

Travel Abroad

ALEX MURPHY: Hello and welcome to our travel abroad webinar. Carrie, I just want to take a minute and make sure that you can hear us. If you can, can you go up to the top left corner of your screen and-- there we go. You know the drill. You've been to a webinar. So my name is Alex Murphy, and I'm the global connections program coordinator.

RUTH GREGORY: And I'm Ruth Gregory. And I'm an emerging technology and multimedia specialist here at the Global Campus. So I help your instructors make cool multimedia for your courses.

ALEX MURPHY: And between the two of us we have traveled quite a bit. I have explored southeast Asia. I spent a few months backpacking. And I lived in southern Africa for three years in the Peace Corps. And so I have those areas covered.

RUTH GREGORY: And I've traveled extensively through Australia, Canada, and Europe, and actually lived for a year in France.

ALEX MURPHY: So we just wanted to provide a webinar to Global Campus students to talk a little bit about traveling abroad, the opportunities that you have, and how it might be acceptable for you in your wide range of lives, depending on where you are in life and what you're interested in. And a few things to keep in mind during your trip before and after to make sure that you get the most out of it, and that you have a lot of fun, and it's very rewarding.

So Carrie, I know it sounds like you said you're a student, wife, and mom in Tacoma. And that you don't anticipate the opportunity to study abroad. But in case you get the inkling to later, we can talk a little bit about how that might be an option for you. So if you have any questions for us, feel free to type it into the chat box and we will answer.

RUTH GREGORY: All right so before you head out traveling abroad, you need to do a little bit of research to make sure everything goes off as well as possible. So the first thing is to look at the cultural norms and taboos in the country that you're going to. And it looks like Alex has a personal story here.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah. So when I was in Myanmar a few years ago I didn't do enough research prior to the trip. And I didn't understand the culture around monks and the monastery culture in that country and in a lot of southeast Asia. And every time we were on a bus I would try to talk to the monks who got on with us.

And I would not be very aware of touching them, and I didn't understand that it was so culturally inappropriate to talk to them and touch them. Because in Myanmar they are the highest form of being, and so you're really not supposed to interact with them or touch them. And so I broke a lot of cultural rules there. And I was scolded for it and learned very quickly to research that sort of thing before you go, so you don't embarrass yourself like I did.

RUTH GREGORY: I've never had a problem like that traveling. Actually, we're going to have a couple. I'm sure I'll tell you in a minute. So there are a couple of great guides and books to help you get started.

Some of the ones that internally we both like, and then other people on the staff who've traveled like, include *Rough Guides*, *Lonely Planet*, and then *Rick Steve*. All of which have websites as well to go with them. One that didn't make the PowerPoint, but that one of our colleagues really like, is the *Culture Shock* book series, which is quite inexpensive and also gives you the lowdown on cultural norms and taboos in the country you're traveling to.

ALEX MURPHY: And one thing to know with travel guides, I think, is to make sure that you always have the most up-to-date version. Because if you get a travel guide that's 10 years old, it's not really going to be that useful if none of the restaurants or hotels are there.

RUTH GREGORY: Good point. Some of the travel guides actually have these, but you're going to want to make sure to bring cheat sheets for the metric system. And then also commonly used phrases if you're traveling to a country where English is not the first language. Another couple of good questions to ask before you go is can you drink the water. Water around the world is differently prepared-- would you say?

ALEX MURPHY: Is it differently filtered?

RUTH GREGORY: In some places it's perfectly fine, and in other places you'll have to do things to it or purchase bottled water in order to stay safe. And the second part of this is you may want to also look into how they prepare the food. So wow-- [INAUDIBLE].

For instance, when I lived in France, I wasn't aware that they don't pasteurize as many products. So the dairy there actually started to really hurt my stomach. And because I was in France I was actually eating a ton of cheese, because that's one of the reasons you go to France. But I actually ended up with some really bad stomach issues, so make sure to check how they prepare the food.

