The Florida International University Powerlifting Team surprised the other collegiate teams in the state with a first-place finish in the men’s competition and a second-place finish in the women’s competition at the Florida Collegiate Powerlifting Championships on Sunday, November 16, 2014. The team, coached by Dr. Bill Hennessey, an FIU instructor and national champion, is only in its first year of existence. “Our victory was absolutely huge,” Hennessey said. “Florida State University had won the title for about seven years straight,” Hennessey continued. “When we got there the competition was looking at us and wondering who we were. I guarantee you that they know now.”

What is more remarkable about the FIU Powerlifting Team is that it began just about a year ago with lifters JC Monduy, Mark Preciados, Katharina Pajic, and Vincent Victorero. The team now has eleven lifters and is state champion. “We have trained extremely hard,” Hennessey said. “None of my original lifters had competed before we began the team. JC Monduy now holds four national records at 52 kgs and Roman Fronzaglia, our freshman captain, is a national recordholder at 59 kgs. I have very talented lifters here at FIU,” Coach Hennessey stated.

At the Florida Collegiate Powerlifting Championships, JC Monduy won a gold medal at 52 kgs and set four American records. Other gold medal winners for FIU included Tiffany Garriga at 52 kgs, Roman Fronzaglia at 59 kgs, Steven Jennings at 75 kgs, Katharina Pajic at 90 kgs, and Vincent Victorero at 100 kgs. Silver medal winners included Jessica Cerron at 75 kgs, Bader Al Ojairi at 75 kgs and Mark Preciados at 110 kgs.
Florida International University Powerlifting Team Cleans up at the 2014 Florida Collegiate Powerlifting Championships Cont’d

Jonathan Eidam and Kevin Garcia won bronze medals at 82 and 90 kgs, respectively. “We could not have done this without the help of our assistant coaches,” Hennessey said. “We have assembled the best group of coaches in powerlifting. Assistant Coach Damian Fronzaglia is a three-time world champion, and Assistant Coach Marvin Wheeler, Assistant Coach Brian Morrison, and I have all won on the national level. The assistant coaches were a huge help on Sunday and they helped me manage things flawlessly,” Coach Hennessey said.

The FIU Powerlifting Team will compete again in March or June. “My hope is to win at the national level,” Coach Hennessey said. “With this group of athletes I definitely think the sky is the limit. I feel very blessed to coach them all. They are not only excellent lifters; they are excellent people,” Coach Hennessey continued.

The Meaning of Thanksgiving

It’s that wonderful time of the year again where we get together with our families, friends, and loved ones to celebrate. We sit at the dinner table and are ready to devour the scrumptious feast that has taken all day to be prepared. As we sit around the dinner table, let us remember the many things we should be thankful for. The meaning of Thanksgiving is to be thankful for yet another year gone by, great health, and the meaningful gift of life. Whether you are here with your family or not, remember that you have a family here at the ELI who cares and wishes you a wonderful holiday! Happy Thanksgiving!
Faculty Spot: Courtney Burnett

There is something indescribably exciting about starting a new stage in your life. Usually, as a child and young adult, one has all the time in the world to think of imaginary things because, up until one goes to college and then after, one’s life has already been planned. One’s mother tells one what to wear and eat, and one’s father, where one can and cannot go, and the type of people with whom one can play. One’s teachers tell one what classes one should take and so on and so forth. However, no one tells one what to do after college. It is then that one is all on one’s own. This is where I found myself a little over a year ago. My life was in my own inexperienced hands. Every day I lived with the fear that I might mess it all up. However, I have come to realize that life just happens, and there really isn’t such a thing as “making a mess of it”.

I spent five and a half consecutive years at the university. I was scared that if I didn’t continue on with my masters, I would be in school forever. That thought was just too terrible to contemplate. However, in my haste to finish my work at the university, I realized that I had neglected my lifelong dream of traveling. I had spent seven years in the United States. Of course, I traveled within the United States, but that is not the same as traveling abroad. Seven years is far too long without a change of environment if you ask me.

Success takes planning and discipline. Fresh out of graduate school and with little to no work experience, I decided to kill two birds with one stone: find an opportunity to travel while gaining international work experience if at all possible for as little expense to me as possible. Thus, I applied for the Fulbright Scholarship.

I chose Korea for two reasons: first, my parents were stationed there when I was a child and used to send me photos and souvenirs which introduced me to Korea, and second, I wanted to experience a culture I had never experienced before.

Living in Korea has taught me a lot of things. In Korea, I was able to truly learn that one must not rely on other peoples’ life experience. One must go out and explore the world and learn for one’s self.

The first 6 months were difficult for me because it took time to adjust to Korean culture and food. I was a bit homesick for the simple things of life such as having public bathrooms with toilet paper and soap, having different types of meals such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and being able to speak one’s mind directly. In Korea, one does not speak one’s mind directly; it is considered too harsh and brash. Rice is with every meal, and you must carry toilet paper and soap in your purse when you are out and about. Pushing and shoveling is not seen as rude as it is in America.

Continued on Page 4
I learned that the idea of universal politeness is not a real concept but a personal one. I had to learn to accept that Korea was not America and to appreciate Korean culture for what it is. I love that there was a wonderful public transportation system, the beautiful and magical four seasons, the mountains and rivers, and the sense of community, especially on weekends when everyone would go out to the local park to have picnics, eat, and play. I love Korea’s dedication to being the best, educationally and physically. Working in Korea was also difficult at first; however, I was able to successfully learn to function in their environment. I loved playing with my students and helping them learn and grow in their language learning development knowing I was making a difference in their lives for the better. I did my best to be a successful cultural ambassador and ESL instructor.

Korea is a beautiful place in its own way. Although they have their faults like everyone else, they are still a distinct part of our global community. As a world traveler, I would suggest experiencing places and people first-hand. Do not rely on other people’s opinion or what you hear or read. Go and explore the world on your own.