter our school in India (2008-2009) due to national security reasons, President Woody Halsey set off to build some foundations for a new SYA school in Hanoi; the Board gave him two months to put things in readiness and convince us that it could be a reality for our opening in September, six months ahead.

To paint but a slim portrait of the opening months of SYA Vietnam, I turn to my wrap-up letter written to our family and friends in December, just weeks before Happy and I departed Hanoi. In January we all dispersed and the program went into hibernation, awaiting new staff and students to reappear in summer and fall 2010 to kick off the second year.

December, 2009

'We cannot believe our luck regarding our small circle of students and faculty in this opening half year of the program. From the start the students were an uncommonly solid group and our faculty colleagues a dream team. To this day we all just smile about the alignment of the planets that allowed this respectful and congenial assemblage of 22 people to convene.

Hanoi is a booming city, at once colorful, noisy, polluted, indescribably congested, drowning in motor scooters, throbbing with energy, growing in prosperity, strikingly beautiful in places while seedy in others, dealing with construction everywhere, historic and aware of its history, optimistic, and forgiving of its past enemies (China, France and, most recently, America). Its people are warm and hospitable, curious but a bit shy by American standards, and friendly.



Warm greetings from friendly, welcoming people





Paddling up the Swallow Tail River

We have had some wonderful travels as a school group including a day trip to the nearby Perfume Pagoda, a striking complex of pagodas and Buddhist shrines built into mountain cliffs, 38 miles southwest of Hanoi. Women rowers took us up Swallow Tail River for an hour in small shallow metal skiffs to the complex of 16 separate halls, temples and grottoes amid a beautiful craggy karst landscape. In late September we spent a four-day weekend in the Mai Chau Valley where we hiked through near constant rain and mud (which bonds wet souls stunningly) to three small ethnic minority Muong and White Thai tribal villages. We stayed in stilt houses along the way, a communal experience where the group spent the night all together on one floor on sleeping mats, shrouded with mosquito netting. More recently we spent a week on the beautiful and historic central coast including the ancient capital Hue, Danang and Hoi An, names many of you recall from the “American” war, where we explored ancient citadels and temples, museums and art centers, worked at an organic garden, and helped clean up an area on China Beach that was particularly devastated by September typhoon Ketsana. The finale was 24 hours on a tourist junk on Halong Bay, where we also explored ancient

caves, enjoyed kayaking and swimming.

Further, we have learned how much we take for granted in our “developed” country: untold life patterns of convenience; simple or complex laws and order; freedom from pressure and fear of governmental oversight; a reliable postal and telephone system; the easy and general use of credit cards and checks; business transactions without expectations of pay off; one-stop shopping (charming as small specialty shops are for nearly everything); far greater air and water quality. The list goes on. We return with a heightened awareness of how different our “developed” country is compared to Vietnam’s “developing” status, remarkable as their awakened surge may be. But we are also fully aware of the cost of our accustomed privileges. Basic life necessities here are a fraction of the cost of similar items at home. Six bananas purchased from a sidewalk stand cost 25 cents; a 3-hour taxi ride is \$7; a handmade woolen sweater \$12; and 20 roses cost 60 cents.

Words like these of mine here go only so far in capturing the depth of the impact our students and we adults experienced in our few months in Vietnam. As more and more U.S. leaders of government, education and social services are proclaiming, we want American youth to spend important, sustained time in another country, especially a developing country, to comprehend our own privileges and advantages to begin to understand how most of the rest of the world lives with so much less.



Working in an organic garden



SYA Q&A



Helene Dick FR'08 VN'10

(Sacred Heart High School)

Helene Dick with classmate, Cole Newcomb FR '08 VN '10 (Wood River High School)

What was the most challenging adjustment?

Meals were difficult to navigate. My host family would finish their meal a half hour before I did, because I would take five minutes in between bites and I dropped food everywhere while trying to use chopsticks.

Three words that describe SYA

Vietnam:

Embracing unpredictable adventures!

What experiences are most outstanding?

There are the major events, like sea kayaking in Halong Bay. But it's the day-to-day experiences that really shine through, like chatting about my service learning project trip with my faculty advisor, drinking iced coffee after school with friends, or helping my Vietnamese sister with her English homework.

Do you have a solid grasp on speaking Vietnamese?

I like to joke that I have the ability to speak Vietnamese like an articulate 4-year-old, which is considerably better than when I began with sign language.

Will you return to Vietnam to visit or study, or perhaps live there one day?

My host mother is really insistent that I have to spend my honeymoon "at home" in Hanoi.

What is your favorite Vietnamese food?

My host mother's homemade *nem* (eggrolls) are the best! Every Sunday night we would set up an assembly line where my host sister and I would roll them, my host mom would fry them up, and then the whole family would wolf them down.

Your one piece of advice to improve the SYA experience would be?

Edit the packing list! One sweater is not enough, it doesn't matter if it's 60 degrees in December, once you've adjusted to a 90-degree climate you'll think that's freezing!

Would you recommend SYA to a student interested in studying abroad?

Definitely, and then I'd push them to pick Vietnam!

