

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

Death date/ Day of week	Name (age) Home state	Home university/ Education abroad program/ Student Status/ Country of study	Location of death/ Cause of death/ Details/ News links	About this student
1/24/08	Karen M. Young/ (20) Massachusetts	University of South Carolina/ John Cabot University/ Undergrad, study abroad/ Italy	<p>Rome/ Not Available, possible medical event/ Karen had just arrived in Rome for her study abroad program semester. She was found dead near the Tiber River, a few hundred yards from the Ponte Sisto Bridge. Cause of death was said to be unclear. According to a statement released by the president of John Cabot University, "Initial medical examinations indicated she died of natural causes." Two days before Karen's death, another JCU student, Allesandro Mioni, died in a moped accident.</p> <p>http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article14328617.html</p> <p>http://thematthew.typepad.com/the_matthew_online/john_cabot_university/</p> <p>http://thematthew.typepad.com/the_matthew_online/2008/01/jcu-mourns-the.html</p>	<p>Karen was an accounting and finance major. She'd grown up living and traveling the world, and was known as a "sociable, fashionable world traveler." Karen was attending USC on an academic scholarship. She hoped to become an international businesswoman.</p>

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

			http://laurensinrome.blogspot.com/2008/01/email-from-president.html	
2/11/08	Matthew R. Atwood/ (21) New Hampshire	Keene State University/ Center for International Studies-LaTrobe University/ Undergrad, study abroad/ Australia	Melbourne, Australia/ Fall with Medical Event, injury/ Matthew fell through a glass window. His arm was deeply cut and he bled to death. Matthew's roommate was brought in to identify the body. The roommate reported being told by police that Matthew's death was regarded as accidental, possibility due to a deep wound under his arm. http://www.topix.com/forum/city/exeter-nh/T7L9C9DV0V707B62M http://www.seacoastonline.com/article/20080212/NEWS/802120421	Matthew was a safety studies major, traveling abroad for the first time. He had not been in Australia long. Friends said, "[Matthew] had such a good heart...always helping...[and the] voice of reason." Just days before his death, he sent this text message to friends, "Just smile and breathe."
3/20/08	Katherine ("Katie") Sherman/ (21) Massachusetts	University of Massachusetts, Amherst/ Living Routes/ Undergrad, study abroad/ India	India/ Disputed, Homicide versus Suicide/ Indian authorities called Katie's death a suicide by hanging. Fellow students were told the same, and for months that is what they believed. However, Katie's family disputed these finding. With the assistance of US Senator Edward Kennedy, plus the results of a second autopsy, the FBI became involved in	Katie was fascinated by people of the world and wanted to help everywhere. She planned to become a photographer for National Geographic and contacted them for recommendations about how to accomplish this goal. They had advised her to travel extensively, and also take

		<p>Katie's case. Senator Kennedy wrote to the US embassy in New Delhi, stating that, "The autopsy and investigation in India were inadequate, and the cause of death was probably murder. I urge you to take appropriate action to see that a full investigation is conducted." The Indian case commenced and ended "inconclusively, for lack of evidence." Six years later, in the aftermath of another Living Routes incident (this time in Costa Rica), U-Mass suspended its affiliation agreement with Living Routes and the program closed.</p> <p>http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/05/family_of_former_umass_coe_d_di.html</p> <p>http://www.masslive.com/talk/index.ssf/2010/09/katie_sherman_wanted_a_name_in.html</p> <p>http://www.lowellsun.com/todaysheadlines/ci_12394530</p> <p>https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/01/28/study-abroad-provider-living-routes-close-after-losing-its-affiliation-umass-amherst</p>	<p>photos. Toward that end, Katie engaged in student travel programs in Scotland, Ireland, Eastern Europe, and Nicaragua.</p>
--	--	--	---

