



## ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ABROAD

2010 Alumni and Business Survey

GlobalLinks Learning Abroad and the Foundation for Asia Pacific Education

### The Foundation for Asia Pacific Education – 501 C3



- Created in 2006
- Private, non-partisan board of directors
- Focus on fundraising
- Supporting over 200 students each year
- Over \$400,000 distributed
  
- Moving to a worldwide context in 2011

## Overall GlobalLinks Learning Abroad Assessment

- Organizational Management
- Site and Program selection
- Student success throughout program components
- Focus on expectations, cultural deepening
- Lifetime Impact
  - ▣ Little to no prior activities
  - ▣ **2010 Alumni and Business Survey with the Foundation**



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## Before the survey...

The question of why?

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## Existing Research

- IIE – outcomes of short term study abroad
- U. of Minnesota SAGE Study – outcomes for global engagement
- Universities of Georgia – the GLOSSARi project
- The Forum on Education Abroad
- CIEE – business and hiring views
- ....and a host of universities who are studying their own alumni, programs and communities

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## Reaching our own conclusions

- Alumni with providers are diverse
- Prior surveys – other content
- Local businesses are part of the future
- Simply interested in the knowledge of business leaders
- Interested to see long term value for students

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## Initial Thoughts: The Value of Education Abroad

- In whose eyes?
- Seeking justification or confirmed theory
- Assuming each person knows why the question is being asked
- Linking the real world to education
- Aware of limitations of a survey vs. a research study

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## #1 Objective

Identify how companies/business professionals view the impact of an international education experience on a person's career preparedness and performance, as well as how the reported outcomes from alumni align with what business professionals report experiencing and valuing in their own workplace

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## #2 Objective

Identify what international education alumni (predominantly of the GlobalLinks Learning Abroad groups) identify as the tangible and intangible skills and capabilities gained through their experience abroad and how they have applied that to their professional, personal and educational pursuits

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## Part 1: Students

Alumni Survey 2009

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## The Survey

- Consulted with field professionals
  - ▣ Board of Directors
  - ▣ Michael Paige, UMN
  - ▣ Study Abroad directors
- Focus on
  - ▣ Personal Impact
  - ▣ Professional Impact
  - ▣ Financial Barriers

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## Who Are You Now?

As part of our survey, we conducted a “who are you now?” approach with questions aimed at understanding how alumni view their experience and the IMPACT on their life since completing their programs. These questions related to where they found study abroad helpful in their personal or professional choices outside of just how they grew intellectually

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## Other Survey Questions

- **Testimonials**
- **Other experience abroad**
- **Postgraduate study**
- **Personal Choices**

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## Student Response

- **To our surprise,**
  - ▣ **2100 alumni participated**
  - ▣ **More than Globalinks Learning Abroad**
  - ▣ **Local universities supporting the efforts**
  - ▣ **Students who participated gave thoughts, not just data**

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## WHO ARE THEY?

- 90.9% from 2000 or later (by graduation year)
  - ▣ 117 from 1990's
  - ▣ 74 from 1980's
  - ▣ 31 from before 1980
- 74.3% Female
- 29% reported participating in 2 or more study abroad programs/experiences

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## Profile of Alumni Participants

Age Groups	Response Percent	Response Count
18 – 20	5.9%	124
<b>21 – 25</b>	<b>58.7%</b>	<b>1233</b>
26 – 30	22.6%	474
31 – 35	5.2%	110
36 – 40	2.5%	52
41 – 45	1.9%	40
46 – 50	0.9%	19
50+	2.0%	43
I prefer not to provide this information.	0.2%	5

Ethnicity	Response Percent	Response Count
African American or Black	1.4%	30
Asian	3.8%	79
<b>Caucasian or White</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>1866</b>
<i>Hispanic or Latino</i>	5.6%	117
Native American or Native Alaskan	0.8%	17
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.5%	11
I prefer not to provide this information.	3.0%	64
Other (please specify below)	1.0%	20

Type of International Education Experience	Response Percent	Response Count
<b>Semester study abroad</b>	<b>70.9%</b>	<b>1488</b>
Year study abroad	12.2%	257
Internship or work abroad	10.8%	227
International field research	3.0%	64
<i>Short course program (8 weeks or less)</i>	22.5%	473
Volunteer program abroad	5.3%	112
Degree program	7.1%	150
Other (please specify)	4.5%	95

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## About their Experience

68% indicated that they used a program provider

For 40.9 %, foreign language study or immersion

29% reported participating in two or more EA programs

Abroad destinations: where do the Asia-Pacific countries rank?

