Students gain practical, cultural experience in exchange program

By Audrey Tobin
Lantern staff writer

Three students were chosen to receive internships in foreign countries last week by AIESEC, an international student organization that was awarded one of four Outstanding Student Organizations of the Year awards by USG.

AIESEC is an international student organization that promotes international understanding in 78 countries, and cooperation between students, academics and business communities around the world.

Through the International Traineeship Exchange program, AIESEC members contact local businesses about hiring a foreign trainee. The program allows businesses to gain cultural awareness while acquiring a short-term intern. In return, a student or recent graduate receives the opportunity to gain practical, cultural experience abroad, while working for a company that another chapter of AIESEC contacted.

The selection committee chose Eric Marshall, a senior majoring in international business and marketing, John Johnson, a senior majoring in international business and finance, and Gina Postman, a senior majoring in international business and marketing, to be interns abroad.

The national AIESEC office tries to match their job and location preferences with the companies requests.

"I was ecstatic," Johnson said. "I have wanted, since ninth or tenth grade, to go abroad after college and find myself. There's more to life than college and a nine-to-five job."

LCI Telecommunications and CompuServe are the Columbus businesses that have agreed to hire foreign trainees. Three trainees from Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and Germany are currently working in Columbus at Bellmar Parts, Direct Micro and CompuServe.

Other companies that have accepted trainees include Discover Card Services, Ohio State Life Insurance, McDonald's, Domino's and Arthur Anderson & Co.

Presently, two OSU alumni are working at IBM Sweden and Arthur Anderson & Co. in Portugal.

Students are chosen to work abroad based on their academic field, language skills, travel experience and involvement with AIESEC.

AIESEC also has a Global Theme Program designed to teach students about different cultures. This past month, members of AIESEC went to Treemont and Greensview Elementary schools to present a program on the misconceptions of cultural and religious diversity of the Middle East.

AIESEC is planning a Culture Through Dance seminar for next fall, where Hispanic, African-American, Asian and Native American students will dance and explain the cultural significance of their dances.
OSU group is raising money for causes

The OSU Association of Students in Economics and Business Management (AIESEC) is raising money for heat, water, food supplies and other necessities for the Children's Hospital in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia.

AIESEC, which is part of a national organization, is selling T-shirts for $12. The cost of making each shirt is $7 and the remaining $5 goes to the Children's Hospital, said Jeremy Levesque, a member who is helping sell the shirts. AIESEC is also accepting donations for the Children's Hospital, he said.

OSU's AIESEC chapter decided to participate in this fund raiser a little over a month ago and sold more than 100 shirts in the first week, AIESEC President Eric Marshall said.

AIESEC is a non-profit, non-political organization that is trying to promote international understanding of the different cultures throughout the world, Levesque said.

T-shirts can be ordered between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the lobby of the Central Classroom building.

— Ashli Goodman
OSU grad to lead exchange program

By Amy Schafer
Lantern staff writer

A former OSU student has recently been named vice president of the U.S. division of the International Exchange Program for AIESEC.

Brian Burson, a recent graduate of Ohio State, will officially begin his duties as vice president in June, said Leslie Prevish, public relations director for the association.

Prevish said the club is a worldwide student association dedicated to international and cultural understanding. The organization's headquarters are in New York.

Burson said AIESEC stands for a French acronym and has no English equivalent. The club is the largest student organization in the world with about 6,000 members.

The association began in 1948 and has 600 clubs in 81 countries, Burson said. The association finds international jobs and internships for its student members.

Burson, who graduated in March with a double major in marketing and international business, will be in charge of coordinating and running the student exchange program for the 65 U.S. universities that participate in the association. He had been active with AIESEC for four years as an undergraduate.

"Brian is very dedicated and very much believes in the ideals of AIESEC. He is very motivated and is successful in motivating others about AIESEC. You can tell he really believes in it," Prevish said.

AIESEC provides a one-for-one exchange system between countries. For example, if a student from France wants to come work in the United States, the French division must provide an internship for an American student, Burson said.

“Our club has a completely reciprocal system,” Burson said.