



Unforgettable internship in Kenya

Through the Vesalius Internship Programme, two VeCo students got the opportunity to take an internship with the Giraffe Project in Nairobi, Kenya, in the summer of 2010. The Giraffe Project is a UK registered children's charity, working in extremely deprived areas of Nairobi, Kenya. It aims to provide educational opportunities for children and young people from Nairobi's vast slums.

Arsola Dalipi gives us a glimpse of her experience. For her full story, please go to www.vesalius.edu.

"My role in this internship was an administrative and management one, but it gave me so much more. I learned how an NGO actually works and how to manage a project. Another important thing that I gained was the value of team work. The good collaboration between the locals and us, "the foreigners", was an important factor of the success of the organization.

In one instance, my colleague Elin and I

were giving business seminars and I assumed that talking about business to teenagers would be easy, but I did not take into account that those teenagers were from the slums and had a totally different background. Luckily, Elin had done research in this field and took the Kenyan backgrounds into account, and together we managed to perform a good business seminar that was useful for the teenagers as well.

Coming from Albania, a very poor country, I thought I was somehow accustomed to poverty. One might do research or see pictures on the internet, but seeing extreme poverty is hard; and the first thing you feel is guilt, for the many useless things you have and for the fact that those kids do not even have the basic elements that we would consider standard for life. Then you learn to see things from a different point of view and you realise that you can actually live without having a Louis Vuitton bag, wine and a TV.

I admire Kenyan people's positive thinking. I was impressed with how happy they seemed. One of the school teachers said: "We have to appreciate what we have, because there are many who have so much less. We mustn't compare ourselves with those who have gone ahead of us, but we should look behind us. Then we appreciate where we are now."

Doing this internship in Kenya was the best thing I have done in my life. This experience benefited me as a person. Now I am going to be more careful in my decisions and I will remember that there are people less fortunate than me. This experience was more than a business internship, it was a life lesson."

Elin Anna Jónasdóttir gives us a glance of her experience. For her full story, please go to www.vesalius.edu.

"The day I arrived in Kenya, at Nairobi airport, I was ecstatic. Everything seemed so different and simply riding in the car from the airport was an experience.





On my second day I faced more than 30 people who had signed up for my business seminar. My purpose was to introduce young people to business, to try to get them to "think outside the box," and to introduce the concept of innovative thinking and entrepreneurship. It was an exciting but unnerving experience. I could feel how these people believed in me and I did not want to disappoint them. I never imagined that my education in business could become grounds for really helping people, the way I experienced it in Kenya.

After my seminar, a group of women called 'the bead craft ladies' asked me for advice with regards to their business. These women were a great inspiration to me. They have been through so much hardship without losing faith and are extremely joyful, giving and energetic. These women gave me something of such value; they gave me a gift that has altered my vision of life.

This was such a meaningful internship and the memory and experience will stay with me forever. I fell in love with the country and the people. It showed me that happiness has nothing to do with material objects; it has to do with what you make of what you have. What I learned in the slums of Kenya is that even though people do not have much money or material objects, they seem happier than all the people I see everyday in Brussels.

Although my experience in Kenya benefited me greatly as a business major student and as an intern, it is invaluable to me as a young woman, planning her future and trying to find herself in the world."

When Theory Meets Practice: EPSS Guest Lecture Series 2010

October 2010 saw the launch of the successful Guest Lecture Series of the *European Peace and Security Studies (EPSS) Programme*. It allowed students to draw on the experience, expertise and views of key EU, UN and NATO practitioners. The special format of the lecture series (40 minutes lecture, 30 minutes Q&A, followed by a reception where students can deepen the discussion informally with the guest lecturer over a glass of wine) allowed students to actively engage with specialists and senior policy-makers on a very personal and informal level.

General Gabor Horvath, Director of Concepts and Planning of the EU's Military Staff, explained in the first lecture the role of the military in the EU's foreign policy. Colonel Christof Tatschl, the former Chief of Staff of the UN Peacekeeping Brigade and current counselor of the Austrian representation to NATO and the UN delivered an engaging lecture to an audience of more than 70 students on the future of international peacekeeping.

The remaining lectures focused on the EU's and UN's approach to terrorism as well as the EU's approach to the financial crisis. As the organizer of the lecture series, Professor Joachim Koops, noted: "the lectures have proved to be hugely popular among students since it successfully bridges theory and practice and actually highlights to students how relevant their EPSS studies are to the real world of European security politics".

Academic News:

[Prof Dr Magaly Rodríguez García](#) published *Liberal Workers of the World, Unite? The ICFTU and the Defence of Labour Liberalism in Europe and Latin America (1949-1969)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010). She wrote the conclusions for and co-edited (with Jasmien Van Daele, Geert Van Goethem & Marcel van der Linden) *ILO Histories. Essays on the International Labour Organization and its Impact on The World During the Twentieth Century* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010).

