

# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE NEWSLETTER

DEC 7, 2021

## This Issue

**Pre-Departure Orientation/  
Packing for Abroad**

Page 02

**Recent Events**

Page 03

**International Student  
Thanksgiving in the US**

Page 04

**Study Abroad  
Student Spotlight**

Page 05

**International  
Student Spotlight**

Page 06

**Program Spotlight/  
Contact**

Page 07





## Study Abroad Set to Reopen in Spring 2022

For the first time in nearly two years, SUNY Cortland students will be studying abroad this spring. The State of New York has approved the SUNY Education Abroad Relaunch Plan for Spring 2022. The group of students going abroad will be smaller than usual, and only to select approved locations that meet several safety criteria, including the University of Salamanca in Spain and the American University in Cairo in Egypt. Several Cortland students will be studying through Stony Brook University's Florence University of the Arts program in Italy. Participating students are required to be fully vaccinated and our partner universities can provide a full range of health and support services to students as needed.

The International Programs Office is now busy preparing these students for the cross-cultural experience of a lifetime. Typically held in-person, the Spring 2022 Study Abroad Pre-Departure Orientation will be held online on the evening of Thursday, December 9 at 6 p.m. IPO staff will cover topics related to cultural adjustment, health, safety, and COVID-19 protocols in detail. We wish all of our students preparing to study abroad the best of luck for a safe, fun, and fulfilling experience!

## Bon Voyage to our Fall 2022 Graduates and Exchange Students!

We also wish a fond farewell and safe travels to our two departing international student graduates and 17 exchange students. This group of students have contributed significantly to the cultural richness of our community; the diversity of perspectives in classrooms, residence halls, and clubs; and the spirit of intercultural collaboration, learning, and exchange on our campus. We will just say goodbye for now and hope these students, who will now be Cortland alumni, will visit us again soon. We look forward to seeing our returning international students and 22 new students in the spring!

## Packing Sustainably for Study Abroad!

As students prepare to head abroad next semester, the question of 'what to pack' comes to mind. How can you successfully pack for an entire semester abroad? It can be tempting to feel like you need to bring everything with you when you are away from home for 3-4 months, but the best advice is to go simple with your packing to save yourself headaches, baggage fees, and to reduce your individual carbon footprint. Packing light can give you less of a burden when abroad, and save your arms the soreness that comes with lugging suitcases around airports, train stations, and cobblestone streets. We encourage all students preparing to travel abroad or domestically to watch our video on **[Packing Sustainably for Study Abroad](#)**. Created by Shannon Delaney, IPO's Marketing and Communications student assistant, the short video covers the basics of what you need to do to pack successfully for any trip.



## RECENT EVENTS

### Visit to Marathon Central School

On Friday, December 3, a group of international students and a return study abroad student from SUNY Cortland visited local Marathon Central School and spoke with high school students about their respective countries. These students shared pictures of their home countries and study abroad destination, spoke about their experiences adjusting to new cultures and shared why the Marathon students should consider studying abroad in the future. Marathon students asked questions about food, holidays and more.

Representing SUNY Cortland were Lucy Harwood, a senior Professional Writing major, who studied abroad at Anglia Ruskin University in Spring 2020; Kelly Tait, a junior Political Science major from South Africa; William Gereke, an exchange student from German Sport University, representing Sweden; Alexandru-loan Popa, an exchange student from Babes-Bolyai University, representing Romania; Madhura Sengupta, an exchange student from University College Cork, representing Ireland; and Katharina Thies, an exchange student from German Sport University, representing Germany.

The visit to Marathon Central School was on the invitation of Principal Holly Marcolina '04, M '05. Marcolina is passionate about international education; in particular, her research interests include connecting rural schools to international opportunities. Prior to becoming principal in Marathon, she taught social studies in the Hudson Valley for 13 years. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Buffalo.

Both schools look forward to future collaborations.



### Syracuse Basketball Game

The International Programs Office organized a trip to the Syracuse University Men's Basketball game on Sunday, November 14. The 25 SUNY Cortland students had an opportunity to see a Division I basketball game in the Carrier Dome. The Carrier Dome, America's most famous and largest structure of its kind on a college campus. Students enjoyed watching the game and especially after halftime when Syracuse Orange helped build a huge lead and beat Drexel University 75-60. The International Programs Office would like to continue similar events and introduce a piece of U.S. culture through athletics and school spirit to students. This event was sponsored in part by a CAS Grant.





# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS EXPERIENCE THANKSGIVING IN THE UNITED STATES!

Every year, SUNY Cortland's faculty and staff demonstrated their generous spirit by inviting our international students into their homes for a Thanksgiving celebration. Thanksgiving allows the students to experience traditional U.S. American holiday foods and the warmth of family gatherings. Last week, John (Civic Engagement) and Kathy Suarez hosted Esra Ceker and Muhannet Altunsoy, both Dual Diploma TESOL students from Turkey. Jackie Morse (Cortland Auxiliary Services) hosted Nethravathi Bhupathi, a graduate student from India, and Chika Sato, an undergraduate from Japan. President Erik J. Bitterbaum and Ms. Ellen Howard Burton have also kindly hosted many international students and scholars for Thanksgiving over the years. Thanksgiving dinner is a wonderful way for SUNY Cortland community members to get involved and share a special holiday meal with international students and visitors. In addition to joining in local Thanksgiving celebrations, many of our international students took the break to travel and see other parts of the U.S. Others went home with their roommates and new American friends, and a group stayed at Cortland to celebrate the holiday with their newfound international family at West Campus and spend some time enjoying the fresh snowfall.



