

News Release

Junior Lexie Ogdahl Sees the World in a Whole New Way following Study Abroad

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Tuesday, December 26, 2017

In grade school, she hoped to be a veterinarian during the week and an archaeologist on the weekends. Lofty goals to be sure, but after meeting Junior Lexie Ogdahl, you realize if anyone could achieve those goals, she can.

The animal science major from Medina, Minn., chose the University of Minnesota Crookston because of its size and her desire to work hands-on. "I wanted to give shots, draw blood samples, and work directly with animals," she explains. "I knew I would get to do exactly that if I chose the Crookston campus."



She has found countless opportunities to work with animals in a variety of settings. "Opening weekend of deer hunting, I volunteered to be a part of the testing for chronic wasting disease with the Department of Natural Resources," Ogdahl says. "I helped with the removal of the animal's lymph nodes used in the testing."

There was a time when Ogdahl may not have taken advantage of being part of such an experience. "I was satisfied to sit back, and play it safe," she says. "But that was before my study abroad trip to New Zealand."



Her trip challenged her to do things she was reluctant to do. "I was really afraid of heights, but how could I not take a chance to bungee jump?" she asks. "I decided I had to try because I didn't want to miss out on what everyone else was doing." That bungee jump, and many of the opportunities that followed, caused Ogdahl to sit back and re-evaluate.

"I believe studying abroad not only allowed me to face my fears, it made me see the world in a whole new way," Ogdahl reflects. "There is so much more outside your safety net. Instead of hanging back, I now say 'yes' to things I would have easily said 'no' to before."

Serving as a global ambassador for International Studies Abroad (ISA), Ogdahl encourages students to discover the world through learning abroad. "It is an experience that helps you learn about others, but it also opens you up to learning about yourself," she says. "I am proof of what a trip like this can do."

Staying beyond the study abroad group's travel dates allowed Ogdahl to visit Sydney, Australia, as well as stopping for three days in Fiji, because she says "when else would I have the chance to see Fiji?"

Nearing the end of fall semester, Ogdahl remains passionate about her career choice and even discovered an interest in animals outside the ones she is familiar with. She is considering a semester abroad to study marsupials and monotremes in Australia or perhaps a trip to Ireland to learn more about her family's Irish heritage. The possibilities for her seem endless abroad and at home.



"I have loved studying anatomy since I was a child," she says. "I had a Leap Frog tablet as a kid and I memorized all the bones in the body right away. I am fascinated by the way the body works and the way it heals itself."

Ogdahl is considering a gap year dedicated to travel before applying to veterinary school.

"The world is a different place to me now," she says. "And, I want to see as much as I can. The more I experience the better prepared I will be for the future and my work as a veterinarian."

Photos:

At top, Lexie Ogdahl conducts an ultrasound in lab.

At center, photo credit International Studies Abroad of Ogdahl in New Zealand during her study abroad trip.

Bottom: Ogdahl is an animal science major planning to go into veterinary medicine.

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