Another thing, too, is telephones. So now there are some phones that you can call over the Wi-Fi with, but make sure you check out your phone. And make sure it's set appropriately, and that you're not going to be charged those amazingly high international bills while you're gone.

ALEX MURPHY: Yes.

RUTH GREGORY: Can you explain a little bit about SIM cards?

ALEX MURPHY: That's a great question, Carrie.

RUTH GREGORY: So SIM cards are little cards that go into your phone. This will depend on carrier to carrier, but you can sometimes get international SIM cards to keep your phone while you're abroad, which then you'll be charged local rates according to whatever plan while you're there.

I know when I lived in France they had a lot of pay as you go SIM cards. So you buy a SIM card or buy credit, and then you would use it up, and then you could buy more credit. And it was a pretty popular option there. So that's one way you can get around getting charged major amounts of money for calling internationally on accident.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah. It was the same in southern Africa. But every country has their own phone provider, and so you have to buy a SIM card for that country and then data for that country, which ended up being about the equivalent of \$1 US. And that could get you by for about a week of phone calls and texting. So every country is probably going to be different.

RUTH GREGORY: Can you swap your domestic SIM card for a local one? Yes, for the most part that's true. You just again have to check with your provider and the type of phone that you have. Some phones are less--

ALEX MURPHY: Compatible.

RUTH GREGORY: --yes, I think it's a really nice word to use, Alex-- with alternative SIM cards from other companies. So just check it out before you go.

ALEX MURPHY: Excellent. So some important information to think about before you go. This is a big one. Make copies of all the important documents-- your passport, if you decide to get an international driver's license, your birth certificate sometimes might be useful to have a copy of. And leave all of that stuff at home with friends or family that you trust. Then if for some reason your passport or your licenses are lost or stolen, then you have copies of them back home. And

they can send them to you quickly, and it won't delay your travel plans.

RUTH GREGORY: Yeah. Don't bring any extra cards that you don't actually need. So if you get an international driver's license, you don't need to also bring your domestic one. In general, you probably don't need to bring your birth certificate along with you. Bring the minimum so that if you do lose whatever you have, that it's easy to recover and get a replacement so you can get back home.

ALEX MURPHY: And another thing to think about is if you're going to be traveling-- excuse me-- and using your credit cards overseas, check with your credit card company and find out what kind of fees are involved for foreign transactions. Some companies don't charge any foreign transaction fees, and some companies charge outrageous foreign transaction fees. So that's something you want to keep in mind before you go.

RUTH GREGORY: Also tell them that you're going. I actually had my credit cards stopped when I went to Europe just for a couple of weeks, because I forgot to tell my company that I was going abroad. So they thought that someone had stolen my card and was charging outrageous amounts. And because of the time difference I also had to wait a whole day to get hold of anyone during business hours in order to get it reactivated.

ALEX MURPHY: So then you're stuck, and you can't do anything or spend any money. Oh, question-- have you ever had any good experience negotiating that rate? I've actually only ever had credit cards that don't charge foreign transaction fees just because I travel and I know that it's something that I don't want to spend money on. So I've never had the experience of negotiating. Ruth?

RUTH GREGORY: That's lucky. The one thing-- I guess I don't know about good. Some places it's actually better to pull money out using your ATM card in the country. Or in some countries it's better if you bring American dollars and have exchanged. It seems to vary all the time.

The one place I will say don't ever change your money at is the airport. Because they inevitably in every country charge the highest rates. Because they obviously have a captive audience. So that would be the one thing I would say avoid if possible.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah. Another really great tip is to know the name or the address of the hotel or the hostel where you're staying at. So if you don't speak the language and you get into a cab-- it's after dinner, maybe you've had a glass of wine, and you don't really know where you're going. You can just take one of their business cards and carry that with you in your wallet at all times. And you can just show it to your cabbie, and then hopefully they'll know where it is and how to get

there based on the address.

And another great thing to know about is the US embassy location in each country where you're in. Because if anything happens, if you get into trouble, or if you need help, the US embassy is going to be the place to go to get that help.

