

2008-2009 Student Writing Contest

The Only Student Travel Writing Contest on Studying, Volunteering, Internships, and Short-Term Work Abroad



Photo by Eamee C. Lanning from [Study Abroad in Bologna](#)

Congratulations to past Student Writing Contest Winners

Editor's Note: We were very pleased to receive well over 100 submissions during the past year, many of which were of exceptionally high quality. Judging the submissions proved very difficult, as there were so many excellent study, volunteer, internship, travel, and living abroad essays sent to us, each with their own unique qualities and perspectives; the contest submissions reflected a great deal of introspection, perception, compassion, imagination, and a desire for cultural immersion on the part of authors of all ages. Many of the submissions were from students who had more than one study abroad experience and others had been inspired to study or travel again in the future.

We decided that it would only make sense to publish the many worthy winners and runner-ups (in alphabetical order by title). The student writing submissions were a very diverse and eclectic embarrassment of riches. The submissions discussed student experiences in countries such as Chile, England, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, India, Italy, Mexico, Poland, and Tanzania.

Thank you to all who sent in contest submissions.

2008	1st	Study Abroad in Bologna: Slowing Down and Discovering the Good Life in Italy by Eamee C. Lanning
	2nd (tied)	Learning The Second Time Around: An Odyssey Studying, Working, and Living Abroad by Nicole Tobin
	2nd (tied)	Study at Nottingham University in England by Elizabeth L. Hatt
	2nd (tied)	Study Abroad: The Benefits of Waiting by Michael Kay
	3rd (tied)	Learning Abroad: Anyone (and Anything) Can Teach You a Lesson by Olivia Victoria Andrzejczak

3rd (tied)	Study Abroad in Chile: Learning Acceptance of New Ideas by Tamara Smith
3rd (tied)	Study Abroad in Helsinki Summer School as a Mature Student by Audrey Faye Henderson
3rd (tied)	Study Abroad in Tanzania: On Borders, Bananas, and Being Back by Danae Roumis
Runner-Up Winner	A Journey of Self Discovery: Understanding Differences Through Studying Abroad by Kristen Clark
Runner-Up Winner	In-Between Cultures: Cultural Immersion in Bangalore, India by Diana Jue
Runner-Up Winner	Internship for an Ethiopian NGO by Sara Cornish
Runner-Up Winner	Living and Studying in the Languedoc Region of Southern France by Lola Pak
Runner-Up Winner	Volunteer Work at an Archeological Dig in Greece by Josiah Ramsay Johnston
2007 1st	The Lasting Benefits of Study Abroad by Lauren Anne Underhill
2nd	Life Lessons in Ghana by Lauren Elliott
2006 1st	The Road Less Traveled: Grants for Independent Research Overseas by Shayna McHugh
2005 1st	Living and Learning in Oxford by Emily Hilk
2004 1st	Beyond the Comfort Zone by Kate Gustafson
2003 1st	Planning for Study Abroad in Developing Countries by Meredith Alt
2002 1st	Irish Literature in Dublin: Disability Does Not Prevent Study Abroad by Johana Schwartz
2001 1st	Work in the Middle Kingdom: Internships in China by Christopher Moore
2000 1st	Students' Guide to Study Abroad by Chanomi Maxwell-Parish

Student Writing Contest Guidelines

TransitionsAbroad.com hosts an annual student writing contest for all currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students, students who have graduated within the past year, and students currently on leave from school are eligible.

For this year's contest, the winning student submission will be awarded **\$500**, the second place winner will be awarded **\$150**, and the third place winner **\$100**. All winning pieces will be published on the **TransitionsAbroad.com** website. Runner-up winners will be awarded **\$50** and will be published on TransitionsAbroad.com.

The title "Transitions" is meant to suggest the changes in perception and understanding, as well as in place, that result from cultural immersion travel. Transitions Abroad has long featured regular [Student to Student Advice](#), [Student Participant Reports](#), [Internships Abroad](#) and [Student Volunteer Service Learning](#) articles, where students share information and experience with other students contemplating educational travel abroad, whether formal study abroad, internships, volunteering, or short-term work abroad (including the most common form—teaching English).

