

Adventuring With Abby: A Global EDGE Project

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Abby Stephens

stephens.abby@yahoo.com

(801) 317-5219

Each student at Southern Utah University completes an experiential learning project—otherwise known as EDGE—during their time as an undergraduate student. Abby Stephens is a soon-to-be graduate from Southern Utah University that embarked on a journey abroad to satisfy the requirements for her project. Through her diligent work, she found a way to complete a global experiential learning project in Tallinn, Estonia. She would be living and working abroad at the Tallinn University of Technology and at the State Department funded EducationUSA Office from August 2018 – January 2019.

While studying both Economics and Political Science, Abby yearned for a way to make her education more meaningful. As a first-generation college student, there were limited funds available to enhance her education. Abby had saved money quietly through working part-time on-campus in the International Affairs Office and through small side jobs. Studying abroad has appealed to many individuals for a plethora of reasons, but the high price tag is enough of a deterrent for most. Little did she know that her ‘rainy-day’ fund, along with the generosity of the International Affairs Office, would come to finance her experience abroad. By teaching English bi-weekly and by guest teaching various topics to local Estonians, Abby was able to grow in many ways.

Abby chose Estonia due to the off-the-beaten-path nature of Eastern Europe’s tourism. The stunning beauty of Estonia’s nature reminded her of Utah’s breathtaking landscapes. Due to Estonia’s closeness in proximity to Russia and their status as a former Soviet Union satellite country, Abby was able to gain an invaluable insight into the lives that have been effected. Abby also gained a new perspective on cultural sensitivity and intercultural communication.

Should you have any questions regarding Abby or studying abroad in Estonia, please do not hesitate to reach out.