

# Going Around The World With The School of Education

The COST of international education became a little bit more accessible for GVSU students.

Five GVSU students will participate in COST — Consortium of Overseas Student Teaching — beginning in the spring of 2004. COST has been in existence for more than 20 years and started when faculty from several different universities attempted to proliferate the study abroad options for their education students. GVSU is a new member to the program this year.

"What better way to get generations of students to think globally than to get teachers to do it?" GVSU's COST liaison Jennifer Mahon, Ph.D., asked rhetorically. "So they got the idea to expand student teaching opportunities for their students."

Grand Valley is the newest member to join the 14 U.S. universities involved in the partnership. Others include the University of Georgia, University of Wisconsin, Ohio University, Kentucky University, University of Alabama and

Kent State University.

Students, who apply one year ahead of student teaching, may select up to three countries for their eight week placement which begins after they conclude 10 weeks of student teaching in Michigan. Placements are available in 15 countries, including Ireland, Japan, Switzerland, England, Costa Rica, South Africa, Scotland and New Zealand.

According to Mahon, COST applicants must have excellent leadership and communication skills and a GPA of 3.0. Because it is part of the regular student teaching semester, students do not pay additional tuition, only the cost of travel, room & board, a \$100 placement fee, and supplements such as the passport.

GVSU is sending its first COST students to destinations this winter. Four secondary student teachers — Brook Bitely, Brooke Kazma, Danielle Kluting and Rachel Warnos — and one elementary teacher — Stephanie Rowlee — have been accepted into the program and are awaiting final confirmations of their placements in Mexico,

Australia, Turkey and Ecuador.

In addition to completing all of their requirements in the U.S., the students have elected to do an additional three weeks of student teaching. They also must complete five pre-departure orientations and maintain contact with both the COST coordinator and their supervising teacher while overseas.

They will teach in international schools in non-English speaking countries and regular public schools in English speaking placements.

"Research into the overseas student teaching experience shows that students return with a broader knowledge of teaching methods to apply to their future classrooms," Mahon said. "This is one reason that superintendents, principals and human resources professionals consistently comment that a resume with overseas student teaching on it usually reaches the top of the pile."

"But even more important is that the students return with a deeper understanding of the world and its people, and a greater confidence in themselves."

## Study Abroad Program Returns To New Zealand

New Zealand has become a popular study abroad destination for the School of Education because of its teaching and learning methods and the diverse array of activities available to students participating in the program.

Following a successful trip in the summer of 2003, the School of Education is offering another master's level study abroad program in 2004.

The 2004 trip will depart Sunday, June 13, and return Sunday, July 4. Students have the option of staying an additional three weeks if they so choose.

The master's level study abroad opportunity — which requires a 3.0 GPA and two letters of recommendation — offers between two to six credits for Issues in Education, Curriculum Development or Comparative Education. A student's master's project or thesis may be done in conjunction with the study abroad program.

During the 2003 trip, students visited nine elementary, middle and high schools — or primary, intermediate and secondary schools, as they are referred to in New Zealand — in the regions of Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton and Rotorua.

Side trips to the Waytomio Glow Worm Caves, thermal hot springs and geyser parks and Maori Arts & Crafts Center in Rotorua are also highlighted in the three-week stay. The adventurous members of the group went white water rafting, and visited craters of Moon Falls and Lake Taupo, which were



*GVSU graduate students participate in a laid back classroom setting in New Zealand.*

created by a crater from a volcano.

Additional information about the 2004 trip to New Zealand may be obtained by e-mailing Professor Loretta Konecki at [koneckil@gvsu.edu](mailto:koneckil@gvsu.edu), or by going on-line at the Padnos Office of International Affairs.

## Students Travel To South Africa For Teacher Assisting Component

South Africa is a nation of diversity and a land of opportunity for GVSU pre-service teachers.

Through an arrangement with the University of Stellenbosch, GVSU students have an opportunity to complete the teacher assisting component in culturally diverse schools, while completing a service learning component in Stellenbosch, South Africa.

"The community is diverse and there are a lot of cultural experiences taking place," said Barbara Doumanian, director of the School of Education's Study Abroad program to South Africa.

Students will be working in schools Monday



*The South African landscape is varied and beautiful.*

through Friday, as well as completing a service learning component at The Ark — an orphanage

for abandoned children and homeless families — two evenings a week.

Some impoverished schools have up to 80 children to one teacher in a classroom. Some of those students must share desks or books.

It will be GVSU's fourth trip taking pre-service teachers to South Africa. The first group of students took part in the exchange program in 2000. Students stay with host families in Stellenbosch.

"We have a strong partnership with the schools in Stellenbosch," Doumanian said. "The host families have created strong bonds with the students over the years."