What would you say to that student to assure them they were making the right decision to study abroad for a full year?

You'll never be alone! Every step of the way you have classmates and faculty living the same adventure; battling giant tropical spiders and trying to convincingly bargain with shopkeepers. The laughs you'll share over the ups and downs will get you through the most difficult of challenges.

What were your first impressions upon arriving in Vietnam?

Motorbikes! There is so much chaos between the people and traffic; you almost never see a traffic light. Crossing the street is an art; you have to tune in to the flow, dive in and pretend you're Moses! It requires both serious meditation and courage.

In what ways have those impressions changed?

I recognized how much more calmly the Vietnamese live than I had once thought. Lots of naptimes, long meals, and there's a cafe on every block!





When I call Jeff Bissell to interview him for this article, he is 1,500 miles south of our Beijing campus, on the road with SYA China's 52 students and five of its Chinese faculty. Jeff is in the midst of the program's annual four-week "Winterim" trip, overseeing a four-day immersion at a Chinese high school in Jinghong City. This regional capital is situated along a stretch of the Mekong River in southern Yunnan (literally, "South of the Clouds") Province, close to the Burmese and Laotian borders, where SYA China's students are enjoying a tropical climate, palm-lined streets and a spectacular cuisine while attending classes, sharing meals and spending evenings with kids from an area that rarely sees Western travelers.

The opportunity to forge relationships like these with people in disparate places, relationships that offer SYA students inten-

Jeff Bissell

Looking back on eleven years at the helm of SYA China

by Stephen Morison Jr., SYA China faculty

sive-language and unique cultural experiences, is just one of the reasons Jeff was so excited to join SYA 11 years ago. He confesses that it's also one of the things he'll miss when he departs at the end of the school year, to head the Chinese American International School in San Francisco.

"I had this total life-changing experience when I was in my twenties," Jeff says, recalling his first visit to China in 1987. "Coming to SYA was an opportunity to, every year, be part of a similar process for kids. China was on the rise, and still is. Kids who spend a year here when they are 17 have a chance to be a front-row spectator to a lot of stuff, and I just wanted to be a part of that."



A peace blessing bestowed by a local monk, 2004

Twelve years ago, Jeff was teaching Chinese language at Marquette University, in Milwaukee, when he stumbled on an online advertisement for the SYA opening. Having taught at the high school level before earning his PhD in Chinese languages and literature at the University of Wisconsin, he knew something was missing. His job at Marquette left him feeling unfulfilled. “My interest in China was more of a visceral, on-the-ground interest,” he remembers.

“Teaching at Marquette wasn’t pushing any buttons. I was interested in working with high school kids instead of college kids. One night, while folding laundry in my room, I went online and found an ad for the [SYA] Resident Director position. I just looked at it and thought, ‘This is the coolest job there is, the answer to my dreams.’ So I applied. I couldn’t have written a cooler job description.”

The program then was still in its infancy. Having been established five years earlier, it had just expanded to a full-year program in 1998. Jeff credits his predecessor, Resident Director John McLoughlin, with laying the foundation but also remembers the difficulties of operating in China in the late 90s.

“Being there that first year was a lot like running and pulling your pants up at the same time,” he recalls with a laugh. “We ran into roadblocks because we were foreigners and people were nervous. There weren’t a lot of foreigners then. We were living with Chinese families and traveling around. I would receive regular visits from the police. I had to spend a lot of time reassuring people that things were cool, that nobody was going to lose his job. So that was a challenge, convincing officialdom that we weren’t a risk.”

When Jeff arrived, SYA’s agreement with Er Fu Zhong, the Chinese public high school where SYA leases office and classroom space, stipulated that SYA students would be taught Chinese by Er Fu Zhong faculty. Although the agreement helped SYA get a foothold in China, it presented Jeff with several chal-

lenges. “It wasn’t a good fit for a variety of reasons,” he says. “There were differences of pedagogy and standards. I had very little direct control over the teachers. I didn’t train them, and they had commitments to their Er Fu Zhong classes.”

So Jeff set about changing the agreement. When Er Fu Zhong was tasked by the Chinese Ministry of Education with implementing a plan for ambitious growth that would expand the size of the campus and turn the school into a Chinese “model” school, Jeff saw an opportunity. He volunteered to relieve the high school’s teachers of their responsibilities at SYA, and they agreed. Then he contacted a handful of former SYA students who had returned to China and were experiencing or had experienced a college study-abroad program. With input from his former students, Jeff began to identify and recruit standout teachers from Beijing college Chinese language programs like the Inter-University Program for Chinese Language Studies at Tsinghua (IUP) and Princeton in Beijing (PiB). In short order, he had recruited a faculty of well-trained and hardworking teachers who were forward-thinking and ambitious enough to make the leap from the more entrenched university programs to the up-and-coming SYA.