And another great tip is to understand the local laws. Some things are illegal in America that aren't illegal in other countries and vice versa. Somethings that are perfectly fine here are not allowed in other countries. And especially when it comes to cultural norms and cultural issues and social issues, that's something you really want to look into. Because you don't want to get yourself into trouble in a foreign country and get arrested and not know why you were arrested, or accidentally break the law, or something terrible like that.

So the website there is travel.state.gov. You can go there and enter in the country that you're going to be traveling to. And it will give you some information about the local laws of that place.

RUTH GREGORY: The other thing, too, that it says right on the front page as we were checking it out today, is that you are subject to the law of whatever country you are in. You need to obey them. So make sure that you at least understand the basics, the big differences when you go abroad.

ALEX MURPHY: Do you have any questions so far? I guess we've had questions all along. Oh, great.

RUTH GREGORY: Cool. It's [fun ?] when people [INAUDIBLE]. So before you go you obviously need to pack to take stuff with you. Our biggest guideline here is to pack as little as possible. And we really mean as little as possible.

So if you're going to bring clothes-- let's see. I survived backpacking in Europe with basically two outfits for four months, and one pair of shoes, and those gnarly hostel shower sandals. And the way it was phrased to me was the only people that will know you're wearing the same thing are the people that you're traveling with. And in my case I was traveling alone, so I figured I could do whenever I wanted.

You're going to need a converter if you're bringing electronics from the US. So we have a little photo in the lower right about what converters look like. There are some cool universal ones that have different plugs. So you can change it depending on which area of the world you're going to.

ALEX MURPHY: Those are definitely a worthwhile investment.

RUTH GREGORY: If you can travel a lot, yeah. And toiletries-- so bring your normal toiletries. And then we have suggestions here to bring hand wipes for sanitation purposes and extra toilet paper. Toilet paper is definitely not a luxury in some countries, but it is nice to have.

ALEX MURPHY: You'd be surprised if you don't have it how badly you need it sometimes. It's one of those things you just don't want to be without if you need it. And some places you-- I've been in a lot of countries in southern Africa and in Asia where you have to pay to get toilet paper. And if you don't have the extra change on you, then you're just out of luck. And they won't do anything to help you. So just keep a roll or a few sheets in your back pocket and you'll be happy that you did.

Another thing along the lines of electronics is you can get an extra battery pack for your phone. And you can find that and the universal chargers on Amazon. Those things are really great to have and I think worth the \$15 or \$20 you might spend on them. So it will save you a lot of hassle and a lot of headache.

RUTH GREGORY: So one thing, too, especially about things that are easy to acquire, like clothes, is that you can always get them where you're going. And then the cool thing about that is when you come back you have your scarf that you bought in Italy, or your sarong you got in India. Remember, you can always pick up more of those later.

ALEX MURPHY: And the same with toiletries. My very first international trip I packed a huge, industrial size shampoo and conditioner, because I didn't understand that they would probably just have that stuff in the country. And I didn't really need to pack it. So those kind of things-- deodorant, shower gel, all that stuff you can usually find in the country where you're going to be in. So save the space in your suitcase and pack it up with gifts for friends back home.

So along the lines of medicine, depending on where you're going to be traveling they will probably have recommendations for immunizations or shots that you might need to make sure that you're safe while you're abroad. You can find those at travel clinics. And if you just do a quick Google search for travel clinics in your area, you should be able to find one. Just sit down and talk with the doctor. Explain what you're going to be doing, where you're going to be going. And they'll have some great advice for you.

And another thing to think of along the lines of medicine is allergies. If you have allergies, especially really serious allergies like a peanut allergy, that's something that you want to bring

your prescription for. And make sure that if you're going to be traveling in a place where they don't speak English, possibly translate your prescription so that you can get it if you absolutely need it.

RUTH GREGORY: The other thing, too, with medicine, especially if you have prescriptions, is to make sure to actually bring the prescription with you-- the thing that's legally from the doctor. Because somethings that are legal here, again, as we discussed before, are not legal in another countries. And you just need to make sure to document that you need whatever it is you're traveling with for medical purposes.