[Prof Dr Leo Van Hove](#) jointly published (with V.A. Bleyen) "To Bundle or Not to Bundle? How Western European Newspapers Package Their Online Content," *Journal of Media Economics* 23 Nr. 3 (2010): 117-142 and (with V.A. Bleyen and M. Hartmann) "Classifying Payment Instruments: A Matryoshka Approach," *Communications & Strategies*, 79 Nr 3 (2010): 73-94.

[Prof Bruno De Vuyst](#) published "Octrooien en de voedingsindustrie: een inleiding" in *FS & Law* 3 (2010): 15-23; and *Handboek Databanken* (Brugge: Die Keure, 2010).

[Prof Dr Georgios Terzis](#) has been elected to Senior Associate Membership of St. Antony's College, U Oxford. He will use this fellowship to advance his research on the development of Pan-European Media and the evolution of EU reporting. He was also recently an invited keynote speaker by the European Economic and Social Committee of the EU, in Brussels, where he presented the topic "Civic Participation and Media Governance Systems."

In July, [Prof Dr Ilse Scheerlinck](#) gave two lectures during the Summer Course on "Energy", organized by BEST (Board of European Students of Technology) Group Brussels. Located at the VUB, BEST is a local member of an international student network that strives to help European students of technology to become more internationally minded. In her lectures, she mainly focused on the micro- and macroeconomic aspects of energy from a global and European perspective by dealing with topics such as "the role of gas and oil in the macroeconomy" and "the market structure in the electricity and gas industries.[WLC]



“Mastering your career and maximizing your search for new job opportunities”

On 26 October Vesalius College organised a networking event for alumni and senior students in cooperation with the Institute for European Studies (IES). Over 25 people came together to talk about career building.

After a serious economic recession, the first signs of recovery are beginning to show. How do we assess if we are still challenged in our job? Which strategy can we use to achieve a career change? What is the right timing? What are the do's and don'ts in CV writing.

These were only a few of the issues that Alexandre Paternotte de La Vaillée, senior partner at AHEAD Executive Search with over 27 years of experience in executive search, addressed in a workshop. He gave valuable insight on how to prepare for a next career step. AHEAD, a well respected Executive Search firm based in Brussels, searches and selects talented professionals for their clients, admired employers across a range of sectors, including Fortune 500 companies and other multinationals, top consulting firms and start-up enterprises.

The workshop was followed by an informal reception where students and alumni could get personal career advice and exchange their experiences. [WN]

UNeECC Conference in Pécs, Hungary

In October 2010 I attended a conference hosted by University Network of the European Capitals of Culture (UNeECC) in Pécs, Hungary. I was fortunate enough to spend two days in Budapest while travelling to and from the conference. Budapest is a beautiful city--I saw the Castle District, downtown area, and Parliament.

UNeECC is a network of academics who do research on how the EU's European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) program impacts cities. They prepare research and give presentations on the positive and negative sides of ECoC, the impact on the cities, the spread of culture, etc. I participated in the student workshop, where a group of student government representatives provided a student's perspective on the ECoC. There were twenty students in our group from Ireland to Turkey! We represented universities in cities that have been, currently are, or will be ECoCs. (Brussels was a European Capital of Culture in 2000.)