- Australia (1) – 905
- New Zealand (2) – 274
- China (8) – 88
- Japan (9) - 76
- Hong Kong (13) – 42
- Thailand - 21
- Malaysia & South Korea – 11
- Singapore - 7

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## Financial Aid

54.3% (1139) received some kind of financial aid assistance

**African American/Black:** 86.7%

▣ *Extremely Important:* 84.6%

**Hispanic/Latino:** 72.6%

– *Extremely Important:* 89.4%

**Asian:** 63.3%

▣ *Extremely Important:* 76%

**Native American/Native Alaskan:**

58.8%

– *Extremely Important:* 90%

**Caucasian/White:** 52.9%

▣ *Extremely Important:* 71.2%

**Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander:**

81.8%

– *Extremely Important:* 77.8%

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## Financial Support

“Studying abroad was the sole reason I went into debt in college, while I'm still paying it off, it was well worth it. Money should be made more available to students who would like to study abroad. It is a financially taxing choice to make and I know that factor scares many people away.”

**Female, 21-15, 2009, Minnesota**

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## Student Testimonial - Funding

“Thinking about the funding piece, it was a very difficult financial decision for me to study abroad. I chose a summer program rather than a full semester program because I was unable to fund a longer program. I wish there were more opportunities for scholarships to study abroad for students like me.”

**Female, 21 – 25, 2006, Minnesota**

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## Student Testimonial - Funding

“After my study abroad program I have realized that because of lack of financial opportunities for minorities. The far majority of US study abroad students are white from the upper middle class to the upper class. Study abroad students do not reflect the United States or even college populations.”

African American Male, 18 – 20, 2012, Arizona

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## Alumni Engagement

Alumni Activity	Response Percent	Response Count
<b>I have actively encouraged others to participate in study abroad.</b>	<b>97.4%</b>	<b>1924</b>
I have volunteered/worked for an international education organization or university study abroad office.	20.1%	397
<b>I have made financial donation(s) to international education.</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>149</b>
I have provided quotes/testimonials about my study abroad experience for my university or study abroad program provider.	49.7%	982
I am a member of a study abroad alumni program with my home university, overseas university or program provider.	24.0%	474
<b>I am a member of a social networking group (i.e. Facebook) for study abroad alumni.</b>	<b>43.0%</b>	<b>849</b>
Other "alumni" activity. (please describe)	5.4%	106

## Understanding Contributors

149 reported making a financial contribution to international education.

- Work experience:
  - Not graduated/Not yet working: 10 (738) or 1.4%
  - 1 – 3 years experience: 42 (784) or 5.3%
  - 4 – 6 years experience: 30 (279) or 10.7%
  - 7 – 9 years experience: 16 (130) or 12.3%
  - 10 or more years: 51 (168) or 30.4%
  
- Of the 139 who have some professional experience:
  - 128 responded that their *study abroad experience impacted their career choice* **"To a Great Degree"** or **"To Some Degree"**.
  - 120 believe their international education experience gives them an advantage over other candidates when applying for jobs. (14 are undecided)

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## Professional Impact

Work Experience	Response Percent	Response Count
I have not yet graduated OR have not yet started working.	35.2%	738
1 - 3 years	37.4%	784
4 - 6 years	13.3%	279
7 - 9 years	6.2%	130
10 or more years	8.0%	168

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## Professional Impact

### How much did your education abroad experience impact your career choice?

- ▣ To a great degree: 37.1%      - Very little: 17.3%
- ▣ To some degree: 38.5%              - Not at all: 7.1%

### Hiring advantage over applicants without international experience?

- ▣ No experience: 599 of 723 (82.8) believe it WILL be an advantage
- ▣ With experience: 1003 of 1327 (75.6%) believe it IS an advantage