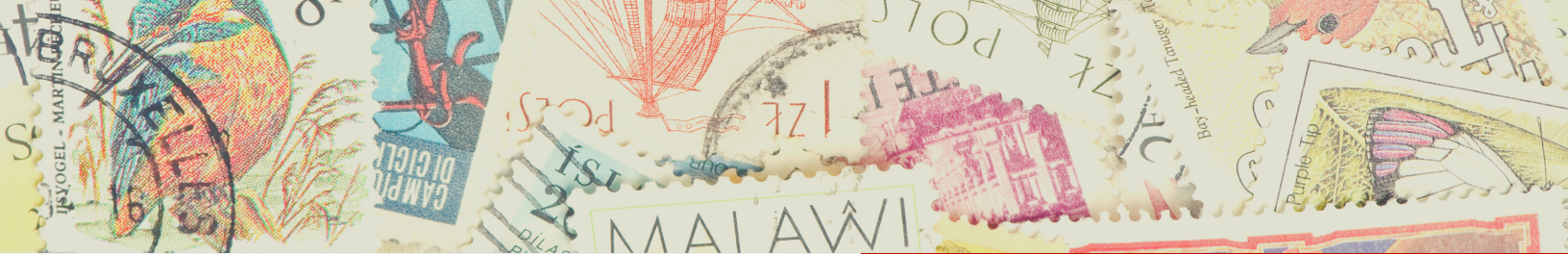


# STUDY ABROAD STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

## GRACE CREMA

Grace Crema is a senior SUNY Cortland student studying Communications. Spring 2022 she will be traveling to take classes at the American University in Cairo. She has completed her required communications courses so she will be taking courses on Egyptian culture during her time abroad. She is excited to experience the culture of the Middle East, as she has never traveled there. Seeing the pyramids has been on her bucket list for a long time, so that will be a highlight of her trip. She is grateful for the orientation that will take place the first week abroad as AUC teaches the group some basic Arabic and train them on safety. During their long spring break, she looks forward to exploring Oman, Jordan, Petra and possibly Greece. Grace loves photography so she looks forward to seeing the architecture and landscapes of the Middle East. Crema was supposed to study abroad during Fall 2020, but her trip was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19. She is grateful that she can study abroad before graduation.

Grace has always had a knack for traveling, as she grew up visiting family in Europe. In high school she visited Vietnam, Cambodia, and India through the ARCC program. The ARCC program allows high school students to experience the world while gaining hands-on education. In total, she has visited 24 countries so far, her favorites being Asia as she appreciates experiencing different cultures and seeing history firsthand. In her future, she hopes to continue to find jobs being a travel guide, like her work with ARCC.



# INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

**ARDESIAN BINJAKAJ**



Ardesian Binjakaj is a senior SUNY Cortland student originally from Tirana, Albania. Binjakaj, unlike most international students, has been studying for 4 years at Cortland, graduating in Spring 2022. He is studying Business Economics and Political Science with a concentration in financial management and minor in Computer Applications. Binjakaj has wasted no time getting involved with clubs during his time at Cortland. He was the Vice President of International Club, the Founder and President of Investment Club and Vice President of Student Government Association. In addition, he was on the Financial Committee and the Diversity Board for Student Government.

Overall, Ardesian Binjakaj has not experienced too much culture shock, but he appreciates the American education system as it is focused more on positive reinforcement. Binjakaj has appreciated how opportunities are offered to you when you show determination and focus on your education. "Even if a professor doesn't have an opportunity for you personally, they will give you their connections, or pass your name along, to help determined students build their resume." Firsthand, Ardesian has been a research assistant, both for SUNY Cortland professors and a Harvard professor, for the past year and will continue in his last semester. After graduation, Binjakaj hopes to pursue Optional Practical Training to gain valuable experience in his field.



# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

## BELIZE INTERNSHIPS

Gain valuable internship credit and experience in the beautiful country of Belize! With this program you intern 40 hours per week with a private corporation, non-profit, sports team, health service provider or government branch. Applicable to over 15 majors at SUNY Cortland, this experience is unlike any other. Regardless of your placement, you will form a relationship with the organization as well as have access to countless opportunities. Not only will you gain hands-on experience but become immersed in another culture.

Unlike classroom study, a job placement allows greater independence, perfect for a hard-working self-starter. Belize is an English-speaking nation surrounded by the Caribbean, which can be explored on vacations and weekends! The country is home to Mayan archaeological excavations, such as Caracol and Xunantunich, as well as hundreds of white sand beaches, lagoons and the second largest barrier reef in the world!

Junior and Senior undergraduate or graduate students are welcome to apply!



# CONTACT US

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

## International Programs Office

Old Main, Room 219

P.O. Box 2000

Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: +1-607-753-2209

Fax: +1-607-753-5989

[studyabroad@cutland.edu](mailto:studyabroad@cutland.edu)

[cutland.edu/international](http://cutland.edu/international)

Contact us to schedule an appointment with an advisor or to learn more. We look forward to hearing from you!

# OFFICE HOURS






EMAIL US TO SCHEDULE AN ADVISING APPOINTMENT

## MONDAY-FRIDAY

8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Old Main, Room 219

# FOLLOW US

-  @cutlandstudyabroad
-  @sunycortlandinternational
-  SUNY Cortland Study Abroad
-  SUNY Cortland International Students
-  @cutlandstudyab

