

CIRCLING THE GLOBE

Dear Friends of Austin College,

When students returned to campus this fall, I began immediately to hear stories of summer experiences. With the start of the Global Outreach (or GO) program and the continuation of the Lilly Vocational Internship Program, 63 students participated in these two programs in experiential learning experiences that were nothing short of life-changing.

The 10 GO Fellows worked with non-profit groups around the globe — five in Africa, two in Peru, and one each in Russia, Pakistan, and Guatemala.

Created with a grant from the Todd and Abby Williams Family Foundation of Dallas, the GO program aims to cultivate the next generation of local, national, and global leaders by promoting innovative, experiential servant leadership opportunities around the world.

As a GO fellow, **Holly Boerner '09** worked this summer at the Adana Children's Center, an orphanage in Debre Zeyit, Ethiopia, 45 minutes from that nation's capital, Addis Ababa. This was Holly's third visit to Ethiopia as an Austin College student. The first two trips, Holly was at the Kamashi Orphanage and School, which serves the area of Benishangul-Gumuzone, one of Ethiopia's poorest regions, where there are an estimated 40,000 orphans. By working in these communities, Holly deepened her cultural perspective of a part of the world where few students travel. She also met successfully the challenge to view the world from a global perspective—and from a servant leader's heart.

The Lilly Vocational Internship Program provides support for a wide range of internships throughout the world, but most take place in the United States. As I visited with one Lilly intern, **Casie Luong '10**, I realized what a great impact this type of program can have on the life of one person. Casie is the daughter of parents who fled from Vietnam during the war, and this summer Casie went to her parents' home country to work in a children's shelter in Ho Chi Minh City.

Casie's experience at the Little Rose Shelter provided her the opportunity to share her gifts with children who had suffered abuse and to contribute positively to her family's cultural home. The shelter was established in

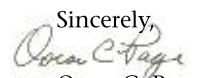
1992 in response to growing incidents of human trafficking in Vietnam. Since its founding, Little Rose has provided a safe shelter to hundreds of young girls and continues to help them build a positive future.

Casie taught English and music, among other subjects, at Little Rose, and while doing this she had the opportunity to meet relatives she had only heard about. Her parents returned to Vietnam this summer for the first time since their departure decades ago, and they were able to witness their daughter's servant leadership in action.

Austin College always has encouraged students to step outside their comfort zone to serve, and today's students are no different. These are just two examples of the College's commitment to global understanding for all students who desire to participate in international experiences. Ten additional students participated in life-changing internships through our centers for Environmental Studies and for Southwestern and Mexican Studies, as well as our Career Study Off-Campus program.

When the 2008 graduating class walked across the platform, we knew that 70 percent of these students had participated in a global experience. Our alumni take great pride in their service opportunities and their recognition of the need to understand and participate in the solving of global problems. In reflecting on the experiences of the students who reached out to others this summer, I feel confident that future generations of students will continue this great tradition at Austin College.

Service, experiential learning, and concern for people throughout the world will be the enduring theme of the College. As you read about Emily Austin and the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the opening of Wynne Chapel, be reminded that our great traditions have their roots in the vision of our founders, who were inspired by the Presbyterian Church to reach out to the underserved and provide opportunities for service to people throughout the world.

Sincerely,  
  
Oscar C. Page  
President