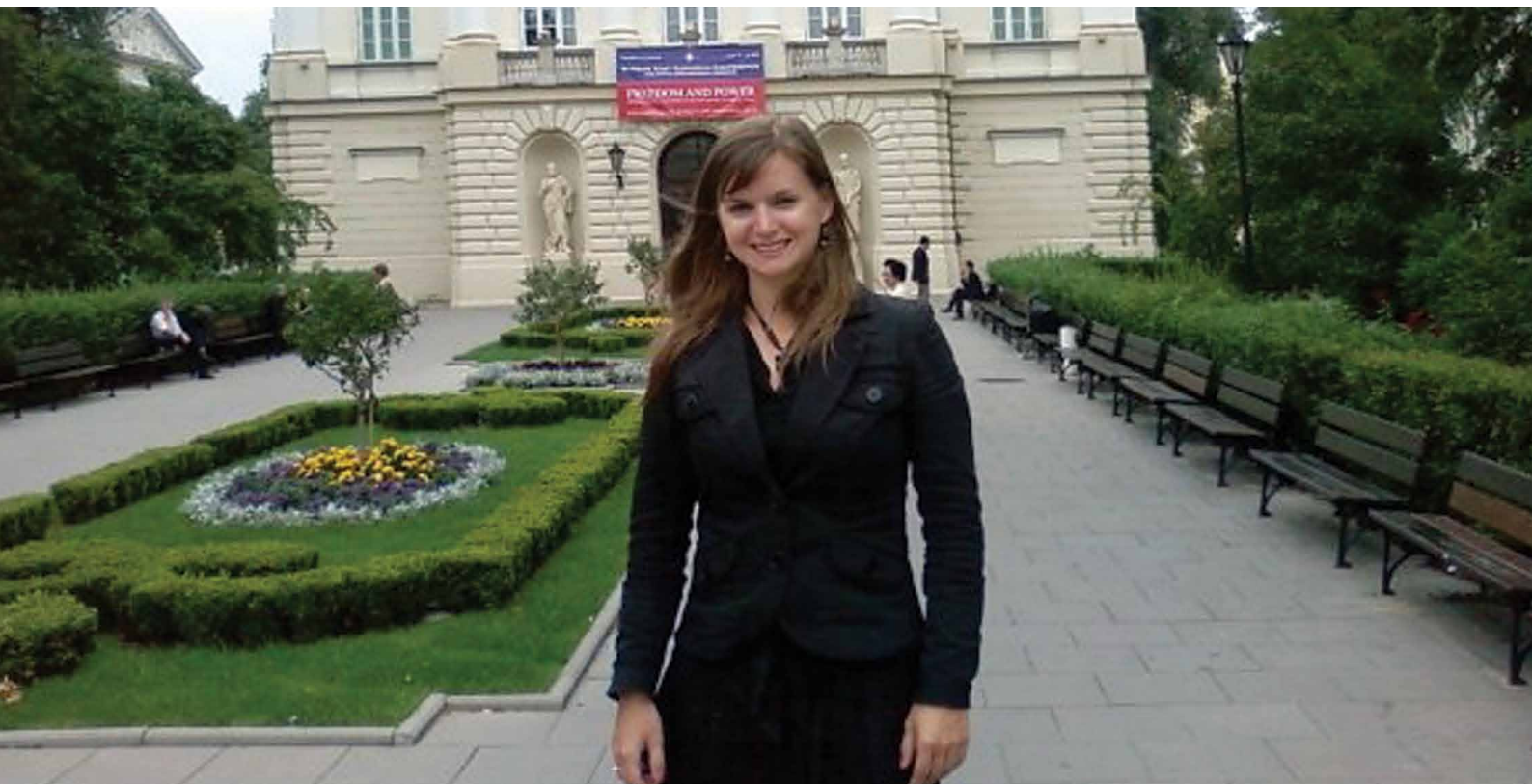
The first day we gave presentations on our cities. It was fascinating to learn about places all over Europe and how the ECoC really changes some cities. The second day we worked in small groups to discuss problems and goals for the student committee's involvement in the ECoC program and how we can create a network of student representatives. This network would be used to exchange ideas about student government at different universities and to help spread the word about the events that go on in each ECoC. We created a magazine to summarize our ideas and suggestions for improvements to present to the academics.

In the evenings, we shared some typical traditional Hungarian food and we would go out and experience nightlife. Luckily there were four Hungarian students who knew their way around and could talk for us because most people didn't speak English or French. It always surprises me how quickly a group of strangers can become fast friends. I'd recommend any type of student conference to all VeCo students. Keep your eyes open because there are several opportunities throughout the year to travel, learn, and make new friends.

Marina Lynch

International Affairs, Class of 2012

Vesalius College: An international environment, but also a springboard to further travels around the world



Following my Bachelor's degree in International Affairs at Vesalius College, I moved to Canada for my Master's degree in Political Science at Dalhousie University. While there, I began publishing and presenting at conferences, and during my last semester, I completed an internship at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium to Bulgaria. This destination was not entirely surprising, since I had had the opportunity to study at the American University in Bulgaria as a Visiting Student during my last year at Vesalius College. I am currently working on a PhD in European Studies with the Monash European and EU Centre, a research centre at Melbourne University that is co-funded by the European Commission.

One aspect of Vesalius College education that I would like to highlight is the transferable skill set taught by the many memorable lecturers and professors at Vesalius College: critical thinking; advanced-level writing for different audiences; and presentation skills (those endless presentations do come in handy when you need to present your work in front of hundreds of professionals!). When people come to you after a presentation, and time after time let you know that they appreciate how clear your talk was, it reminds you

that communicating ideas is as important as having them in the first place!

As a political scientist, I find the well-rounded program at Vesalius College an important component in preparing for further education at the graduate level by ensuring that you are well-equipped to take on the rigours of graduate studies. If you prefer to begin working after graduation, the Vesalius College Internship Program provides you with an opportunity to familiarise yourself with the intensely competitive Brussels work environment and obtain invaluable local experience. Vesalius College is an excellent way to get a foot in the door, whether you are interested in research, policy, lobbying, PR, or journalism.

One thing you can count on is that no matter where you travel to, you can be sure to find a VeCo alumnus, and no matter how long you are gone for, there will be many VeCo friends back in Brussels! Vesalius is an international environment, but also a springboard to further travels around the world.

Philippine Colson

International Affairs, Class of 2007



Vesalius College Brussels

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