“We hired good people, but Zhang Tong was and is our unlikely, unassuming rock star,” Jeff says, referring to SYA’s longstanding Chinese language chair. A Peking University graduate, Zhang Tong had taught at Yale, IUP and Beloit College (in Wisconsin), and was in charge of training new teachers at IUP before Jeff persuaded her to make the leap to SYA. “Once she took over the responsibilities of running the Chinese program,” Jeff says. “It went from a collection of smart, dedicated teachers to a well-oiled machine with evaluations, assessments and meetings to make goals and integrate Chinese into the curriculum.” Jeff also credits Zhang Tong with identifying other talented teachers and recruiting them. Over the course of her tenure, she has been responsible for luring more than a half-dozen Chinese language teachers to the school.

With the language faculty and curriculum in place, Jeff began to put together the other pieces of a puzzle that would eventually turn SYA China, as he puts it, “from a program into a school.” Not happy with a faculty of temporary teachers who rotated through every year or two, he set about locating teachers willing to make a long-term commitment to China and to the school. He eventually secured master teachers Hilde Becker, a PhD candidate now in her eighth



SYA China Faculty, 2009-10. From left (front): Shi Lili, Tim Pettus, Cheng Hairong, Shi Hongyu, Ma Ningwei, Guo Sijia, Tie Jiao and Ding Xuesong. (back): Steve Morison, Shen Penghua, Hilde Becker, Shen Yu, Li Yan, Li Xuedong, Zhang Tong and Jeff Bissell

year at SYA, and Tim Pettus, a mathematics teacher and AP Calculus wizard with previous experience at Phillips Exeter and St. Marks, who is also in his eighth year at SYA.

Perhaps his final challenge was the remaking of the English curriculum. Jeff sought to require books and assignments of SYA China's English class that are "more relevant to the experience the kids are having in Beijing," he says. Three years ago he found and hired me, an English teacher who was enthusiastic about working with Jeff to develop a syllabus that integrates classical and contemporary Chinese authors in translation with selected authors and works from the canon of American literature. Jeff credits the changes with reinvigorating interest in English among students who already commit more than five hours a day to Chinese language study.

But as anybody who has spent more than a day on any one of SYA's campuses must surely realize, Jeff's job as a Resident Director demands more than just a commitment to curriculum design. For the last 11 years, Jeff has been SYA China's day-to-day leader, a job that requires he stay as flexible as a Wuqiaoan acrobat as he shape-shifts from motivational speaker one moment to firm taskmaster the next. As Resident Director, Jeff is accustomed to fielding telephone calls from the United States at two in the morning or being awakened in the middle of a chilly night in Fujian Province while sleeping in a tulo to hear that one of his charges is throwing up and needs attention.

Jeff and wife, LeeAnn, raised their own two kids in Beijing even as Jeff served in *loco parentis* to countless SYA kids. Kristoffer "Kro" Bauer CN'01 is one former student who credits Jeff with having a powerful impact both during Kro's time in the program and in his life subsequent to SYA. "I was probably the most homesick kid in the history of SYA China, but Jeff would talk with me," Kro remembers. "It was because of him that I stuck it out." Kro has long since recovered from his homesickness and is now a successful entrepreneur based in Beijing, where he oversees, in addition to other projects, the popular Tube Station Bistros and Kro's Nest pizza restaurants.

At the most fundamental level, Jeff simply loves working with kids. "Watching the kids gain increased self-confidence, increased independence, increased sensitivity and humility." When I ask him to describe the favorite part of his job, he answers quickly: "watching

them have eureka experiences. From: I can do this? To: I can do this!"

He says he's lost track of how many students have returned to China but swears it's in the hundreds. "They're doing incredible things," he says, "everything from working with businesses, to working with NGOs, to using Fulbright grants to implement research projects, to working in schools."

I ask him what he'll miss most. "There's nothing I won't miss," he says. The line goes quiet for a moment, and then he begins to list things: the food, his Chinese friends and colleagues, his relationships with the "good singers" in the SYA home office, his relationships with various SYA parents, the self-selecting students who make the

commitment to come to China for a year, the blossoming SYA library. "China is really the eye of the hurricane in the world," he says. "Life here is lived at a frenetic pace. The country changes so quickly that life from one year to the next is like being in a different place. I like being here with all this movement, speed and optimism."

He knows San Francisco will present new challenges, new adventures and new opportunities, but he hopes to maintain the relationships he's forged at SYA. "I look forward to supporting the organization any way I can in the future," he says. "Whether it's sending students to China, interviewing kids, helping out with projects . . . I plan on keeping a finger in the pie."

The winter wind is blustery in Beijing. It rattles my apart-

ment windows and groans like an arthritic ghost. Down in Yunnan, a car horn toots in the background behind Jeff. He asks if I have any more questions. I check on how things are going with the kids, and he reels off the highlights. Some are familiar to me—I was with him on this same trip a year ago—and some are new. What never changes, however, is the enthusiasm in Jeff's voice. It rings with all the bounce and excitement of a kid describing his first day with a new toy. Over the last 11 years, Jeff has transformed a nascent program into one of the most respected Chinese language schools in the country, he's traveled to remote regions with 50-plus kids more than 30 times and he's watched them thrill to new experiences and new acquaintances thousands of times. But listening to him tell me about his most recent week traveling through Jinghóng City with the students, you'd think it was still his first week on the job. ❧



Proud parents Jeff and LeeAnn Bissell with their children, Jillian and Joe.



