

## Expanding Access to Education Abroad

While one in four students currently studies abroad during their time at Kent State, many students are unable to access an international experience due to the cost. What if every student was able to receive scholarship funding toward global education? That question was the inspiration behind the Kent State Global Education Endowment.

Established with a lead gift from Valoree Vargo, vice president for Kent State University's Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement and CEO of the Kent State Foundation, the endowment aims to provide every incoming undergraduate student with financial support for a study abroad experience.

"An opportunity to study abroad is an experience like nothing else," Vargo says. "Students are learning 24/7 when they're immersed in a new culture—both in and out of the classroom. The global education that Kent State offers our students is the best in the country, and I believe that access to that experience should be open to as many students as possible. To be able to support the Global Education Endowment personally and professionally is deeply meaningful to me."

Reaching an initial goal of \$20 million would provide a scholarship of approximately \$1,000 per student for the number of Kent State students who are currently studying abroad (about 25%).

The scholarships will be administered by the Office of Global Education, Division of Enrollment Management and Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement.

The collective impact of \$20 million in one endowment is the fastest way to make more scholarships available to more Kent State students. This will be a differentiating factor for Kent State among public higher education institutions and will support enrollment and retention rates. Most importantly, it will enrich the student experience.

Kent State's greatest global education advocates who give a new gift to support the endowment will be welcomed into the Renaissance Scholars Society (see page 15). With their collective support, undergraduate students from every major and every college at any Kent State campus will be eligible to receive a scholarship from this fund once during their undergraduate career. The university will continue to grow the endowment to fulfill its ultimate goal of providing a global education scholarship to every undergraduate student who desires a study abroad experience.

Additionally, the Office of Global Education has a donor-supported fund specifically designed to assist students in obtaining their first passport or renewing an expired one. The cost of a passport can be a

stumbling block or stopping point for some students, preventing them from pursuing one of the many important global learning opportunities available to them at Kent State. The Project Passport Fund provides a portal to a future that includes global learning for students who have never left the country.

"At Kent State, we believe that exploring new places is vital to a greater understanding of the world around us," says Marcello Fantoni, PhD, vice president for global education. "We know that an international experience is one of the most direct and effective ways to change the life of a student for the better."

A global experience expands academic, professional and personal horizons and leads to greater employment opportunities. Kent State's Global Education Endowment will provide unprecedented access to global education, allowing students to dream bigger and gain a new world view. Studying abroad is the chance of a lifetime and, with this endowment, one that no Kent State student will have to miss. ⚡

Scan this QR code to give to the Global Education Endowment. Or go to <https://flashes.givetokent.org/campaign/global-education-endowment-fund/.C440600>.



## JOIN THE RENAISSANCE

The Italian Renaissance was a cultural phenomenon that transformed our world forever—and the city of Florence was at its heart. As Kent State celebrates 50 years of its flagship program in Florence, Italy, the university has set its sights on the future. It has recently established the Kent State Global Education Endowment that, once fully funded, will provide access to a global education scholarship for all incoming undergraduate students who aspire to study abroad during their time at Kent State.

Such an ambitious goal would be the largest endowment in university history—and is only possible with philanthropic support. To help meet that goal, the university has created the Renaissance Scholars Society, a group of major gift donors who share the university's enthusiasm for a boundless education and an expanded worldview. The program aims to raise an initial \$20 million in five years or less to support the endowment fund and immediately help as many students as possible.

To become a member of the Renaissance Scholars Society, donors make a new gift (outright or five-year pledge) to the Kent State Global Education Endowment at one of five levels (\$50,000 to \$10 million). The society will offer exclusive opportunities to its supporters for travel and education abroad with renowned scholars, artists, lecturers, historians and faculty from Kent State and its international partners. It's a unique format that combines two of the university's core competencies: study abroad and lifelong learning.

Renaissance Scholars Society members will journey to Florence in October 2023 for the Kent State Florence program's 50th anniversary celebration, which includes a donor gala and access to experiences only available through Kent State. They also will receive advance invitations to attend future alumni and donor global education experiences at other locations beginning in 2024, as well as updates about global education.

Learn more about the Renaissance Scholar Society at [www.kent.edu/renaissance](http://www.kent.edu/renaissance).