

From our alumna: Brandy Garzel, Karolinska Institutet / College Notre Dame MD (Fall 2009)

It was about one year ago that I decided I would spend a semester in Sweden, and I would say now, even before I am finished, that it was one of the best decisions of my life. I had originally been wary of choosing Sweden, as I had not heard much of Stockholm before, and had been warned of the cold and dark winter that I would endure.

I arrived at the end of August for my semester of research, and the weather was actually quite beautiful. Flying into the city, and noticing the beautiful landscape, I remember being surprised that a capital city could retain such amazing scenery, while still maintaining the entertainment and business that make a capital successful. After a brief adjustment period, the opportunities available in Stockholm became very evident. There was so much to do and see on the weekends, and the research that I had come for proved to be extremely valuable and an amazing learning experience for me. And though the weather might have scared me at first, I realized that it was not all that different to weather I had experienced growing up in central Pennsylvania. The fall scenery was beautiful, and there were many days where even just a sweater was perfect for walking around the city. The views all around the city are beautiful and accentuated by all of the water that surrounds Stockholm. And while the city may be the capital of Sweden, it has a quiet and peaceful feel, which really allows one to feel safe. After two months of researching and exploring Stockholm, I can honestly say it was the best choice I could have made for a semester abroad.