For Immediate Release

August 9, 2012

Record Number of Indiana High School Students Spent Unforgettable Summer Abroad

Most Programs of the Indiana University Honors Program in Foreign Languages (IUHFL) are at maximum capacity

Bloomington, IN — In early June, a record 261 Indiana high school students traveled to France, Germany, Mexico and Spain as part of the IUHFL study abroad Program. For nearly seven weeks, they immersed themselves in a foreign language and culture, living with host families, taking academic classes and going on excursions.

A few days ago, all nine groups — now IUHFL alumni — returned as worldly young adults who are highly proficient in their language and full of confidence. To achieve language proficiency, students had to follow the IUHFL Language Commitment, requiring them to speak only the foreign language during their stay abroad.

“While challenging during the first days, this commitment is one of the cornerstones of the Program,” said Stephanie Goetz, managing director of the IUHFL. “Our 50-year history of language learning through true immersion speaks for itself.”

But it is perhaps living with a host family that leaves the deepest impression with students and makes cultural immersion possible. Students are integrated in host families and participate in family meals and gatherings. They often take trips with their host parents and in many cases create lifelong friendships. The third pillar of the Program is its academic focus — daily classes and afternoon activities, taught by three to four instructors. All instructors are IUB graduate students or Indiana high school teachers and in many cases native speakers.

“I had the chance to meet with my student Sunny L. who has just returned from France,” said Shannon Swann, French teacher at University High School in Fishers. “I’m incredibly impressed with both her experience and her command of French! We went out for coffee and spoke non-stop — completely in French — for at least two hours.”

To offset some of the Program costs, the IUHFL offered more than $76,000 in financial aid and scholarships to 2012 participants. On average, eligible students received $600-1,000 in reduction-in-fees. All German students were awarded $800 to reduce expenses — five of them qualified for an additional $1,000 Max Kade scholarship through Indiana University Bloomington’s Germanic Studies department.

In September, the next generation of IUHFL applicants will begin their journey to an unforgettable summer by registering for the mandatory language test.

About IUHFL
The IUHFL is a seven-week study abroad Program for Indiana high school students with a minimum of three years of foreign language instruction. Since 1962, the IUHFL has been sending gifted students abroad to immerse themselves in the host culture, achieve greater language proficiency and grow into well-rounded young adults. For more information please contact iuhfl@indiana.edu, 812.855.7957 or visit iuhonorsprogram.org.