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

5/10/08	Kenan Mehra/ (21) North Carolina	Delhi University/ [Student status unclear, possibly direct enroll/ India	New Delhi, India/ Homicide/ Kenan was in Delhi for a month, doing philosophy research at Delhi University. He was staying in a rented room near Delhi University. Friends had been trying to get in touch with Kenan for over 36 hours. When they obtained entrance into his room, Kenan was dead, with head injuries and stab wounds to the neck. A murder investigation was registered with the police. [At this time, no further information has been located.] http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/ uncategorized/indian-american-student- found-killed-in-delhilead_10047986.html http://ns2.imc- usa.org/2008may12/indian_american_st udent_found_dead_near_delhi_university. html#.WeUp0RNSxsM	[Unable to find further information about Kenan.]
6/10/08	Lisa Tam Chung / (18) Texas	South Grand Prairie High School/ GradCity/ High school, senior class program/ Mexico	Cancun, Mexico/ Vehicular with Medical Event, injury/ Lisa and classmates were on their senior trip with Massachusetts-based graduation trip company, GradCity. This was a package trip, with special events	Lisa was a member of her high school's National Honor Society and yearbook staff. She was to begin college at Baylor University in the fall. A psychology and political

		<p>included. One activity was a snorkeling cruise with Servicios Maritimos, on a 73-foot catamaran called Sea Star. Students stated that suddenly, "It felt like we had run aground. The front of the boat was stuck but the back was moving," and "[the boat] started taking on water and started sinking." Boat staff fled. They later said they left "to swim for help." Meanwhile, with no GradCity staff on board, parent chaperones and students handed out life vests and everyone began to jump into the water. When a large towboat arrived, it hit Lisa and another student, plus nearly hit several other students. After nearly drowning, Lisa suffered heart and lung failure. She was evacuated to the US, where she was declared brain dead and taken off life support. Others students suffered a "bump to the head," bone fractures, and panic attacks. In the aftermath, there were questions about whether or not the Sea Star was overloaded. Initial reports suggested that the boat was authorized to carry 80 people, though it was carrying 126. (GradCity, also known as StudentCity, was formed in 1987. It takes approximately 50,000 US students on grad trips each year, with the</p>	<p>science major, she was to be in Baylor's honors program.</p>
--	--	--	---

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

			<p>promotional tagline, “A graduation gift that you’ll never forget.” Following Lisa’s death, her family filed a legal case against GradCity.)</p> <p>https://www.cbsnews.com/news/girl-dies-after-cancun-senior-class-trip/</p> <p>http://www.mydeathspace.com/article/2008/06/11/Lisa Chung (18) struck her head while on a snorkeling trip in Cancun and later died</p> <p>https://docs.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/massachusetts/madce/1:2010cv10943/129444/56/</p> <p>http://media.ca1.uscourts.gov/pdf/opinions/16-1765P-01A.pdf</p> <p>http://blogs.findlaw.com/first_circuit/2017/04/judge-erred-in-ruling-on-issue-not-raised.html</p>	
7/?/08	Adrian Wilson/ (19) New Jersey	Messiah College/ Worldwide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)/	Spain/ Drowned/ Adrian received a grant to attend a 6-week program in sustainability. He went swimming in the ocean with friends, was	Adrian grew up in the Bahamas. At the age of 16, he moved to the US and began college. Adrian was interested in sustainability. He had

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

		Undergrad, study abroad/ Spain	<p>caught in a riptide and drowned. The beach was without lifeguards and the students had not been advised of the dangers.</p> <p>https://www.messiah.edu/offices/development/documents/February2011issuePDF.pdf</p> <p>https://thewayofimprovement.com/2010/02/24/messiah-college-humanities-symposium-day-3/</p> <p>http://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/hudson-valley/news/2015/09/3/study-abroad</p>	<p>started a community garden at Messiah College. He joined WWOOF in Spain to learn more about community gardening. Adrian was known for having keen insights and putting others before himself.</p>
8/4/08	Unnamed female	University of Minnesota/ UMN exchange program/ Graduate student/ Austria	<p>Vienna, Austria/ Medical Event, illness/ The student had a seizure while sleeping.</p>	[Unable to find further information about this student.]
9/1/08 Monday	Terrance Davis/ (20) Arkansas	Georgetown University/ University of Cape Town, South Africa/ Undergrad, study abroad/	<p>Hargerville, South Africa/ Drowned/ Terrance was part of a 10-student group in Cape Town. During an interim one-week break, Terrance and another student traveled 275 miles east of Cape Town. Terrance was walking along a</p>	<p>Terrance was a sociology and performing arts major. He had served as director of publicity for several student organizations, including The Fire This Time, Black Ensemble Theatre and Black Student</p>