### During your career, have you had work experience overseas?

- ▣ English speaking country: 337 (of 1340)
- ▣ Non-English speaking country: 273 (of 1338)

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## Professional Impact

Professional Skills	Significant Impact	Some impact	Neutral	Little impact	No impact at all	Do not know/No response
Teamwork/Collaboration	262	647	253	124	56	11
<i>Cross-cultural Understanding</i>	1047	262	27	11	3	3
Leadership	352	626	275	68	27	5
Critical Thinking	412	625	216	76	21	3
Problem Solving	517	576	177	63	17	3
<i>Interpersonal communication</i>	782	476	65	20	7	3
Creativity/Innovation	454	597	202	70	25	5
Foreign language skills	459	218	222	127	285	42
<i>Intercultural communication</i>	812	422	73	27	13	6

#### Top 3 ranked by business leaders:

- ▣ Teamwork/Collaboration (25)
- ▣ Interpersonal Communication (25)
- ▣ Creative/Innovative (22)

#### Bottom 3 ranked by business leaders:

- Cross-cultural understanding/awareness (11)
- Foreign language skills (5)
- Intercultural communication (5)

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## Professional Impact

Professional Qualities	Significant impact	Some impact	Neutral	Little impact	No impact at all	Do not know/No response
Able to work independently	633	485	149	44	27	8
Adaptable/Flexible	862	398	61	14	7	4
Assertive/Forthright	463	603	199	57	18	6
Culturally sensitive	824	427	69	18	4	4
Professional/Work ethic	281	501	372	122	63	7
Self-aware	739	474	96	22	10	5
Self-confident	729	471	110	19	13	4
Self-motivated	583	503	185	42	28	5
Socially responsible	619	489	162	47	22	7
Tolerant	648	489	152	37	15	5

### Top 3 ranked by business leaders:

- Adaptable/Flexible (30)
- Professionalism/Work ethic (29)
- Self-motivated (25)

### Bottom 3 ranked by business leaders:

- Tolerant (12)
- Socially responsible (9)
- Assertive/Forthright (8)

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## Career Impact

“My ability to work with people of different backgrounds and perspectives was largely developed by my international experience. I am a much better communicator in general because I have had to communicate in difficult international situations.”

*Male, 40-45, 1989, Colorado*

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## Testimonial – Career Impact

“During several professional interviews, my experience abroad has often been one of the first topics of conversation that a future employer will discuss - by having the opportunity to express the experiences, achievements, and challenges overseas - I have had successful job offers influenced heavily by my international education experience.”

*Female, 26-30, 2005, California*

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## Testimonial – Career Impact

“The experience increased my multicultural awareness which has come in very handy in today's international business environment. I regularly work with people from all over the world, and having dealt with different cultures before has played an important role in fostering business relationships.”

*- Male, 31 – 35, 2000, Massachusetts*

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## Educational Impact

- 39% reported that they are enrolled or completed postgraduate study.
- Nearly ½ of those said their PG study has an international focus.
- 50% of the students said their study abroad experience impacted their choice of PG specialization. Equal said “little impact”
- 42% said they would participate in an overseas program as part of their PG program.

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## International Experience

- 62% of alumni have spent time overseas since returning from their EA experience
  - ▣ 29% lived abroad
  - ▣ 14% volunteered abroad
  - ▣ 9% enrolled in postgraduate studies abroad
- Almost all respondents indicated wishing they could go abroad more often and in different context than their prior experience

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## Part 2: Business Leaders

Survey 2009

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### Business Leader Interviews

#### Company profiles:

- 34 business leaders from 33 companies/organizations
- 29 for profit, 5 not for profit
- 23 with corporate headquarters in the Denver-metro area
- 18 companies with workforce based outside the US

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## Business Leader Interviews

- 30 in Director, VP, SVP, CEO leadership positions
- Direct responsibility profiles (current):
  - 26 hiring new employees
  - 27/31 training/developing (resp.)new and existing employees
  - 12 hiring or selecting for overseas work/ex-pat positions
- “Abroad” Experience