ALEX MURPHY: And another thing to think about is, obviously, insurance. Find out what kind of limitations you have on your health insurance. What are you able to access when you're in a foreign country. What's going to cost you an arm and a leg. What sort of things should you just pack along with you-- cold medicine and that kind of stuff.

Depending on where you're going to be it might cost a lot of money. So think about how long you're going to be gone, what sort of issues, health issues you might run into, and just be prepared. That's our best advice.

RUTH GREGORY: All right, so if you're traveling abroad you do need to get a passport and possibly a visa depending on where you're going. Again, the travel.state.gov website has a listing of what you need to go to certain countries. So one thing to keep in mind is that your passport must be valid for six months after you enter a country, even if you're only going in for a week.

And the last thing is that you're going to have to-- to get a passport you have to get passport-sized photos made. And usually they give you more than what you need for your actual physical passport. But those are some things you actually probably want to bring along with you.

I know that in France they're very fond of using passport photos for everything, including the week-long subway pass in Paris. For some reason they really want your photo for that, so that you don't transfer it to someone else. So just bring those along with you. They're small. It won't hurt. And it will definitely make it easier than trying to find a place to get passport photos while you're abroad.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah, I agree. I think passport photos are just a really simple thing you throw in your wallet, and you'll be surprised how much you use them.

And visas-- so depending on where you'll be you might need a visa, you might not. Again, that's something that you can check out with the US State Department at the travel.state.gov website. And they'll tell you whether you need a visa, how much the visa will cost, whether you can get it at the airport when you arrive, or some place you have to apply to visas. And it can take a few weeks, up to a few months, depending on how hard it is to travel in and out of that country. So you definitely want to give yourself a bit of a cushion there and enough time to have that process go through if you need it.

Another thing that the US Department of State website does really well is they have travel warnings for the countries that you might be visiting. So if some place is unsafe, or they're having unrest, or maybe it's an election year and there's a lot of demonstrations, all those sort of things are taken into consideration when they write the travel warnings. So I wouldn't say personally that it's something that you should let deter you.

I think that the Department of State tends to be, obviously, very safe. And they want to make sure that everyone is taking the proper precautions. So don't let it scare you away, but definitely take it into consideration and think about those things before you go.

RUTH GREGORY: I saw a warning on the travel site when I was going to Athens, Greece. And really all it said was that the American president at the time was visiting, and they were not very popular in Greece. And there was a lot of protesting going on.

And by the time that I got there, the day after the president had visited, everything had cleared. But it was just nice to know that that might be fresh in the local culture's mind. And that I would have to be very aware of being American in Greece at that time.

ALEX MURPHY: And I'd say that's another good just general tip for traveling-- is be aware of Americans, and how Americans might be perceived, and just our cultural influence, and be open to talking to people about that. I know that's one of the most interesting things about my travels in southern Africa and Asia is that as soon as people hear, oh, you're American! They'll say certain key things that we tend to be known for. And it's a really great gateway to communication and to very interesting conversation. But I know that some people might not be as enthusiastic about that. So it's just something to keep in mind.

RUTH GREGORY: Yes. You have to remember our second biggest export as a country is media. So there will be a lot of very interesting perceptions of us based solely on the media we export. I remember

watching *Jerry Springer* in England one night and realizing that this is what they thought I was like at home. And I was like, oh, great.

ALEX MURPHY: And I know a lot of kids in my first community in Botswana, they would come up to me and just ask-- when a new Beyonce song would come out they would say, oh, do you know Beyonce? And I would say, yeah, sure. We're best friends. And they think it's-- the people in that small community, because they come from a small community, they expect our culture to also be the same. So just a funny little anecdote.

RUTH GREGORY: All right, transportation. So if you're going abroad, most likely you're going to be going through an airport. You'll have to go through security, immigration, and customs. This could mean that you have to drop off your bag and pick it up many different times and recheck it. And just be prepared for that.

