



With a quivering hand, both nervous and excited, she brings the insect to her mouth. Missi Barton has never snacked on termites before, but the tour guide explains that it's a popular source of protein for native Belizeans. "When in Rome," she thinks, and takes the bite. This is not her usual Spring Break routine.

Last spring, fourteen agricultural communications students were given the opportunity to make Texas Tech University history when they embarked on a study abroad trip to Belize that had never been done before. Unlike many study abroad programs, the trip only lasted one week.

Every agricultural communications student at Texas Tech is required to take the agricultural campaigns class, but last year, it was offered as a study abroad option.

Dr. Erica Irlbeck, an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications, was inspired to incorporate international travel into the class when her sister, Evin Zebaneh, began a banana farm tour in Belize.

Bunches of Fun banana farm tour is the only banana farm tour in Belize. Zebaneh needed a marketing campaign

to accommodate the American and Canadian tourists who often visited Belize. This would involve social media, web redesign, videography and news releases.

Irlbeck has taught the regular campaigns course for several years, so she was excited to introduce a new hands-on experience to the class that would prepare students for the international agriculture industry.

"It added another level that we don't get in that the client was international," Irlbeck said, "I do think agriculture is a global business, so having a little bit of experience in communication with an international client is good."

The class was conducted similarly to previous campaigns classes. The students met once a week for two hours to discuss campaign methods. They came up with the name, "Belize It," to represent their mission. But instead of parting ways for Spring Break, they traveled across the Gulf of Mexico to the small Central American country of Belize.

Once everyone arrived in Belize, the adventure began. Missi Barton, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications, was on her



*Students got a stamp on their passports.*



*The students created a campaign called "Belize It!"*



*Most of the workers at Sagitun Farms are native Belizeans or Guatemalans.*