

Staying Connected

Diving Into a Life of Curiosities & Opportunities

Majoring in German changed my life, although I never intended to pursue this degree. Truly, the LS&A language requirement was the only reason I began taking German courses. However, my time spent in the MLB increased each year, as I found my favorite professors were from the German department. After graduating in 2004, my career path did not require using much German until I started to travel and eventually became a professional scuba diving instructor.

During my time at U-M, the German department helped me secure two successive summer internships. These experiences allowed me to work for German companies and travel in Western Europe. In 2002, I worked in Munich at the headquarters of Wacker-Chemie. It was my first time abroad. When I arrived back in Ann Arbor to start my junior year, I had found a new passion and my major. The next summer, I was fortunate to spend my second internship at the Volkswagen headquarters. During this time I took a trip to Hamburg and met new friends who told me about Koh Tao, a tiny island with no airport and no chain restaurants in the Gulf of Thailand. They told me the island was popular with travelers and scuba divers from all over the world. Without a question, my internships had opened my life to new curiosities and opportunities.

My first trip to Thailand happened one year after graduation. I found Koh Tao and learned to scuba dive. The next year I decided to resign from my job and book a one-way ticket to backpack around Asia. However, I quickly found myself back on Koh Tao, underwater with tank, regulator and mask, learning to become a diving instructor.

Perhaps the best credential an instructor can possess is being multi-lingual. German dive instructors are often in demand, because there are many Swiss, German and Austrian travelers. My German-speaking customers often ask where in Germany am I from! That is one of the best compliments I can receive. As a PADI master scuba diver trainer, teaching in German has allowed me to continually work and travel. Besides living on Koh Tao for most of the past five years, I have traveled through twenty countries and my diving career has led to the Honduran island of Roatan, the Similan Islands and Dahab, Egypt.

My German degree provided me with the skills to work abroad in a unique profession, which has therefore allowed me to continue working and traveling.

Alles Gute
-Kev Maratea



Both images are of Kevin Maratea ('04), at work and at play.

To learn more about his endeavors, please visit www.kohtao.com
coralgranddivers.com