Jeff and Professor Xue Anqin from Dalian, Liaoning province spent the summer of 1994 reading Zhou and Han Dynasty texts as part of his dissertation research.



Jeff and Ji Chun at the Great Mosque, 2003.

Event Highlights

Young Alumni in NYC

January 22, 2010



From left: FR'05ers Kelin Hall, Kate Dworkin and Taro Kuriyama



From left: VN'10ers Pamela Mishkin, Aliza Goldberg, Helene Dick (also FR'08) and faculty member Jeeyoung Choi ES'01



A great showing from ES'09 included, from left (front): Hannah Bardo, Ellie Stone, Hadley Siegel, Madison Newbound, Catherine Corbett; (back): Collier Searle, Tim Anstrim-Cashin, Maddy Wilson, Charlie Nesler, Will Robson and Joey "Pepe" Bahng

Young Alumni in Boston

November 13, 2009



From left: Liz Paisner CN'97, Peter Truog FR'07 and Michael Bordonaro CN'00



From left: Marc Aidinoff FR'07, Peter Truog FR'07, Liz Paisner CN'97, Jeremy Jarvis CN'08, Jazmin Rodriguez FR'08, Alexa Whiting FR'08, Sarah Lockwood FR'08, and Eddy Santana FR'08

SYA in London

February 11, 2010



From left: Trustees Natalie Bulgari ES'86 and Margaret Conklin FR'74 with Mira Stout FR'77



From left: Margaret Course Hicks FR'83, host Tom Sutherland ES'71, Trustee Margaret Conklin FR'74 and Jonathan Cole ES'82

SYA in Paris

February 9, 2010



Hosts Chris Olin FR'86, his wife Regan Pritzker and their daughter



Mirielle Eaton ES'04 CN'06 and Etienne Coulon ES'04



From left: Linda Brochu, SYA France RD Denis Brochu, John Finlay FR'68 and Claire Simmons FR'03



From left: FR'76ers David Holbrook and Will Iselin



From left: Pauline Chen FR'82 and Jessica Green FR'85

SYA in Beijing

May 10, 2010



From left, SYA China Resident Director-elect Frances Fremont-Smith, Ned Levin CN'03, Nahin Jorge IT'06, SYA China Resident Director Jeff Bissell, Sarah Burton CN'99, Shi Lili, Andrew Porter CN'03, Catherine Liu, John Gordon CN'98, Honora Shea CN'01, Matt Niederhauser CN'01, Ira Renfrew CN'01, Kevin Ching CN'01, Emory Williams ES'75 and Elisabeth Ramsey CN'05 welcomed Director of Alumni Relations Susan McLean to Beijing in May.

Generation SYA at U.S. Embassy, France



Ambassador Charles H. Rivkin FR'79, left, and Chief of Staff Daniel Dozier FR'00

Gilt moldings, crystal chandeliers, clipped boxwood and Louis XIV furnishings still set the style at the U.S. Embassy in Paris, but the American mission now adds an occasional dose of hipster culture. SYA's own Charles H. Rivkin FR'79, U.S. ambassador to France, recently hosted a young artist group, Bulie d'Ox, from the northern suburb of Bondy, to create a "graffiti happening" in the elegant garden of the Residence.

"The Residence is an important part of diplomacy," says Rivkin. "We're trying to open up the Residence in the same way that the Obamas are opening up the White House, bringing the Residence to people who never would have had access before. We're hosting representatives from disadvantaged communities, graffiti artists, musicians, wine tastings for thousands of people and putting on fashion-related events. We're also reaching out to the next generation of leaders. In France, that includes about 6 million Muslims who are not well integrated into French society."

And these occasions come off smoothly, the ambassador says, because Daniel Dozier FR'00 has brought new creativity and leadership to his role as chief of staff for the ambassador's Residence.

Dozier and the ambassador's wife, Susan Tolson, supervise a staff of 10 and operate, in the ambassador's words, "a mini hotel, conference center and restaurant." Dozier and Tolson create the themes for the events, set the menu, order the flowers and finalize the guest lists. They also handle daily practicalities for the ambassador and his family: ensuring that the ambassador's two teenage children get to school, arranging visits, ensuring that personal errands get done, and that the family dog, a terrier-boxer mix, gets walked.

Approximately 1,000 people work at the embassy and at the U.S. missions to the OECD and UNESCO. The 72,000-square-foot Residence, along with The Chancery and the Talleyrand buildings open their doors to tens of thousands each year. Some 53 U.S. government agencies have representatives at the embassy, and Rivkin oversees the U.S. consulates in seven smaller French cities, including Rennes, the home of SYA France.

A typical day in the Residence might feature breakfast for 40, lunch for six, a cocktail party for 100 and two or three speeches. Work there, and in other embassy buildings, might involve phone conferences about France's reintegration

into the command structure of the NATO and meetings about French President's Nicolas Sarkozy's first visit to the White House. It might end on a receiving line for 5,000 oenophiles tasting vintages from 50 wineries.