In general, they don't allow you to lock your bag when you're traveling abroad, because they want to be able to search it pretty readily. Excuse me. Another thing to keep in mind is that customs-- it is a serious process. Don't make jokes. You don't want to get detained at customs.

I had a colleague and we were going to Canada to shoot a documentary for grad school. And they were like, what is your purpose in Canada? And she didn't even really think about it. She just said, I'm coming to work on a documentary. And they thought she was coming into the country illegally to work in Canada. And they detained her for awhile, and we were very late for our first filming engagement. So it sounds so innocuous, but really think about why you're there and--

ALEX MURPHY: Keep it simple.

RUTH GREGORY: Yeah, keep it simple. When you're in airports, ignore all your fashion sense and travel comfortably as much as possible. Because it's going to be a long, long day. And that's actually something I think we didn't include, or we might have had it somewhere else-- is that when you're packing, especially if you're checking your bag, make sure to put into your carry on-- there we go. That's the right word. Put into your carry on a change of your unmentionables and probably a toothbrush, toothpaste, or whatever you need in terms of medication, and the things you would immediately need just in case your bag is detained, or lost, or any other thing.

ALEX MURPHY: Just a change of clothes. I know for me when I get off of a 16-hour flight, you might not be able to shower. But it's amazing how much of a difference just a clean shirt makes.

RUTH GREGORY: Yeah. OK. So the question was, what might she have said better? She might have said she's traveling, she's working on a graduate school project. That's the one thing she could have said better.

I can't remember exactly how she phrased it. She used the word work. And so they just assumed that meant she was getting paid as an American to come into Canada to basically steal work from Canadians. So that was the big snafu there.

ALEX MURPHY: I think even just saying I'm here as a tourist is pretty simple. If that's your answer every time you cross the border, no one is going to question that. So it will be the most seamless process.

RUTH GREGORY: All right, so on the ground.

ALEX MURPHY: All right, on-the-ground transportation. So depending on how long you're going to be in a place, you might consider getting an international driver's permit. They're only \$15. I think they're really worth it. I know at least for a lot of my travels in southern Africa it was much, much cheaper, and very convenient to have friends who had an international driver's permit and could take us places. Rather than constantly having to hire a taxi or a personal vehicle or taking public transport that sort of a thing.

If you're going to be somewhere for an extended period of time, I say it's worth it. And for the most part driving is driving all around the world. Granted, there are some countries where it's going to be a lot scarier, and the laws will probably be a lot more fluid, maybe not so concrete. So that's something you might want to research if you're going to be driving in that country.

RUTH GREGORY: So I drove a lot when I was in Germany, making the film that we were actually in Canada for as well. And they didn't actually require an international driver's permit. So also look that up before you leave, because it's another step you need to take before you go. And so if you don't need it, you might as well not do it. And so we drove on the autobahn, which really does have no speed limit and was probably the scariest thing that I've ever done with jet lag.

ALEX MURPHY: All right, if you don't want to go through that horrendous--

RUTH GREGORY: [INAUDIBLE].

ALEX MURPHY: If you don't want to go through that kind of experience and you just want to take the train or the bus, I think that's also a great option. But if you've never taken trains or buses before, maybe take some time before you leave to get comfortable with your transit system in whatever city you're currently in and get comfortable with how to access it, how to maneuver it.

And when you get to your country, don't be afraid to ask. I think that for the most part people around the world are really willing to and excited to help out foreigners when they can. So just ask for help. I'm sure that someone will usually help you.

RUTH GREGORY: The one thing, though, that you should be aware of is that the public transport system in other countries-- in any country I've been in-- is probably the place where I hear about the most pick pocketing and stuff going on. So really make sure you're aware of where your belongings are when you travel on public transport. I think it's the same probably in the US, too.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah. And keep your very, very valuable items close to your body. I usually tuck my passport, or if I'm carrying a lot of cash, I just tuck it right into my undershirt. And it's just on my person. And you don't need a special pouch or anything, but just as long as it's somewhere where someone can't easily grasp it off of you. That's one of the safety precautions that you should really take.

