

The BSM Beat

Alumni newsletter for the BSM program

Budapest, Hungary Most Welcoming European City

In December 2013, CNN reported that Housetrip.com voted Budapest, Hungary as the most welcoming of European cities, a fact that any BSM alumni knows is certainly true! Housetrip.com is an apartment rental website that uses data from over 130,000 users' European city reviews. Reviewers were asked to give a rating on a 1-5 scale (5 being the best) on the basis of a city's all around friendliness and the quality of the welcome and Budapest was the city most often given a five-star rating!

There are many wonderful qualities that make Budapest unique, but here are a few that even alumni may not be aware of:

- To begin, Hungary is slightly smaller than the US state of Indiana and has a population of just under 10 million (1.7 million of whom live in Budapest).
- Lake Balaton, known as the Hungarian Sea ("Magyar tenger") to Hungarians, is Central Europe's largest lake, covering almost 230 square miles.
- There are over 1000 natural hot springs in the country and over 118 of those are in Budapest alone. Szechenyi Thermal Baths, on the Pest side of the river in Budapest, claims to be the biggest thermal

bathing complex in all of Europe.

- Hungarians are inventors by nature and have invented many things, including the world famous Rubik's cube. In addition, the country has one of the highest numbers of Nobel laureates per capita with 13 winners ranging from 1905 (physics) to 2004 (chemistry).
- As all alumni of BSM know, goulash (or gulyas) is the signature national dish of Hungary and there is even an annual goulash festival held each September in Szolnok (about 70 miles southeast of Budapest).
- Hungarians love paprika and use it to spice up just about everything, particularly their famous goulash.
- Tokaji, a sweet dessert wine, is extremely popular in Hungary. It is measured by its sweetness, shown by the number of puttonyos (the scale goes up to six).
- Hungarians love sports! Hungary has one of the highest per capita number of Olympic medals with a total of 482 across both the winter and summer games. While Hungarians do well in gymnastics, fencing and swimming, the men's water polo is the team revered nationally and Hungarians everywhere gather around their TVs when the team is competing.

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Fall Semester 2014

- Students arrive for language intensive course: August 15th
- Orientation and welcome party: September 8th
- Classes begin: September 8th
- Putnam Exam: December 6th
- Classes end: December 12
- Final exams: December 15-17

Student Spotlight: Jessica Oehrlein, Fall 2014



Jessica Oehrlein is a junior at Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering in Needham, MA. She was born in Houston, TX but she grew up in Oklahoma City, OK.

Amazingly enough, Jessica is a second generation BSMer! Her father, Chris Oehrlein, attended the Budapest Semester in Mathematics program in Spring of '91 so Jessica has grown up hearing stories about the program. She always thought it sounded like a lot of fun and she missed taking math classes (as an engineering major) so she decided to apply!

Jessica isn't a math major (and is not alone in that - see the statistics on the fall class below and in each issue of the BSM Beat for details on the wide variety of majors our program attracts), she is a mechanical engineering major. She chose mechanical engineering because she thinks fluid dynamics, heat transfer, and thermodynamics are really cool. She loves that

she gets to experiment with thermal-fluid systems by doing projects such as building a solar water heater and figuring out how feasible it is to build a freezer that doesn't use electricity.

Jessica took a week-long class on graph colorings at Mathcamp and chromatic graph theory is now her favorite area of math - she just really loves the problems! She has also enjoyed her PDE class because it tied into her mechanical engineering interests.

At Olin, Jessica is co-President of Olin's Society of Women Engineers chapter, is very involved in Olin's Christian fellowship and spends a couple of mealtimes each week eating and talking with the Spanish conversation group. She also enjoys working as a NINJA (Olin's acronym for being a course assistant - "Need Information Now, Just Ask") for Olin math courses.

Jessica spent the past summer doing chemical engineering research in Singapore and the summer before this she lived in Baku, Azerbaijan for two months studying the Azerbaijani language.

As far as her time in Budapest, Jessica is looking forward to riding the 90-year-old roller coaster that is in Budapest and going to see the Hungarian National Ballet. She is taking the intensive language class as she loves learning languages.

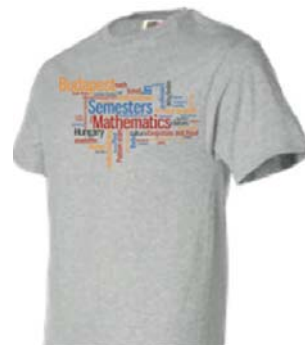
After graduation, Jessica thinks she will probably go to graduate school, but she isn't sure yet what she would like to study. She enjoys riding roller coasters and has been on 155 of them! She loves dancing and watching dance - everything from ballet and modern dance to salsa and contra dance. She also enjoys fencing, watching baseball, and reading!

What's happening in Budapest in the Fall 2014 Semester?

