



AN *UNBOUNDED* MISSION

Global Initiatives Carry the St. John's Message to the World



When the first 46 St. John's students walked through the doors of a small farmhouse in Brooklyn in 1870, they were well aware that they were entering a newly created college founded to serve the

educational needs of the children of immigrants from bustling post-Civil War New York City. What they did not know was that this college would one day evolve into an international university with a well-deserved global reputation for academic excellence — a reputation anchored by a mission of service for people around the world.

For many years St. John's University has been committed to bringing the world onto campus. Our faculty has long included an impressive cadre of internationally acclaimed professors, gifted women and men from around



the world whose dedication to teaching, research and overall scholarship are sources of genuine inspiration to the University's more than 20,000 students. The students themselves also attest to the diversity of St. John's worldwide population, coming to us from 122 countries, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in Fall 2007.

*This page, clockwise from top:
A view of the Rome campus.
The main chapel at the Paris location.
Stained glass at the Paris location.*

*Opposite page:
A view of the new Paris location
from the interior courtyard.*





During the current academic year, St. John's achieved record levels of international enrollments at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. According to Brenda Majeski, senior vice president, enrollment management and marketing & communications, the University is currently ranked by *US News and World Report* as one of the top 10 most diverse campuses in the country, a reality that she attributes to the increased perception of St. John's as not merely a national, but also an international university. "Ten years ago only 22% of our applicants and 19% of our enrolled students came from outside of the greater New York metropolitan area," notes Majeski. "Today those numbers have increased to 59% and 40% respectively."



That level of diversity has a profoundly positive effect on the students by encouraging them to interact with and learn from individuals whose cultural background may be significantly different from their own. "Students very quickly become comfortable living and learning with other young men and women from varying backgrounds," Majeski says. "It gives them a chance to broaden their horizons and redefine their perceptions, which is really what the St. John's experience has always been about."

While the University is justifiably proud of its success in bringing the world to its campuses, it is even more gratified by the success of the unique programs and initiatives designed to carry the St. John's message to countries near and far. Central to the globalization



efforts is the highly acclaimed Discover the World program, a unique opportunity for students to experience total cultural immersion while earning a full semester of academic credit in exciting locations around the world.

Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer James P. Pellow, Ed.D. has been the driving force behind Discover the World which was launched in Spring 2007 and goes far beyond the parameters of traditional study abroad programs. Student participants select an international region, such as Europe, Latin America or Africa and spend time living and learning within a number of exciting cities within that region. For example, students who enroll in Discover the World Europe experience overall cultural immersion in such tradition-rich cities as Dublin, Rome, Paris, and/or Salamanca, Spain. "One of the things that makes Discover the World so unique is that it's multi-city," says Matthew Pucciarelli, executive director of St. John's Office of Global Studies. "Students have a chance to see not just one place but a number of locations within a particular region of the world."



Besides engaging in traditional classroom education, students learn to appreciate the various aspects of the local culture, including the arts, music, architecture and language of the cities in which they study. By living within the local community, they also expand their personal horizons to include a first-hand appreciation of the customs, ideas and lifestyles of that population.

One of the most powerful components of Discover the World is the requirement that students engage in meaningful service within their selected overseas communities, a reflection of the Vincentian mission that underscores St. John's every activity. Students are expected to put the University's service commitment into practical action by extending the caring and compassionate hand of St. Vincent de Paul to local residents during their time abroad. "Our students are expected to leave a portion of themselves, and of St. John's, behind by engaging in meaningful service" Pucciarelli says. "They help out in local soup kitchens, assist people with English language and reading skills and, in general, make certain that Discover the World is a platform for global service." As with everything else at St. John's, academics and service go hand-in-hand to carry the message — and the mission — to wherever they're most needed.



Within most study abroad programs, cost has been a deciding factor in determining who can or cannot participate. Thanks to the generosity of the University and its many supporters, that is not the case at St. John's. A combination of effective fiscal-management practices on the part of the University maintains the cost of participation at a level roughly

equivalent to a semester of living on campus. By combining traditional forms of financial aid and specific study abroad scholarship opportunities, such as global language scholarships for students with majors or minors in French, Italian or Spanish, students from all economic backgrounds are able to take part in this exceptional program. According to Karl S. Rutter, director of recruitment for the Office of Global Studies, the traditional students participating in study abroad programs at other colleges and universities are "...white, affluent and female." "That's not the way it is here at St. John's," he says. "Our study abroad programs reflect the diversity of our students, and we hope to continue that reality as we expand these opportunities in the future. At the bottom line, it's all tied into the Vincentian mission."

As St. John's extends its horizons academically, the University continues to expand its presence in cities around the world. In Spring 2007, St. John's entered into an agreement to lease significant space within the beautiful and historic Collegio Leoniano (Vincentian Motherhouse) in Rome that will significantly enhance the University's campus in the Eternal City. Consisting of approximately 184,000 square feet, the new facility, which is within walking distance of Vatican City, will include more than 200 beds, 12 classrooms, a multi-use conference room and student lounge. Expected to be fully completed by Spring 2009, the building will be acquired in developmental stages and occupied as each stage is completed.

In addition to serving as the home for Discover the World students studying in Italy, the current Rome campus recently hosted a contingent of 32 law students from St. John's School of Law as well as other law schools from across the country. The students participated in programs designed to provide them with a unique perspective on current international law while affording an opportunity to examine the historical basis for our current legal systems and practices. As with all St. John's facilities, the Rome campus provides students with advanced technological amenities, such as state-of-the-art computers laboratories and wireless internet access, 24 hour availability of online databases and a host of traditional library resources. The campus also offers students recreational facilities that include tennis courts, basketball courts, soccer fields and an indoor swimming pool.

This spring the first contingent of students will join us as charter members of St. John's newly established location in Paris, France. Following the same pattern that resulted in the establishment of the Rome campus, the University has secured space in the Vincentian Motherhouse, bringing St. John's unique mission and values to the City of Lights. The facility is expected to be fully operational by January 2009 and, as with the Rome campus, will require all students to participate in service activities that reflect the University's Vincentian mission of caring and concern for others.

As part of St. John's global orientation, the Office of University Ministry provides opportunities for students to engage in service initiatives both at home and in locations all around the world. Some students assist the victims of Hurricane Katrina in rebuilding their devastated homes; others journey to Panama to help local populations construct schools and churches while still others travel to Lourdes, France to assist pilgrims seeking renewal in that shrine's blessed waters. "Bringing our mission to people throughout the world is a vital part of the St. John's experience," notes Stephen M. DiBlasio, director of faith formation and liturgy. "Our mission makes us unique, and the message of that mission is one that deserves to be heard in locations near and far. We're continuing to walk the journey that St. Vincent de Paul began hundreds of years ago, and his ideals are as relevant today as they were back then."

St. John's will continue along the pathway to globalization, a pathway that is limitless, full of surprises, uniquely personal and faith-based in the most wonderful and practical of ways. The world is indeed our classroom, and in true St. John's fashion, we not only bring the world to our students, but bring our students to the world as well.