RUTH GREGORY: I use the pouch, but I find them super annoying at the same time.

ALEX MURPHY: So it's a personal decision. And another thing along the lines of safety precautions is don't be afraid to negotiate. For most countries, if you're traveling in the more developed area, they might have set prices for public transport. But in a lot of countries that I've traveled in there are things like their taxis are negotiable depending on the distance that you're traveling and the amount of people who are in your taxi.

And so obviously do your research and find out if you can negotiate. And if you're able to, I would say go for it. I think it's a great cultural exchange. And maybe it will save you a few bucks. But if you don't care that much and you don't mind paying the extra few dollars, then don't worry about it.

RUTH GREGORY: I've yet to be in a country where I've had to negotiate, or at least I did a bad job of identifying that I could negotiate. I look forward to that one day. OK. So probably the-- wow. We have an airplane. That's unusual for Pullman.

So the thing that people always want to know is, how do you finance it? Neither Alex nor I are

individually wealthy people, so we found some pretty creative ways to fund our traveling abroad. Some of which are family friendly, and some of which are less so. So we're going to talk a little bit about funding options.

ALEX MURPHY: All right, and I see that we just had Shandy join us. So welcome, Shandy. Let us know if you have any questions. We're kind of coming to a close, toward the end of it. But we'd be happy to go through anything that we've talked about before if you have an upcoming trip that you'd like to know about.

RUTH GREGORY: We also will be putting this up online, so you can review it later. Because I know we have so much expert advice on how to travel.

ALEX MURPHY: So how to finance it-- study abroad is one great way to finance your international travel. If you are interested in studying abroad, Global Campus students are able to definitely. You have to go through the International Programs Office. And you can do global learning for credits, but it has to go through the global learning office. So if you're interested in that sort of thing, I would say contact the International Programs Department via this website that we posted here.

And I found out that actually if you have children and this is something that you'd like to pursue-- it's acceptable to you. It depends on the institution where you'll be traveling and the country where you'll be in, but some places will accommodate childcare. They won't give you any extra money for your children, but they will make accommodations to make it easier for you to take your children abroad with you. So I would say don't cross it off your list. If it's something that you're really passionate about, there's a way to make it happen.

And the International Programs Office is very helpful, and they are very eager to help out Global Campus students. So definitely get in contact with them. And Peace Corps I am partial to, because I did Peace Corps for three years. And I think it's a wonderful program. And I think it's just an amazing experience in general. It is a bit of a commitment-- two years. So if you're interested in that sort of thing, I think you can at least look into it.

The Peace Corps has a program called Master's International where you can pursue a master's degree. And your Peace Corps service will contribute to part of your credits for finishing your master's degree. And you could potentially even do some of your research for your master's while you're doing your Peace Corps service.

So it doesn't cost you much aside from the checks that you have to get beforehand. The

Peace Corps will pay you to be a volunteer. It's not much. You're not going to make a ton. But you'll at least break even. And then when you're finished serving, you get a big chunk of a couple thousand dollars to help you resettle back into America. So I think it's definitely feasible. It's a great program. So you can look into that.

RUTH GREGORY: I wanted to ask you, too, I thought that Peace Corps had kind of changed it's policy so now you can kind of better dictate where you're going. Because it used to be you signed up and they sent you wherever they wanted, right?

ALEX MURPHY: Yes, pretty much. So nowadays in an effort to recruit more volunteers, they've made the form a lot shorter. When I applied it was 12 pages. And now they've shortened it. And they've also allowed you to select the country, or at least preference the country that you'd like to serve in or the area of the world. So that's convenient.

RUTH GREGORY: That's nice.

ALEX MURPHY: Yeah. So if you don't want to study abroad and you'd rather volunteer, there are a ton of websites out there that you can just do a quick Google search for volunteer abroad or volunteer in the country that you want to serve in. But WWOOFing is a great organization that I've done in Indonesia.

