ROCK ISLAND, IL (12/08/2010)(readMedia)-- Sixty-eight Augustana students will study and work in Sydney, Australia, for the first two months of 2011. The international study program known as "Augustana in Australia" places students in career-relevant positions in Sydney and immerses them in Australian culture.

The students complete a five-week on-campus internship seminar and a class in intercultural communication before leaving for Australia on January 2. In Australia, students will intern four days a week for seven weeks and use their remaining time to experience Australia.

The program exposes students to a new culture, which is very marketable to employers. "Employers are seeking entry-level employees with knowledge and experience of the world's diversity and cross-cultural understanding," said Karen Petersen, Augustana's director of business internships and program director.

The students are looking forward to exploring their career interests. Erin Christian, a senior music and mathematics double major from Aurora, Ill., will intern at ii-A, a finance and insurance firm in downtown Sydney. "This internship is exactly what I need to move forward from Augustana," Christian said. "I hope to find a job as an actuary or in the finance/insurance field so being an intern at a company of this caliber will prepare me for obstacles I might face in the work world."

The students travel together with no faculty from Augustana, which gives them a lot of independence. "Students in the program demonstrate maturity and the ability to depend upon themselves and their peer group to deal with problems and issues as they arise," said Petersen. Students do receive on-site supervision by their organizational sponsor and their internship coordinator, the Centers for Academic Programs Abroad (www.capa.org), and Augustana faculty or staff conducts site-visits about halfway through the internship.

Students will stay at a five-star serviced apartment complex in Sydney, along with Australian and other international students. During their trip, they will visit the ANZ Stadium where the 2000 Olympics were held, the Sydney Opera House and the Blue Mountains just outside of Sydney. They also may travel to New Zealand or areas of Australia including Melbourne, Darwin and Cairns, where they can snorkel or dive the Great Barrier Reef. Students return to Rock Island on March 4.

You can read about students' experiences in Australia by visiting Augustana's Globablog at www.augustana.edu/blogs/international/
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Participating students from your area include:

Allison Hughes from Moline, IL, a senior majoring in accounting and business management

Lisa Schippers from East Moline, IL, a junior majoring in communication sciences and disorders

About Augustana: Founded in 1860 and situated on a 115-acre campus near the Mississippi River, Augustana College is a private, liberal arts institution affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The college enrolls 2,500 students from diverse geographic, social, ethnic and religious backgrounds and offers more than 70 majors and related areas of study. Augustana employs 287 faculty members and has a student-faculty ratio of 11:1. Augustana continues to do what it has always done: challenge and prepare students for lives of leadership and service in our complex, ever-changing world.