



The Global Experience

By Kodiak Atwood | September 1, 2011

A long time has passed since I left from Eugene and a lot of things have happened since then. I have watched the sun set on the Cliffs of Moher, sat in Irish pubs with a pint of Guinness, climbed around castles and ancient ruins, and I have become a living nightmare for garden slugs. I have eaten lunch at the foot of Notre Dame and watched the springtime sun set in Paris from atop of the Eiffel Tower. I have sat in a Russian airport for 17 hours while munching on pancakes topped with raw salmon. I have attended Nadaam, dined with nomads, almost got electrocuted off of mountains, ridden horses, bathed in rivers, drunken fermented mare's milk, and camped in the Gobi Desert. I have hiked barefoot to ten thousand year old fortresses, experienced the nightlife of Korea, and had my mouth torched by some of the most delicious food around. Since I have left Eugene I have travelled over 19,000 miles (over 30,600km) and around the entire world, stopping in five different countries along the way. I have made wonderful friends who I will never forget and made lasting impacts on students who have made lasting impacts on me.



While all of those things are great experiences, I have yet to mention all of the work experience I have gained. Not only have I gained a much larger understanding of organic gardening and its intricacies, I have gained a ton of experience in many other areas as well thanks to extra responsibilities I undertook while interning abroad. In Mongolia I taught four different English classes, working with students from six years old to seventeen and of varying English abilities. I designed my own curriculum and lesson plans and was completely on my own for the entire process, leaving me with extremely valuable experience to help me achieve my dream of becoming a teacher of English as a second language. Furthermore, I tutored English to one of the monks in Ireland and thus I am now better at teaching and assessing not only diverse student groups, but also individuals as well. I also designed four different advertisements for the Asral center, gaining experience in graphic design as well. One of my designs is now a billboard on one of the main streets in Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. I could also go on and on about the smaller but greatly important experiences in things like automotive repair when our vehicle broke down in the countryside and three meals for twenty people and having to make do without the proper ingredients, but I will not just because there is so much to tell.



Besides all of the great experience I have gained abroad, there are also other work experience related benefits that go along with interning abroad. I have learned to work with different cultures that have a very different work ethic from what I am used to. I had to get used to working in the care free environment of Ireland where the tea breaks are more important than the work at hand and the nomadic mentality of Mongolia where one day you may work till sundown only to drive off to the countryside for the day to drink mare's milk the following sunrise. Now I feel that I can adapt to a variety of work styles and can work in an environment diverse in both culture and ideas.

From riding on buses in Ulaanbaatar from standing on top of an Irish mountain with the wind blowing in my hair, I've experienced a lot that I will not soon forget. For those who have contributed and helped along the way, whether it be financially, offering a ride or a bed, pulling a few strings, or all that and more, I cannot express my overwhelming appreciation for helping make this wonderful journey a reality. The slugs are slightly less appreciative.