"When the president of the United States calls you up and asks you to be ambassador to France, you say yes," says Rivkin, who has managed major media companies and long been active in political and charity work in southern California. "It's sixteen hours a day, seven days a week. I don't think I've ever worked as hard in my life, but I love it. To have the chance to represent America at this moment in time, to step into a tradition that stretches back to Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, is an honor beyond words."

"I am not the Democratic Ambassador, I am the American Ambassador," says Rivkin. It's inspiring to serve at a time when the American president is a phenomenon in your host country. Obama is more popular in France these days than her own president and garners approval ratings of more than 80 percent. Kids in public housing wear HOPE T-shirts; the Obamas grace the covers of French magazines.

“The warmth of the welcome we’ve received is extraordinary,” Rivkin says.

The ambassador has spent his career in business, but the pace, protocol and public relations of diplomacy didn’t come as a complete surprise: Rivkin spent his early childhood in Francophone countries—Luxembourg, Senegal and Gambia—where his father, William R. Rivkin, served as ambassador under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Despite his early exposure, Rivkin says he had very little command of French when he arrived in Rennes in 1979, on leave from Chicago’s Francis W. Parker School. “My hosts, the wonderful Gervais family, spoke no English,” Rivkin remembers. “If I wanted them to pass the bread, I’d better learn how to say it quickly. It was the best way to learn a language: total immersion. I was fluent in six or seven months.”

Rivkin’s language skills improved so quickly during his SYA year that he was able to land an internship with the French carmaker

Renault. He returned to the United States to complete a BA in political science at Yale and then an MBA at Harvard. After a stint at Salomon Brothers, Rivkin joined the Jim Henson Co., of Muppets fame, and eventually rose to the position of president and chief executive officer there. In 2005, he worked for a children’s television production company that created programs for Nickelodeon.

After being involved in politics for many years, he became co-chairman of finance for the Obama campaign in southern California in 2006. “I did it because whether or not Obama would become president, I thought he *should* become president,” says Rivkin. His brother, Robert FR’77 and his wife, Moelis, had been friends with the Obamas for decades. The ambassador’s sister-in-law occasionally traveled with Michelle Obama on the long road to victory.

Dan Dozier came to a similar conclusion about Obama’s candidacy at just about the same time. After traveling around the world writing a thesis on sustainable tourism, Dozier graduated with honors from Georgetown University. He moved to Paris and worked



Ambassador Rivkin welcomed U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to the embassy earlier this year.



Ambassador Rivkin with actor Samuel L. Jackson

for a travel agency catering to English-speaking tourists. But when the father of his SYA host family died suddenly, Dozier reappraised what he was doing.

Obama inspired him. Dozier decided to move back to the United States and joined the Chicago headquarters in March 2007; he signed on as the campaign's 200th employee.

Dozier became the Americans Abroad finance director for both the Obama campaign and the Democratic National Committee. He traveled the world raising money. He took Obama's sister, Maya Soetoro Ng, to Mexico City and did an event with Michelle Obama in London. George Clooney headlined a fundraiser in Geneva; Natalie Portman drew in donors in Paris.

After Obama's election and Rivkin's nomination to the post of ambassador, a mutual acquaintance sent the younger SYA alum's résumé to Rivkin. "One of the things that attracted me to hire

Daniel was his experience at School Year Abroad," Ambassador Rivkin says. "His French is impeccable."

Rivkin says that during his SYA year, he came to love the *esprit critique* of the French. "They love to discuss and debate world affairs," Rivkin says. "They're engaged citizens of the world."

The ambassador says he loves the give-and-take, the discussions at the events that Dozier helps to make possible. "One day it will be lunch with a group of farmers; the next, it will be industrialists. We bring in the creative community, journalists and artists. It's fascinating," he says.

Being ambassador has opened up lots of new perspectives, not the least of which is empathy for the work of a receiving line. "After you've shaken the hands of several thousand people at a reception and your hand is swollen, you have a new appreciation for what politicians go through," Rivkin says. "When I get back to reality, next time I shake hands with a politician, I'll go easy on him." 🇫🇷

Communication as an agent of change

If you've ever gotten lost in the cyber byways of fedworld.gov, if you've ever had to figure out how one environmental nonprofit is different from another, it's difficult to imagine a world without an excess of public information. Yet Paul Dezendorf ES'65 says that's exactly the situation in Russia, where he's completing a year as a Fulbright scholar.

"One of the major challenges for Russia is to bring people of different backgrounds and walks of life together," explains Dezendorf, a lecturer at Western Carolina University. "The government-public communications available in many other countries is really lacking in Russia."

Despite this, Dezendorf has found that Russians are intensely interested in the notion that communications may actually be central to successful administration, not only as a low-cost tool for improving government effectiveness but also as a way to increase the public's confidence in government.

"Russian government is a pervasive influence in Russian life," says Dezendorf. "In my interviews with young people, I find a respect for the challenges facing the government but a resignation about how government is run. In particular, the students in my classes see government as lacking communications skills."

