



Timberland  
Regional  
Library

# News Release

(360)943-5001 - Fax (360)586-6838 - [www.trlib.org](http://www.trlib.org) - 415 Tumwater Blvd SW - Tumwater, WA 98501

## **“20-Somethings Abroad”**

### **How 3 lived, worked & studied in West Africa, Central Asia, South America**

Where and what next after high school, after college, or somewhere in the middle? There’s more school or the job hunt, of course, and there’s the Peace Corps. But older teens and “20-somethings” may not be prepared for the long-term assignment. They do have choices—if they think outside the box. They can explore different countries, experience different cultures and come back with their own worlds expanded.

Three young locals back from their travels – for awhile – will speak about their experiences abroad at three separate events at the [Olympia Timberland Library](#). Each 90 minute presentation will be held after hours and include time for questions.

#### **Senegal, Africa: Monday, August 23, 8:15 – 9:45 p.m.**

Ryan Lawrence will talk about his experiences as a volunteer teaching in the West African nation of Senegal. Right out of high school, with an interest in languages and four years of French under his belt, Lawrence wanted to experience an extended stay in another country and found his opportunity with the Projects Abroad organization, [www.projects-abroad.org](http://www.projects-abroad.org). He lived with families in local towns and villages and taught English from October 2009 to May 2010.



Seeing how people live in community in Senegal was a most broadening experience Lawrence said. And the food—mainly rice and fish with spices and sauces—was great. This fall he’ll be taking up Chinese at Carleton College in Minnesota. His experience in Africa should set him up nicely for Carleton’s Chinese Studies program in Tianjin, China.

#### **Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Wednesday, August 25, 7:15 – 8:45 p.m.**

Sarah Heywood will discuss her experiences as a student of the Ilkhom Theatre School of Drama program in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, [www.ilkhom.com/english/school](http://www.ilkhom.com/english/school). How does a University of Washington student end up in a three-year course of drama studies in Central Asia? “It was a collision of spontaneous events,” said Heywood. She knew she would pursue the theater arts and she was studying Russian language, literature and drama. Then she saw Ilkhom perform in Seattle. “I’d never been affected by a piece of art like that in my life,”



said Heywood.

Spring 2008 found her living in an apartment in a Soviet-era block building, “weathered in all its glory,” and pursuing an arduous, six-days a week course of study. Sundays were for discovering the city, visiting friends and doing her laundry. One result of Sarah’s immersion is that when she speaks in Russian, she thinks in Russian. She heads back to the school in September.

**South America: Thursday, August 26, 7:15 – 8:45 p.m.**

Kevin Lynn will talk about traveling, learning and volunteering for six months in five countries in South America from June 2009 to just before Thanksgiving.

The Capital High School graduate’s second year at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon provided an opportunity to spend a year in South America with a set course of study and a specific schedule or to take leave for a semester and follow his own course. With a sense of adventure and seven years of Spanish language studies to back him up, he chose the latter.



Kevin spent over 300 hours on buses and traveled thousands of miles from Bolivia to Peru, Ecuador, Argentina and Chile. “I taught English classes, volunteered in an animal refuge in the Bolivian jungle, volunteered in the Ecuadorian cloud forest, went wine tasting in Argentina, visited Machu Picchu and watched tango performances in the streets of Buenos Aires,” wrote Lynn in an e-mail, “I got lost, pickpocketed, scammed and heckled, but I also experienced incredible hospitality from fascinating and inspiring people.”

**Don’t miss the boat**

Like the other two speakers, Kevin leaves town soon. He returns to Willamette next month. The library arranged the 20-Somethings Abroad series to show young people they have options. “We wanted to share this with the community and give young adults a sampling of possibilities and opportunities and ways to expand their world,” said Cheryl Heywood, Olympia Timberland Library Manager and mother of Sarah Heywood.

The library is at 313 8th Avenue SE, Olympia. For more information, call the library at (360) 352-0595 or go to [www.TRL.org](http://www.TRL.org).

---

---

Timberland Regional Library provides for the information, reading and lifelong learning needs of the Grays Harbor, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, and Thurston county public at 27 community public libraries and 7 library service partner locations. The library system is funded mainly by local property taxes. Anyone needing special accommodations to participate in a library’s program may contact the library one week in advance.