It stands for Worldwide Organizations of Organic Farms where you can work on an organic farm. It's sort of a work-- excuse me-- work-living exchange program. So if you volunteer for, let's say, three weeks of work, then they will house you and feed you for three weeks. So long as you commit to anywhere from four to eight hours of work per day, depending on what your skills are, depending on what their needs are.

Every country is different. Every individual farmer is different in terms of what they need and what they're going to expect out of you. It's a pretty cheap cost. I think it only cost maybe \$20 to sign up for the website. And then you have access to all these different countries where you can WWOOF. So that's something.

RUTH GREGORY: That's Alex WWOOFing in the lower right corner digging a ditch, too.

ALEX MURPHY: Yes. That was all I could contribute, because I don't have that many skills-- nothing really relatable to farm work. So that's a great way to travel for very, very cheap and also a great way to understand the local culture. If you're living on a farm with a family, then you're going to

get one-on-one access to that culture and that language that you might not get if you're staying in a hostel with a bunch of other foreigners.

Another website that you could check out is crossculturalsolutions.org. They do charge for their volunteer programs, but they take all of the work out of it. So they'll place you. They'll find you work. They'll find a place to live, what you're going to eat. And they'll kind of take care of everything for you. So if you don't have the time or the ability to do the research and the planning ahead of time, that's a great program to go through.

RUTH GREGORY: And then finally there's working abroad. So BUNAC is a really popular organization that will help facilitate getting your visas, especially to other English speaking countries-- so Australia, New Zealand, the British Isles, et cetera. The one thing about BUNAC and their programs, it will depend on the country that you're going to, but a lot of them are time sensitive.

So once you graduate-- it's very much tied to being a student. So once you graduate, you have, I think, like six months to a year to apply to go and use it. Otherwise it expires. There are also age caps, too. So for instance, I'm no longer eligible for any BUNAC program because I'm too old.

There's also good references on jobs.goabroad.com. When I actually worked abroad in France I was an English language assistant, which is a huge program in France. They import people from all over the world whose native languages are diverse. In my area, which was a relatively small town in southern France, we had people who were teaching students Russian, German, English, and all sort of different versions of English, Spanish, et cetera.

So that was a great way for me to be able to travel abroad. They do pay. You can only work 12 hours a week. So that's where got into eating too much cheese, which was a problem, in my time off. And it is something that you can do with kids.

There was another woman who was working in the program because her husband was actually stationed, military-wise, in France. And so that's how she made extra money. So they don't necessarily discriminate based on parenting, et cetera.

So those are a couple of our options. Of course, there are more out there. BUNAC also has volunteer options, too-- I guess I forgot to mention that-- as well as work options.

ALEX MURPHY: And this kind of stuff is so available. If you just Google where you want to go and what you want to do, you'll find a ton of resources. All right, so our top five trip tips before you trip.

RUTH GREGORY: This is an aggregate from several other people we work with who have traveled a lot as well.

ALEX MURPHY: If you can't remember anything else that we've talked about tonight, these are our top five tips for success when you're traveling. I think be culturally sensitive is one of the most important. Just because you don't want to offend anyone, and you want to make sure that the people around you, and the people that you're staying with, the people that you're interacting with-- not only that you are getting the best experience of them, but they're also getting the best experience of you and of your culture.

And the best way to do that is to really understand their culture and understand what possibly offends them, or upsets them, or excites them. What are they interested in? And those kind of things can really make or break your traveling experience.

RUTH GREGORY: So number two is make an attempt at the language. You're not going to necessarily be able to speak everything perfectly. You may not even be able to speak, but you're trying to speak perfectly. But you'll be amazed at how much nicer people are if you just try.

The other added shoe is if they don't understand you in English, speaking louder at them will not actually help. I actually had people do this to me in France in French. And I was like, wow, that's really annoying. So speak slower. That will maybe help with the comprehension differences.

ALEX MURPHY: And if your verbal language isn't working, sign language is universal. And I mean this means drink anywhere in the world. So you can get by if you're really struggling.