Dezendorf, who is being hosted by the State University-Higher School of Economics in Moscow, has developed a symposium method to advance the concept of government public relations to a large audience. He brings together 35 to 50 people from different sectors—government, academe, nonprofits—for closed-door sessions. There, people who otherwise might never meet each other, much less have a substantive exchange of ideas, can freely discuss ways to promote communication that serves mutual goals.

Dezendorf has a master's in social work and a PhD in public health and has taught humanities, public health and public relations at several universities. He says he never would have become involved in this field if it weren't for his School Year Abroad experience in Barcelona.

"That year enormously expanded my perspective on the world while focusing me on the question: 'Who gets what and why?'" he says. "In Barcelona, the courses on Spanish history and the reality of Franco's Spain focused me on the cycle of success and failure of societies. I kept coming back to the two themes that run through my adult life: communications and change."

At some level, leaders have used public relations since before the Romans came up with the idea of bread and circuses. But as a formal discipline, it emerged about 200 years ago, Dezendorf says. During the first half of the 20th century, PR was central to the education of public administrators.

Then the idea fell into disfavor, Dezendorf says. The Madison Avenue culture of the 1950s and 1960s bred faith in the idea that the public could be sold anything. Government tried to use these newly sophisticated tools, with disastrous results: Vietnam, and Watergate, for example. For a time, U.S. tax dollars could not even be used to hire public relations specialists.

In recent years, as the media landscape has changed radically with cell phones, the Internet and social networks, the science of public relations has also changed, and begun again to gain favor, Dezendorf says. "It's entering a 'fourth generation,'" he says, "away from manipulative, one-way models."

It's an idea that's gaining traction in Russia. The top executives from eBay, Twitter and Mozilla recently headed a delegation that traveled to Moscow to discuss how online social networks might be used to combat corruption, human trafficking and other social problems. Dezendorf has received speaking invitations from all over the country: Saratov, Ekaterinburg, Novosibirsk. The U.S. embassy in Moscow has expressed interest in Dezendorf's work, and his Fulbright was extended because of the success of his discussion sessions.



Paul Dezendorf ES'65

Those are the ideas that also seem to capture the imagination of those who attend Dezendorf's sessions. "In Yaroslavl, a historic city north of Moscow, I participated in a daylong symposium about the communications between the government and the people," Dezendorf says. "The discussions started slowly, then heated up and continued well past closing. The participants themselves were surprised by the vigor and detail of the discussion."

The most rewarding experience, Dezendorf says, has been watching the younger generation of his Moscow students and teachers come around.

"Students at first were dubious about the topic: 'Russia will never change! No Russian government really wants to communicate,' they complained," Dezendorf says. "As they applied the classroom teaching to practical projects, they began to realize that change is already occurring in Russia. The president now blogs and answers questions, Russian government is beginning to increase its public communications. By the end of the course, most of the students were convinced that improved government-public communications was vital. They saw how change could come about in Russia." 🌐

El Camino de Santiago: The Journey of Life



Lydia Smith ES '81

In 2007, filmmaker Lydia Smith ES'81 found herself at one of those crossroads that the middle years often present: A relationship had broken up, a house had sold, a project had ended and she found herself bemoaning her lack of partner, home and employment.

"Then it occurred to me: Why not take advantage of not having all those things?" Smith says.

So, in the spring of 2008, Smith did just that. She returned to Spain to spend five weeks walking El Camino de Santiago, 450 miles across northern Spain, a network of routes pilgrims have trod for more than a millennium. As she progressed step by step to Santiago de Compostela, where it's believed the remains of St. James the Apostle are entombed under the cathedral, Smith reveled in the mixing of cultures, religions and personalities along the Camino. Gradually, the pilgrimage began to do its work; Smith says she gradually became more "herself."

Smith had built a successful career producing and camera assisting on projects all over the world: educational films televised in the United States, France, Spain and Japan; documentaries on subjects as varied as hemodialysis, child sexual abuse and

Colombia's peace movement; television shows and commercials in Spain; music videos. She helped market and distribute an Academy Award-winning film on nuclear disarmament. In Los Angeles, she worked on the film "Ed Wood" with actor/director Danny DeVito.

"And yet, in some ways, I was always trying to be someone else," Smith says. "On the Camino, I realized I just had to be me. I didn't have to be a leader, but I could lead. And what that meant was doing a film about the Camino. Of course, I had doubts: 'It's too magical. It's too hard.' Then I thought, 'Who could be better? I'm bilingual. I'm a filmmaker. I'm a spiritual practitioner.'"

Smith returned to California, raised enough money to shoot the film and recruited cameramen and sound people from her extensive contacts in the industry. She returned to the Camino in 2009 as a director with a team, cameras and microphones. Over the course of two months, the crew would walk awhile, then interview some pilgrims, then walk some more. Sometimes the crew luxuriated in the donated rooms of fancy hotels, sometimes they crashed on cots in the rustic hostels that punctuate the major Camino routes, of which there are several.

The Camino saw its height of popularity in the 11th and 12th centuries, when the faithful made the pilgrimage to gain admission to heaven. Today, approximately 150,000 walk the route in a typical year. Some walk for spiritual reasons, some to grapple with personal problems. Others see it as cheap tourism, or as a fitness challenge.

