Throughout the Fall 2019 semester, IEP alumni have had a variety of opportunities both on and off campus to engage with current and prospective students.

Along with their typical participation in URI’s technical career fair, IEP alumni have also come to campus in recent months to host a couple of company-specific information sessions exclusively for their younger peers, with others planning ones for the coming year. The companies that have already hosted visits this fall were BMW Manufacturing Co., AQA Germany, and Hexagon Manufacturing Intelligence, a local and longstanding industry partner with its headquarters in Quonset, RI.

In addition to participating in these tailored recruitment sessions, another group of alumni with different language and STEM majors volunteered at the recent career fair in West Warwick, where they were also able to show some of the participating in our dual degree program could help them to launch their careers in STEM.

Similarly, in November, GIEP alum Michael Egloffstein (’16 GIEP/MCE) presented at Hexagon’s IEP information session in October, looking to recruit the next generation of IEP graduates.

Motivation, I believe, is the hand-downs the greatest indicator of future success in a language. Find your passion. If you are studying a language that you think you “should” or that you otherwise felt pressured into, you will likely not get far unless you find your own personal incentives for studying it. These may be reasons you prioritize learning this language in your life. Find a language that you feel passionate about, and talk about. Every little thing you can do to keep yourself interested and immersed in the language will pay off in the end. Additionally, prioritize learning this language in your life. If you’ve had an experience and/or summer program, you should talk about that experience and/or summer program. Learning a language is often difficult, if you don’t use it, you can lose it. This is one of those cases where if you don’t use it, you can lose it.

While learning a language is often difficult, you can lose it. This is one of those cases where if you don’t use it, you can lose it. So choose to use it. I promise the rewards are well worth the grind.

In November, IEP Coordinator Melissa Botsko spoke at Wachusett Regional High School in Holden, MA at their Work Language Honors Society ceremony. Having participated in language programs both here and in Germany, she emphasized that students can use the tools they learned in class and while abroad to communicate effectively in that language. She also pointed out the benefits of learning a second language and provided students with some of her suggestions in order for them to be successful. In the speech, she emphasized that students should be both “language” and “STEM” people and that language learning can provide a meaningful skillset to be used in one’s personal or professional life. What follows is an excerpt from her speech (for the whole text, please see the IEP website, under “News”).

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Finding Friendly Faces

One of the IEP’s goals this semester has been to set up students in more events and activities which would allow them to establish connections to staff, international students and fellow IEP members. To date, we have held four socials this semester (an IEP mixer, a trivia night in Fascitelli Center, a meet-up, a trivia night in Fascitelli Center) which has allowed for students to ask questions about our programs, talk about different classes or study groups they are in, or languages they are learning - all while enjoying some pizza, gelato or beer. We have plans to host further events in the spring semester, including a monthly meeting where students can query about student visas, financial aid or housing and much more!

In regards to language-specific extracurricular offerings, URI’s new JOLC, led by Vietnamese exchange student Fukunaga, have started up a Japanese conversation hour (Shabera) which was already seen great attendance during its weekly meetings and themed events. This has helped to bring more equity to the offerings across the different language programs, as the others have already been offering similar conversation hours with their own programs. Similarly, drawing upon the interest of both IEP’s many German speaking students and our own GIEP students, several tandem partnerships have been established.

11/13 - IEP Trivia Night in Fascitelli Center

IEP tried out something new this semester to offer something of this scale, enough exchange students in each country to host a more personalized approach to cultural exchange here at URI as a part of this same program.

Cultural Perspectives from our Rhody Scholars Abroad

In Okayama, Japan - 11/29/2019
Nearby everyone [in the grocery store] was shopping alone…when a pair of people were taking it in low whispers…The store was filled with the musiclads playing over the speakers... Shoppers would weave past each other without a word. Most interactions occurred at the cashier’s stations, and [were] mostly driven by the cashiers. The customer barely had to say anything... People’s silence when walking past or even talking to each other struck me as particularly odd, especially as Japan is an extremely polite society. A few possible explanations:

1) Speaking up to say “I’m sorry/excuse me” is seen as more confrontational than necessary, and can be avoided by walking carefully.
2) People tend to each other to acknowledge the other person at least, and see each other make eye contact before responding...under our culture was very nice. Overall I found the whole experience to be pleasant, and I didn’t see any problem in how foreigners are treated.
3) As long as you are polite/friendly to the wait staff and to communicate as clearly as possible, it is a great experience, and the language as sufficient. I’ve found that U.S. restaurants are quick to realize that it is very different of the US, parents here are more lenient on what children get themselves into. Compared to the US, parents here are more lenient on what children get themselves into. It seems that parenting should be done. parenting should be done.

IEP welcomes a presidential delegation from TU Braunschweig for an eventful visit to the Graduate School of Engineering, Technology and Sciences, Business, and Economics. The delegation visited the Photomechanics Lab in Kirk and met with students and faculty research visits and collaborations. The delegation has been established.

A few times we observed children playing near each other. They seemed to have different views on how good parenting should be done. Some children were playing near each other. They seemed to have different views on how good parenting should be done.

The feeling of the location was very relaxed. I had an easy time enjoying my meal, and didn’t feel a need to rush out of the place. The staff was polite. Unlike wait staff in the US, they typically let you sit and enjoy your meal unless you signaled them. The check wasn’t brought out as soon as we finished our meal, which was quite different as I’ve found that U.S. restaurants are quick to give you your check. Another difference is that tipping is not expected in France...I left a small tip because I would have felt strange if I didn’t leave one...the culture. The other person with me, who is from Brazil, did not feel obliged to leave a tip even though our waiter was very nice. Overall I found the whole experience to be pleasant, and I didn’t see any problem in how foreigners are treated.

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