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

		South Africa	<p>rocky beach, when a “freak wave” dragged him into the water. Rescuers said the weather had been particularly stormy, with “ferocious waves as high as 30 feet.” It is unclear if Terrance’s body was found.</p> <p>http://www.thehoya.com/student-presumed-dead-in-south-africa/#.UkHUjtJQEuc</p> <p>http://www.thehoya.com/a-student-who-shone-a-man-who-loved/</p> <p>http://www.thehoya.com/body-found-at-sea-may-be-davis/</p>	<p>Alliance. He was active in Georgetown’s gospel choir, peer mentorship, NAACP, and Movements of Grace and Black Movements Dance Theater, a joint venture of Georgetown and the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Terrance had also interned for Senator Mark Pryor (D-AK). Friends remembered Terrance for his big hugs, having a beautiful singing voice, tremendous energy, and great enthusiasm for the world.</p>
10/3/08	Matthew (“Matt”) Wanetik/ (20) Pennsylvania	Syracuse University/ SU Abroad Strasbourg/ Undergrad, study abroad/ France	<p>Strasbourg, France/ Fall/ Matt slipped and fell in his host family’s home. News reports said Matt died from a “slip and fall accident.”</p> <p>http://dailyorange.com/2008/10/su-junior-dies-while-studying-abroad-2/</p> <p>http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/philly/obituary.aspx?n=matthew-ross-wanetik&pid=118684005</p>	<p>Matt was a political science and international relationship major. He was a member of Alpha Epsilon Pi fraternity and served as house manager. He was also active in SU’s comedy group and had participated in a national college comedy contest the previous spring. Friends described Matt as filled with faith and perseverance, honest, humble, and helpful.</p>

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

<p>11/7/08</p>	<p>Kurt Leswing/ (21) Wisconsin</p>	<p>University of Wisconsin/ Semester at Sea/ Undergrad, study abroad/ Hong Kong</p>	<p>Hong Kong/ Vehicular/ A drunk driver hit Kurt. The driver was estimated to be traveling at 80 or 90 miles per hour. Kurt died before reaching the hospital. The driver, who had a history of drunk driving offenses, was sentenced to 3-1/2 years in prison.</p> <p>https://badgerherald.com/news/2008/11/10/uw-student-killed-in/</p> <p>http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/hkedition/2010-01/12/content_9303329.htm</p> <p>http://www.scmp.com/article/706383/repeat-offender-jailed-312-years-drink-drive-death-student</p>	<p>Kurt was a business major in his senior year.</p>
<p>12/15/08</p>	<p>Cody Lavender/ (20) Arizona</p>	<p>Dartmouth/ Dartmouth Religion Foreign Study Program/ Undergrad, study abroad/ Scotland</p>	<p>Edinburgh, Scotland/ Fall/ Cody had been with others at dinner. Students discussed their plans to visit Paris the following week. Later that evening, Cody fell from a 4th floor balcony. First responders were called, but Cody died on the scene. There were no witnesses. Initial police reports did not suggest foul play, but police were</p>	<p>Cody was a religion and gender studies student. He served on Dartmouth's philosophy journal, Aporia, and was co-chair of Gender Sexuality XYZ. After college, he planned to teach at Gallup, New Mexico's Navajo Reservation and hoped to eventually become a professor. Friends said, "He</p>

2008 Study Abroad Student Deaths

			investigating. http://www.thedartmouth.com/article/2009/01/cody-lavender-10-dies-on-fsp/ http://tucson.com/news/local/crime/dartmouth-student-with-local-ties-dies-in-fall/article_d0dd2961-3a87-5311-b0ab-831e6	gave great advice...He fought for what he believed in.”
--	--	--	--	---

Non-lethal incidents in 2008:

- Near drownings
- Boating incident with injuries
- Suicide attempt
- Stabbing assault, possible hate crime
- Robberies
- Sexual assault
- Fall with injuries