Years of Professional Experience	Response Percent	Response Count
1 - 5 years	0.0%	0
6 - 10 years	3.0%	1
11 - 15 years	12.1%	4
16 - 20 years	27.3%	9
21 - 25 years	21.2%	7
26 - 30 years	18.2%	6
More than 30 years	18.2%	6

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## Corporate Value of Education Abroad

When comparing candidates' experience, do you view international education experience as an *advantage, disadvantage or neutral.*

- 26 reported viewing the experience as a clear ADVANTAGE
- 2 view the experience as Advantage/Neutral (A/N)
- 5 view the experience as NEUTRAL

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## Testimonial – Does EA Matter?

“I always consider it an advantage. It always catches my eye. It is an indication that this person thinks differently and is likely to bring a global mindset and seek out different opinions.”

- *Kristy Feldkamp, Senior HR Director for Hewlett Packard*

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## Testimonial – Does EA matter?

- “More and more companies are now seeing international background as a top priority. Those resumes are going to the top of the pile...They are looking for new hires and even seasoned professionals with international experience, and foreign language skills. That’s a really big deal today.” *Michael Tucker, President of Tucker International, which consults to a number of Fortune 100 companies in the US and overseas*

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## Testimonial – does EA Matter?

"People who have the comfort with travel, new experiences, new languages are a real advantage for us. They don't suffer from zip code impairment."

*William Dehn, Executive Vice President for CH2M Hill*

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## Corporate Value of Education Abroad

20 business leaders reported that their international experience had a direct impact on their own career path and/or choices.

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## Testimonial – Business Leader Impact

“I had a lot of international business knowledge, but I never fully understood China in the context of global business impact and its critical role in (my industry) until I went there. It was a wake up for me.” *Warren Mickens, VP of Customer Operations. Qwest*

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## Testimonial – Business Leader Impact

"You can watch all the Rick Steves videos you want, even National Geographic and movies, but until you actually go there, breathe the air and see the people, explore different places and different cultures, I don't think you have a true understanding that people have different life styles and what works in one country may not work in another."

*Dustin Gallegos, Exec Director, Global Pricing and Finance, TeleTech*

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## Testimonial – Business Leader Impact

“(In my previous company) I wanted to head up the international division, but I learned the hard way that my DESIRE to travel abroad, understand cultures and speak another language could never stack up to someone who had actually DONE it or had those tangible skills. I was at a real disadvantage and it was very motivating and eye-opening.”

*Luke Wyckoff, CEO, Wyckoff Consulting*

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## Corporate Value of Education Abroad

When asked if international experience during college held its relevance 15 years into a person’s career (29 asked):

- 13 stated they would view the experience as **still relevant**.
- 13 said the relevance would be **dependent on how they could show that the experience had been built upon** in their career and/or life.

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## Testimonial – long term impact

- “For me, it’s always going to be relevant. It goes back to what the international experience does to shape someone’s thinking and the different reference point with which they view things going forward.” “The fact that I was an exchange student more than 20 years ago STILL shapes how I view things.”
- *Maria Hannon, Director of HR, Denver Museum of Nature & Science*

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## Testimonial – long term impact

“It depends on what they’ve done in that 15 years. If they’ve been able to weave that experience through their 15 years, either personally or professionally, then it’s very relevant.”

*Darrick Christopher, VP of BackUp Solutions, Bright Horizons*

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## Corporate Value of Education Abroad

Just 4 of 25 business leaders included *international experience* or *global knowledge* specifically when asked to list up to 3 overall hiring priorities for their company today.