- 77 students will attend the program
 - 13 seniors
 - 61 juniors
 - 1 sophomore
 - 2 post-graduate
- Students from 51 different schools
- Students from 27 states and 11 countries
 - 28 female students, 49 male students
 - There are 43 math majors, 15 undeclared majors, 5 math and computer science majors, 3 math and physics majors, 3 math and economics major, 1 math and philosophy major, 1 math and nano-science major, 1 math and biochemistry major, 1 math and business administration major, 1 computer science major, 2 math and music majors, and 1 economics and philosophy major.
- This semester we have a daughter of a BSM alum attending (see above) and we have our first student from a school in Hawaii attending!

BSM Merchandise

The BSM program has a number of new BSM merchandise items available to alumni! If you are interested in purchasing any of the following items, please contact the Program Administrator, Eileen Shimota, by email at shimota@stolaf.edu.



Hooded BSM sweat-shirts (with BSM logo on the front): \$21.00.

BSM T-shirts: Two have the BSM logo on the front - one large and one small. One has a BSM program Wordle with words representing mathematics, the BSM program and Budapest. All shirts

are \$7.00. Hats with the BSM logo on the front are \$5.00.



Alumni Spotlight: Chris Oehrlein, BSM Spring 1991

If you are reading this newsletter carefully, you have already noticed what makes our alumni spotlight so interesting this semester - our alumni spotlight and our student spotlight highlight a two generation BSM family! Yes, Chris Oehrlein went to Budapest in the Spring of 1991 and his daughter Jessica Oehrlein is currently in Budapest this semester. When Chris went to BSM in 1991 there were only about 30 students attending BSM that semester.

When reflecting on his classes during his time in Budapest, Chris did notice that Csikos, his professor for Projective Geometry and Differ-

ential Geometry, is still teaching for the program. He fondly remembers all of his classes as being very different in content and teaching style.

Chris earned a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Texas Christian University and a Master's degree in Mathematics from Rice University. He is currently a mathematics professor and his favorite classes to teach are Differential Equations and Calculus II for Business.

Chris originally decided to study math because he thought he wanted to be a professional statistician or an actuary. He decided to go to BSM because it just seemed

like a cool opportunity (it is!). A few of his favorite memories of his time in Budapest are the week long trip he took with some fellow BSM students to Sofia, the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria, and Istanbul. He also remembers playing ultimate Frisbee and having many Hungarian kids joining in to play with the group.

Outside of math, Chris is a high school, NAIA and Division II baseball umpire.



Budapest Semesters in Mathematics

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Mathematics

St. Olaf College
1520 St. Olaf Avenue
Northfield, MN 55057

North American Director
Dr. Kristina Garrett
garrettk@stolaf.edu

Associate Director
Dr. Kendra Killpatrick
Kendra.Killpatrick@
pepperdine.edu

Program Administrator
Eileen Shimota
shimota@stolaf.edu

**Have you updated
your alumni contact
information lately?
Do so today!**

The BSM organization would like to keep in touch with all of our alumni. If you move or your contact information changes, please contact us to update your information so we may continue to send you the BSM Beat and keep you informed about upcoming alumni reunion events. You will find an information update form on our website, www.budapestsemesters.com, under the Alumni heading or you may contact us in any of the following ways:

- Email: Kendra.Killpatrick@pepperdine.edu
OR budapestsemesters@gmail.com
- Facebook group: BSM Forever
- Webpage: www.budapestsemesters.com
- Phone: 310-506-7796
- Mail: Kendra Killpatrick
Associate Director, BSM
24255 Pacific Coast Hwy
Malibu, CA 90263-4321

Opportunities for BSM Alumni

BSM Alumni, we would like to encourage you to share your experiences with the Budapest program with others, particularly those of you who continue to work in higher education. If you are currently a math professor, and if you are interested in giving a talk to the math majors at your institution about the Budapest Semesters in Mathematics program, we have a complete PowerPoint presentation already put together that we would be happy to share with you.

In addition, if you are a graduate student or a math professor who will be attending a Regional Undergraduate Mathematics Conference and would be interested in being on a panel about academic or summer opportunities for math majors or would be willing to sit at a table and hand out brochures and talk to undergraduates about your experience with BSM, please let us know. We would

be happy to help you make contact with the RUMC organizers, provide you with brochures and handouts and we can also provide you with a small stipend to reimburse you for travel expenses.

To request the BSM PowerPoint or to inquire about representing the BSM program at an undergraduate math conference, contact Dr. Kendra Killpatrick at

Kendra.Killpatrick@pepperdine.edu.

If you have further ideas about ways in which you can share information about the Budapest program with undergraduates, feel free to contact us and we will help you in whatever ways we can! You, the alumni, are our most valuable resource for recruiting the next group of talented BSM students.

BSM Alumni Directory

The BSM Alumni Directory will be emailed once a year to all alumni who have given us a current email address. If you haven't updated your contact information, you can do so now by going to the webpage and clicking on Update Your Contact Info. Please encourage other BSM alumni you may know to fill out the form so we can make the directory as up to date as possible!

