Every summer, the Business Connections Learning Community holds its annual immersion trip: students travel to a new country and are able to learn about international business. This past summer, students had the opportunity to travel to Ireland. For ten days, we traveled within Ireland to Dublin, Belfast, and Galway where we met with numerous different companies, learned about their businesses, and were able to network with professionals. I truly believe that the idea of taking students who are dedicated to business across the ocean to a new country to experience life there, is one of the most impactful parts of their blossoming careers. Having been born and brought up in America, I have lived in this small bubble of the way the world works and the culture of the society that I live in. I have been accustomed to the way people speak to each other, dress, address issues, and much more. Although I have not set foot into every business in America, I have a pretty good idea of how it would run, based on the culture of the United States and the personal experiences I have had. However, once arriving in Ireland I found numerous things that were different. I enjoyed being able to walk into a coffee shop and have a long conversation with the barista about Ireland’s taxing system. Not only did I learn more about the differences in their financial organizations, but I also became familiar with the sincerity, friendliness, and humor of the Irish people. This made me take a step back and reflect on the differences I saw. It
made me realize that it is imperative to take advantage of opportunities to learn more about different cultures while we are still young and receptive. In addition to the business aspect of the trip, the down times were also a lot of fun. We were able to branch off on our own and sightsee the country’s breathtaking scenery. Ireland is known for its spectacular coastal Atlantic views and rich grasslands, which we were able to experience when standing on the edges of the Cliffs of Moher or driving through the hilly terrain of the Aran Islands. Pictures do not do justice for the beauty we witnessed and the history and culture we were able to absorb. The best part of experiencing all of this was doing it with friends. At the start of the trip, I was not close friends with any of my fellow travelers; I did not want that to negatively affect my experience. Because of that, I chose to reach out and talk to people I had never talked to before, and this proved to be the best decision for me. Together, we explored the cities we traveled to, learned a lot about each other, and shared many laughs. These friendships definitely made my immersion trip that much more memorable.

Overall, I highly recommend the international trip to the BCLC freshmen. The chance to travel to a new country with friends, to learn more about business, and to experience a country’s splendor and culture, is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that you definitely do not want to miss. These are cherished memories that will be with me forever and a part of “the good old