

Namaste...

CMAT and education departments go abroad

By Alexis Howard

Sports Editor
Ah48115@gulls.salisbury.edu

During the Winter 2011 semester, several students from the Salisbury University Communication Arts Department traveled abroad. The students traveled to Mumbai, India, and other locations. Education students also traveled there and spent days teaching children in Mumbai and Pune.

Dr. Andrew Sharma, a communication arts professor, grew up in Mumbai and was familiar with the city. This is the second year Sharma has taken students abroad, and he plans to make this trip once every two years.

"International education is something I believe in, and this also supports SU's mission," Sharma said. "My past connections with India made it a viable choice."

The senior communication arts students were from various tracks in the department. CMAT students included Mark Zaccapio and Brady Cohen (media production), Kristen Etzel (human communications), and Kierstin O'Guinn, Maggie Hughes, Eyan Clifton and Alexis Howard (journalism/public relations). Chris Robeck, a communication arts student at the University of Maryland College Park, also traveled with the group. The students studied Hindi Bollywood films at St. Xavier's College and had the opportunity to take Hindi classes to learn the basics of the language.

Dr. Edward Robeck, an education professor, took two education students on the trip. Juniors Allison Bondarenko and Alli Trotter had the chance to teach children and spent four days in Pune teaching various lessons.

"I had always wanted to study abroad, but there aren't many short-term options for elementary education majors. The opportunity came and I took it," Trotter said.

The first weekend excursion was to Aurangabad. While there, they visited the Aganta and Ellora Caves. The Aganta Caves are a world heritage site about 99 kilometers from the Aurangabad district. They were carved from second century B.C. to sixth century A.D.

The Ellora Caves are also a world heritage site and are about 18 miles northwest of Aurangabad. The caves are dated back 300 years.

"I learned that I knew almost nothing about India," Clifton said. "The history of their religions and people at the Ellora and Aganta caves were simply amazing. Realizing that their history is over 4,500 years old in comparison to our history in the U.S.



Submitted photo
Students who went on the India trip from the CMAT and education departments pose in front of the Ellora cave during the winter term.

that is only a couple hundred years, really puts their country into perspective."

The second weekend trip was to Goa in Southwest India. Goa, originally settled by the Portuguese, is located on the Arabian Sea.

"Our 'rustic' bungalows were awesome, and I've never been so happy without A/C," Clifton said.

While there, the students

had the opportunity to ride an elephant. Everyone took home their own special memories and views on their experiences.

"My best memory was visiting an after school program in Pune where I had the opportunity to just play with a bunch of kids," Trotter said. "I remember their smiling faces so vividly because they reminded me that people are

people, regardless of whether you prefer chapati or French fries."

For more information on studying abroad, call the Center for International Education, 410-334-3495.

"Watching the students adapt to the host country is wonderful," Sharma said. "Since we do everything as a group, we become a very tight-knit family."