RUTH GREGORY: Number three is important.

ALEX MURPHY: Bring coins for the restroom. I'm shocked at how often I have needed to pay to use a bathroom. You think that it's just one of those things that's readily available, but it's not. And if you need it and you don't have a coin, just like if you don't have toilet paper, you're really in a tough situation. And you don't want to be in that situation.

RUTH GREGORY: I would say this holds true for everywhere I've traveled as well. It's kind of a weird, universal truth except for in the US. So yes, bring coins for the restrooms. Some are literally you put a coin in, and doors open, and you go in. Sometimes there's an attendant, but either way you need money to go to the bathroom.

ALEX MURPHY: Number four, we talked about this a little bit, pack light. This is just the most important, I think, one of the most important, obviously, things. Because if you've got a huge backpack on and if you're not in a country where it's convenient for you to access public transportation or even transportation with wheels. If you're going to be walking a lot, you don't want to carry 100 pound backpack. Trust me, you will regret it.

RUTH GREGORY: The other thing, too, I would say is that I actually prefer to not bring my rolling bag but to put it on my back. Because I don't know what the terrain is going to be like. And it's very awkward. I think you've all experienced trying to drag a rolling bag down a dirt road or gravel road, et cetera.

Number five is probably our most important-- is keep an open mind. It's especially bizarre and also enlightening to be an American and to talk to people about America abroad. And you have to realize that the things that we feel about other cultures-- that may not always be positive. Maybe things that they also feel about us. And we have to be able to listen and engage in dialogue. So make sure you keep an open mind when you're traveling about their customs, how they feel about us, life in general.

ALEX MURPHY: And just about your trip, too. Some of the best trips that I've ever been on during my travels have been unexpected ventures off the path that I thought I would take. I had a week itinerary where I was going to do Monday here, Tuesday here, Wednesday here.

And then I met a fabulous person at a hostel who was going to go to some foreign part of the country that I'd never heard of. And they offered me an extra seat in the car. And you'd be really amazed at how easy it is to get off of your path if you're open to it and how incredible those experiences can be.

RUTH GREGORY: I think this is the one thing I have sucked at when traveling abroad. Keeping an open mind to changing your itinerary is the one reason why deep in my heart I will regret that I've never gone to the Isle of Skye in Scotland. Even though I've gone right by it I think three times now. And people were like, let's go there. And I'm like, but it's so hard. And then I leave and I'm like, I wish I would have gone there. Yes, so keep an open mind about many things.

ALEX MURPHY: So that being said, that's all the information that we have for you tonight. Before you leave, I just want to put a copy of our survey in the chat box. Because this helps us evaluate our programming and develop our future programming. So if you could just take a moment and fill that out, we would really appreciate it.

And check out our upcoming events at connections.wsu.edu. If any of this information has piqued your interest and you really have a burning desire to travel abroad, but you maybe don't know how to finance it, we're going to be hosting an international scholarships event on April 7. Where we're going to talk about international scholarships that are specifically available to Global Campus students. Possibly how you could bring your family on those scholarships, and just how you can finance it and how feasible it is for you. So don't miss that.

RUTH GREGORY: And I would like to say, I know one of the ones they're going to talk about it is the Fulbright. And I actually has a former colleague from grad school who did take his family abroad on the Fulbright, so I know it's possible. So if you're really interested in traveling, I highly recommend that you check that out even if you feel like it's something that's outside of your current plans or finances.

ALEX MURPHY: So do either of you have any questions for us tonight, or anything that we didn't address that you would like to know more about? All good.

RUTH GREGORY: If you do have questions after the fact, we've put our emails up on the screen. So this is Alex, and I'm Ruth. And you're welcome to email us at any time if you have questions about traveling. It's definitely something we both like to talk about a lot.

ALEX MURPHY: Yes, and something that we both feel very strongly everyone should do. So thanks for joining us today and thanks for tuning in. And I hope you guys all have a great night.

RUTH GREGORY: Good night.