Public Health Perspectives: Finland and Estonia

Experience Description:
From May 18th to June 1st, 2018, along with 14 of my peers, I explored the health initiatives, histories, education systems, and cultures of Finland and Estonia through extensive travel of both countries (Helsinki, Keuruu, Jyvaskyla, Parnawa, Tartu, and Parnu in Estonia). This was my first time abroad, and this educational experience, which included visits to museums, universities, a high school, and a health research center, allowed me to gain knowledge about both urban and rural societies of Finland and Estonia and their public health systems. It was extremely informative and insightful. I earned 3 credits through PUBH470 3189.04: Field Experience in Global Public Health: Finland and Estonia, which consisted of 25 hours of classroom instruction prior to traveling and then while abroad, I completed several analytical assignments that involved me comparing and contrasting tobacco sales and regulations among the U.S., Finland, and Estonia; comparing and contrasting U.S. and Finnish high school lunches; and evaluating the walkability of a city. I connected my experiences to different facets of public health!

What was transformational about your project?
This project helped me become a stronger, more competent, and more culturally sensitive public health professional. It enhanced my understanding of how social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental factors influence the health of urban and rural communities in these two countries. I realized the importance of urban planning, and I developed an interest in incorporating health communication into my career, as it allows me to utilize social media and graphic design to educate the public.

My Favorite Parts:
- Exploring Helsinki
- T&H presentations and food
- Ahaa Science Center

For in-depth descriptions of my experiences, please see my e-Portfolio: [http://u.osu.edu/dang157eportfolio/](http://u.osu.edu/dang157eportfolio/) Feell free to contact me at dang.157@osu.edu.

Resources: oio.osu.edu, odi.osu.edu, cph.osu.edu, step.osu.edu
Thank you to program director Lorraine Wallace, Ph.D., and program coordinator Amanda Jovanovich, B.S. as well as my 14 peers who helped make this unforgettable!

Finland

National Institute for Health & Welfare
- 3 presentations:
  - History of health challenges and outcomes
  - Physical activity and sleep
  - Vitamin D status
- Finland #1 happiest nation in world (2018)
- 2nd best country to be a mom (2017)
- 3rd least corrupted country (2017)
- Major COD: cardiovascular diseases
- Other concerns: obesity, depression, blood pressure

Keuruu High School
- 18 to drive cars, 16 to drive motorized scooters
- Grades 7-12 ~200 students
- Tour of school and mini presentations on Finnish cuisine, holidays, values, recreation, and music

University of Jyvaskyla
- Collaborative research and international exchange

Parnawa Kumpunen Organic Farm
- Sauna and boat-rowing in a lake

Breakfast: berries, oatmeal, yogurt, eggs, ham, cucumber, bread, apples, bananas
Dinner: salad, pickles, onions, mashed potatoes, reindeer and elk meat, fish, rye breads and spread, dessert

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