What We Are Looking For in the Student Writing Contest

Think about what you were looking for when you were planning to study, travel, work, or live abroad as a student:

- What did you need to know?
- Once you were abroad, what did you wish you had known before you left?
- Since you returned, how have you been able to fit what you did and learned abroad into your life—academic, career, and otherwise?

- Think of yourself as an adviser or counselor and your reader as a student like yourself before you decided to study abroad.
- Be specific: Vague and flowery evocations of the place(s) you were and what a wonderful time you had there are not helpful to someone preparing for his or her own trip.
- Think of yourself as a journalist seeking to tell a story with as much objectivity as possible in order to reach a wide and educated audience.
- If you write about your experience as a student with a specific program, remember that the appropriateness of the program depends upon the individual. If you write about one program or independent activity, please provide a list of similar programs or opportunities you researched for your reader to choose from.
- Emphasize essential **practical** information such as how you selected a program or arranged your own independent study or job or internship.
- Optionally provide photographs which will help evoke what you experienced abroad and **inspire** others to do so..

*** Well-researched supporting material and annotated web links in sidebars greatly increases the likelihood of selection as a winner; we cannot emphasize enough the importance of providing others practical information which they can use.**

Think of yourself as an adviser or counselor and your reader as someone like yourself before you went abroad. Be specific and to the point: **Narrative descriptions of your own experiences and responses to them (diaries) are not generally helpful to someone preparing for their own trip unless your descriptions make clear how the reader can plan and carry out a similar program.** If you write about a specific program (a "Participant Report"), be critical but remember that the appropriateness of the program depends upon the individual. What was right (or perhaps wrong) for you might be wrong (or right) for another student. If possible, provide examples of similar programs or opportunities for your reader to choose from.

Word Count

1,000-3,000 words.

Student Writing Contest Deadline

The Contest begins May 15th, 2008, and all entries must be received by March 1st, 2009. **Transitions Abroad Publishing, Inc.** will require first-time Worldwide Electronic rights for all submissions which are accepted as contest winners and for publication. In addition, **Transitions Abroad Publishing, Inc.** will reserve the right to reprint the story in a future publication, with additional compensation. The writer may republish the unedited submission as desired six months after initial publication on **TransitionsAbroad.com**.

Winners will be chosen on or about March 15th, 2009 and notified by phone, mail, or e-mail by April 1, 2009 for publication by May 1, 2009 or at such time as all winners have received and cashed payment.

Student Writing Contest Terms

- There is no entry fee required for submissions.
- Submissions that have been published during the current academic year by home academic institutions are eligible.
- **Transitions Abroad Publishing, Inc.** is not responsible for late, lost, misdirected, incomplete, or illegible e-mail or for any computer-related, online, or technical malfunctions that may occur in the submission process.
- Submissions are considered void if illegible, incomplete, damaged, irregular, altered, counterfeit, produced in error, or obtained through fraud or theft.
- Submissions will be considered made by an authorized account holder of the e-mail address submitted at time of entry.
- The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners—along with any other runners-up accepted for publication—will be paid by **Transitions Abroad Publishing, Inc.** either by check or Paypal as preferred by the author.
- All federal, state, and local taxes are the sole responsibility of the Contest winners.

- Decisions of the judges are final.

Format

Typed in Microsoft Word and sent by e-mail to webeditor@TransitionsAbroad.com. Your name and your email address must be on document.

Cover sheet

Please provide a cover page with your name and contact information (address, email address, telephone number), your college or university, and your year in school or year that you graduated or expect to graduate. If you traveled on your own, list the countries and dates and what you did (worked, backpacked, etc.) If you traveled with a program, list the program name and institution, and the dates. Include your current and permanent address, your current and permanent phone number, and e-mail address if applicable. Include a short biographical note (hometown, major, etc.).

Send to

Send electronically as an attached MS Word file to webeditor@TransitionsAbroad.com. If you cannot attach as MS Word file, then paste the article into an email message.

* Please do not send a hard copy submission by mail, as it will not be judged.