Most common priorities included technical knowledge/job specific skills and cultural fit, but also:

- Flexibility, change-oriented, adaptability
- Diversity in background, well-rounded, varied life experience
- Communication skills
- Creativity / Innovation

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## Skills & Qualities

### Associated with international experience:

#### > 10 times

- Cultural awareness and tolerance
- Risk taking
- Flexible / Adaptable / Change oriented
- Global mindset / World view
- Open – minded / broad perspective
- Problem solving / Critical thinking

#### < 10 times:

- Self-motivated / Takes Initiative / Eager
- Creative / Innovative
- Confidence
- Independence
- Good communication skills

### Professional skills:

- Teamwork/Collaboration (25)
- Interpersonal Communication (25)
- Creative/Innovative (22)
- Ability to work well with a diverse workforce (21)
- Critical thinking (17)
- Problem solving (17)
- Leadership skills (16)
- Cross-cultural understanding/awareness (11)
- Foreign language skills (5)
- Intercultural communication (5)

### Professional Qualities:

- Adaptable/Flexible (30)
- Professionalism/Work ethic (29)
- Self-motivated (25)
- Self-aware (17)
- Self-confident (17)
- Able to work independently (16)
- Tolerant (12)
- Socially responsible (9)
- Assertive/Forthright (8)

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## Observations for Future Messaging

Strong match between what business are seeking and what they interpret as being developed through international experience:

- ✓ Adaptability / Flexibility / Change oriented
- ✓ Cultural awareness and tolerance
- ✓ Global mindset and world view
- ✓ Problem solving and critical thinking

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## Future Messaging

Areas where the link between skills/qualities sought and those enhanced through international experience can be stronger:

- Communication skills
- Creativity and Innovation
- Motivation and Initiative
- Diverse experience and perspective
- Confidence and Independence

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## Corporate Value Testimonials

"Education is about learning, experiences and being valuable and able to contribute based upon the breadth of who you are as a person and all that you can bring – a lot of different dimensions. I think people that have had the breadth of international travel and work and being ensconced in another culture, it broadens you as an individual, makes you a more experienced decision maker... shows a lot of initiative that a person would take that on. It makes you a more well rounded person."

- Randy Lynch, Senior Vice President Marketing, Strategy and Business Development - Telstra International

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## Corporate Value Testimonials

"These global competencies are relevant no matter the business. All companies today deal with diversity. 'Domestic diversity awareness' in business practice is just a domestic application of global competencies. Some companies are seeing that link and they are benefiting from doing so."

Michael F. Tucker, PhD, President – Tucker International

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## Testimonial – Future Students

“People who have had this experience, and perhaps by nature are people who look for this kind of experience, are always asking “What if?”. When you’re in an entrepreneurial company you always need to be surrounded by people who are asking “what’s next” so this mindset is so valuable.”

– *Cindy Carrillo, former founder and CEO Work Options Group*

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## Testimonial – future students

“If they have significant experience internationally, I expect that they have an ability to understand culture and business acumen across various parts of the globe, which is a distinct advantage. They naturally understand the do’s and don’ts of engaging with different cultures.”

*Roland Thornton, Executive Vice President Wholesale Markets - Qwest*

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## Other Testimonials

### Demonstrating awareness of the financial barriers to growing participation:

"It can't just be the top rung of the socio-economic ladder who get to experience (studying abroad)."

*– Michael Wukitsch, Vice President for Human Resources – The Children's Hospital*

"And the key to this is finding a way to enhance students' economic means to go abroad. That's the big barrier to making (significant growth in study abroad participation) a reality."

*– Kristy Feldkamp, Senior HR Director for Hewlett Packard*

### On the impact of demonstrable growth in education abroad participation across the US:

"If every student had some kind of experience in another culture, I think this country would be incredibly smarter and wiser. Our issues with other countries would improve. Think about people in positions of political power. If everybody in Congress had direct experience in another culture, what a different Congress we would have right now. Joe Six Pack would not be so popular."

*– Elizabeth Andora, Director of HR Mergers and Acquisitions – Sun Microsystems*

"From a business development standpoint, I think we would see a natural growth in international business partnerships because of the unavoidable exchange of knowledge taking place as a result of these experiences. It would certainly help this country be much stronger from an economic standpoint."

*– Mike O'Donnell, Executive Director - Colorado Lending Source*

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## So Where To from Here?

- A good test-run. Great for the Foundation.
- Potential ideas:
  - ▣ Providers with a key field knowledge group could band together to do more
  - ▣ Results of this survey alone could be distributed more widely to spur similar thoughts
  - ▣ PhD/Research to focus on the bridge between long term impact of education abroad

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THANK YOU

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