In the end, the team focused on about a dozen pilgrims: for example, a Danish woman who came to the Camino alone and fell in love, a Spanish guy, a Brazilian, an Italian. The final film will probably focus on six pilgrims, Smith says.

"People go for so many reasons. What most people don't realize is that only twenty percent of those who do the Camino are Catholic. It's open to all faiths," Smith says. "The real point is to show that each person has his or her own journey to make. It's a metaphor for life. We each have to find our own Camino."

Smith returned to the United States with about 300 hours of footage. She has produced a 23-minute trailer to raise the next round of money needed to complete the editing of the Camino documentary (www.caminodocumentary.org). Smith estimates this last stage will take nine months. She's in negotiations with PBS, a Catholic production company, Spanish tourism authorities and several other possible partners. The team hopes to finish production by the end of 2010, a *vacavejo* year when St. James's Day falls on a Sunday. In these "holy years," Camino pilgrims who make it to Compostela have all their sins forgiven. Authorities expect 250,000 to make the trek and receive that extra dose of grace.

"This film just would not have happened without SYA," Smith says. "I wouldn't have the love for Spain. I wouldn't have known about the Camino. I wouldn't have had the language skills necessary for the project. SYA gave me what the Camino's given me: Not everybody lives the same way. Difference is not a matter of right and wrong."

And as for a partner, a home and employment? Smith says she now has all three once again. "I have the best job I could imagine: making and promoting this film," she says. "I'm in a wonderful relationship. I live in a floating house in Portland, Oregon."

The Camino, apparently, works in mysterious ways. 🍷

The Gift of Family and Friendship

By Maddy Butcher Gray FR'82 ES'08P FR'10P



The elder brothers and sisters of the second generation,
from left: Aidan ES'08, Beau FR'10, Alix, Blanche and Cormick



With my French brother, Patrice Moyon

Every once in a while, you roll a Yahtzee!

And what a thrill to hit the jackpot.

That's how I feel about School Year Abroad and the tremendous gift of family and friendship that this year was passed on to a second generation of my host family and to my son, Beau Gaughran FR'10.

It all started when I headed off to Rennes as a naïve 16-year-old public school girl from Maine. I was placed with Michel and Bernadette Moyon at 31 rue du Champ de l'Orme, a middle-class family in a middle-class neighborhood.

Middle class perhaps, but far from middle-of-the-road.

The Moyons were top-notch as host families go. I soaked up their hospitality like I soaked up Madame Moyon's homemade soup with a piece of baguette.

In hindsight, I realize not every SYAer might have matched up so well with the Moyons. They had their eccentricities. But so did I. And I think more often than not, SYAers and host families relish the commonalities, dismiss the weaknesses of relationships, and mesh the best they can.

My French brother, Patrice, and I hit it off famously.

After most dinners, Patrice and I would do the dishes: I would wash, he would rinse and dry. We talked and laughed about the day, his crazy but lovable father, our latest running routes, his terrible English and my passable French.

I suppose I shouldn't be telling you, but on rainy days, we'd surreptitiously peel the most colorful, artful and witty posters off billboards, strap them to our bikes, and hustle them home. After they dried in the Moyons' cellar, we'd proudly hang them in our rooms.

After I returned to the U.S., it wasn't long before Patrice visited. My folks and I

learned Patrice wasn't big on planning. He would usually call from

the general store five miles up the road and say, in his heavily accented English, "*'ello! Eets Patrice. I'm in Brunswick. Please come and get me?*"

A few years later, he brought his new wife, Agnes. She was and continues to be the sister I never had. One summer, Agnes and I traveled from Massachusetts to Montana and back.

With our four kids.

In a Toyota station wagon.

I memorialized it in a front-page, mostly humorous travelogue for the *Boston Globe* travel section.

So Patrice and Agnes's oldest daughter, Alix, was part of my life before she could talk. And Agnes witnessed Beau's toddler temper tantrums long before he matured into a level-headed teenager!

That Maine teenager appeared at 31 rue du Champ de l'Orme this September as part of the SYA France class of 2010.

His host family includes five, count 'em, five younger siblings! They range in age from Alix, 12, to Oscar, 4.

Over New Year's break, my sons, Aidan ES'08 and Cormick, and I visited Beau and the Moyons. It was a week packed with my true family as I have come to know and love them. Days were filled with rowdy dinners, trips en masse to the open market in the city center and not-so-quiet walks in the park (with balls, scooters and mud-encrusted shoes and pants).

Patrice continues to bike everywhere, although I don't think he nabs posters anymore.

Agnes, her daughters and I share a passion for horses. And they gave me a tour of their home stables, just outside Rennes.

The Moyons are a crazy, intellectual, loving, active and vibrant family. And Beau, like me nearly 30 years ago, is privileged to spend time in the thick of it.

Thank you, SYA!



