

## HEATHER LAUSCH: FREQUENT FLYER

Major:	Math
Dream job:	International humanitarian work
What's next:	Teaching English in China
Can't live without:	Ice cream, the beach, books, and laughing
On her iPod:	John Legend, Disney songs, Broadway soundtracks
On her Tivo:	<i>Lost</i> and <i>The Office</i>
Favorite class:	Asian philosophies and religion with Dr. Michael Lodahl



photo: m. emerson

**H**eather Lausch could be the poster child for the Millennial generation. She's adventurous, optimistic, team-oriented, interested in diverse cultures, and committed to serving others. She's spent her time at Point Loma preparing for a future filled with travel and several different careers. Here's how her journey has gone so far.

First stop: **Thailand.** Heather's father works with an international company, her mom once lived abroad, and her brother worked in Italy and is now in Japan. Following in their footsteps, Heather took a weeklong trip to Thailand with her dad during her freshman year. That experience fed her passion for international travel.

Next stop: **Chile.** Also during her first year at Point Loma, Heather visited her roommate in Chile. She called the experience "awesome."

Next stop: **Haiti.** Between her sophomore and junior years, Heather went to Haiti with LoveWorks. She and her team worked in the heat every day to build a road for the people who lived there. Before the LoveWorks team arrived, the village was often cut off from supplies during flooding and bad weather because they lacked a road. Heather called the experience "life-changing."

"It was the first time I'd seen what it means to be so poor. It really opened my eyes to injustice," she said. "Without my team, it would have been horrible, but together we were able to show God's love and compassion in a really practical way. I learned that I really need to have a team like that around me."

Next stop: **London.** During the spring semester of her junior year, Heather studied abroad in London. Since she had friends studying in Florence, she met up with them on weekend trips in Paris and other cities. After school ended, she and her friends backpacked around Europe for another month.

Next stop: **American roadways.** After graduation, Heather and her friends took a three-week, 8,500-mile road trip across the U.S.

Not-so-final destination: **China.** At the end of the summer, Heather will leave for China where she will teach English to university

students for the next year with English Language Institute/China (ELIC). She chose ELIC based on what she learned about herself from LoveWorks – ELIC sends English teachers in six-person teams. And the organization employs Christians, which means that she will have the support of Christian teammates who are striving to show God's love through their work.

On the future itinerary: **Eastern Europe, the Peace Corps, graduate school, and then...** Plans can change, of course. But for now, Heather imagines that after she finishes her work in China, she will look for a job teaching math somewhere in Eastern Europe. After a year or so of doing that, she hopes to join the Peace Corps. Once those world travels are finished, she expects to return to the U.S. to earn her doctorate in either comparative religions or peace and justice studies. She'd like to eventually use that degree to work for the U.N. or an international nonprofit that focuses on education and compassionate work.

The exploring Heather has planned – of the world, of work possibilities, and of her own purpose – are representative of a new way of thinking about life after school. They do beg one last question, however. Why did Heather major in math? On the surface, her post-commencement plans don't really seem to jive with her field of study. Or do they?

"I've always done well in math and really enjoyed it," she laughed. "I love all my professors, and I have a really close group of math friends – is that nerdy? Besides, math is a great skill to have to get into international organizations. Plus, I've taken lots of electives in theology. There is a strong math-theology connection throughout history, you know." ⊕

– C.S.