Beau FR'10 sharing Go Fish tips with host brother, Oscar

Faculty News

Former SYA China English instructor and writer **Phil Gambone** has a new book—his fourth—coming out in June. *Travels in a Gay Nation: Portraits of LGBTQ Americans*, is a collection of profiles of prominent and interesting gay Americans. Phil made sure to feature several Asian American voices in the book, including Arthur Dong, a Chinese American documentary filmmaker and George Takei, the Japanese American “Mr. Sulu” from *Star Trek*.



Álvaro Álvila de la Torre, art history teacher at SYA Spain recently published his doctoral thesis, *Arquitectura y Urbanismo en Zamora (1850-1950)*, published by the Provincial Government of Zamora. He also published an article about Art Nouveau architecture in *European Art Nouveau Network* magazine. He is currently working on a lecture for a national art history conference, and at the end of this year, he will publish a biography of Francesc Ferriol, a Catalan Art Nouveau architect.



Lo Drago the Cammenòt, a novel by SYA Italy’s ancient history teacher **Santo Sammartino**, is written in an imaginary language that might have been spoken in 13th century central Italy. The text follows its own grammatical rules emphasising the “oral musical effects of combining words from different linguistic roots.” As such, the book has been presented as a performance, in theatres and in open-air spaces at Middle Age festivals. The performance is influenced by the Italian *cantastorie* tradition; professional storytellers who would go from village to village, entertaining people with the latest news. This is Santo’s second published book written after his first novel *Working Holidays*.



Santo Sammartino in concert

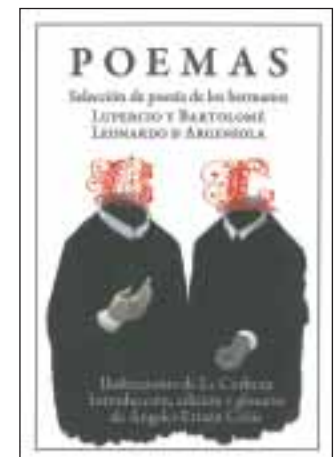


Antonio López-Piña, SYA Spain political science teacher, has published his first play, *La Pieza*. A performance of conflicts in three acts, the play attempts to show the contradictions and injustices which individuals face daily without having even the slightest chance of overcoming them in any real, effective way. Opening night is on the not-so-distant horizon; break a leg, Antonio!



Katia Delle Monache, left, and Alessandra Tuzi

Italian language teachers **Katia Delle Monache** and **Alessandra Tuzi** are studying to receive a master’s degree in teaching Italian as a foreign language at the University Ca’ Foscari of Venice. The yearlong program prepares teachers not only in teaching but in promoting Italian both in Italy and abroad, and is recognized by the European Union.



Ángeles Errazu Colás, Spanish literature and journalism teacher, edited and wrote the introduction to a collection of poems written by the d Argensola brothers, 17th-century Zaragozans who were both writers and official city historians. The book, *Poemas, Selección de poesía los hermanos Lupericio and Bartolomé Leonardo d Argensola*, is one of five to which Ángeles has made a significant contribution or fully authored. She has also published scores of newspaper and magazine articles.

Your gift
makes a
difference!

謝謝您 *Merci* *Danke* *Grazie* धन्यवाद *Gracias* cảm ơn *Thank-you*

“ Having grown up in France and then living for many years in the United States with an American wife, it was important to me that our four children not only learn to speak French but also to understand French culture. Édouard Herriot, a member of the Academie Française before World War II, famously wrote, *‘La culture, c’est ce qui reste quand on a tout oublié.’* Today, our children may have oublié, forgotten, who designed Chambord or what year Napoleon was crowned emperor, but they retain the culture: they still speak fluent French, feel comfortable in France and remember fondly the day-to-day life with their French families in Rennes. They came to understand France while experiencing what all four describe as one of the very best years of their academic lives. They were willing to take the risk of a year away, they learned a great deal and, perhaps most important, they gained a level of maturity that prepared them well for college and life.



We all support SYA because there is no other institution that offers such a special experience to so many students in so many countries. Being fluent in other languages and being citizens of the world are increasingly important, and SYA without doubt leads that cultural globalization effort among high school students.

Daniel Zilkha

FATHER OF LEONORA FR'90, NATHANIEL FR'93, REBECCA FR'95 AND ZMIRA FR'03



SCHOOL YEAR ABROAD

439 South Union Street Lawrence, MA 01843

T 978.725.6828 F 978.725.6833 www.sya.org

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 411

Waterbury, CT

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



12
09
15
alumni

countries with alumni

6
SYA schools

389
families with multiple SYAers

faculty and staff

8
07

There is strength in numbers...

1964
founding year

45
years SYA has been teaching



1

...that's why we need you.

One person can make a difference.

imagine...

What would the world be like if more of tomorrow's leaders could spend a year with SYA?

You can make a difference. Please support SYA with your gift today.

LEADERSHIP GIVING

- \$50,000 President's Circle
- \$25,000 1964 Founders' Society
- \$10,000 Global Society
- \$5,000 Ambassadors
- \$2,500 Diplomats
- \$1,500 Bridge Builders
- \$500 Internationalists

Young Alumni:

- \$100 World Citizens (8-12 years out)
- \$25 World Citizens (up to 7 years out)

giving.sya.org