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AIG Travel Launches Student Travel Safety Initiative

Global travel insurer educates and empowers students, their parents and other stakeholders

HOUSTON (June 20, 2019) – AIG Travel, a global leader in travel insurance and travel assistance services, has launched an educational initiative designed to boost awareness of student travel safety considerations and help students journey safely and confidently, anywhere in the world. The initiative, encompassing a dedicated Student Travel Safety [microsite](#), a related webcast, social media outreach and more, focuses on sharing practical advice, actionable tips and helpful resources for students, their parents, study abroad organizations, universities and other key stakeholders.

“Domestic and international travel, for both educational and leisure opportunities, is popular among students of all ages, but given the increased risks they face while traveling, more can be done to enhance their safety and wellbeing,” said Jeff Rutledge, CEO, AIG Travel. “Whether students are venturing off for an international field trip, a study abroad program, sports tournament, volunteer mission, vacation with friends or other purpose, a comprehensive safety and preparation plan can mitigate risk and help ensure they enjoy travel and the valuable experiences it can bring.”

More than 332,000 American students studied abroad for academic credit in 2016-17, a 2.3 percent increase over the prior academic year and a 37.6 percent rise in 10 years, according to a 2018 fact sheet from the Institute of International Education. The Forum on Education Abroad has reported that 10 percent of U.S. students who studied abroad filed an insurance claim.

While every traveler is different, students may not have a significant amount of global travel experience. Their chosen activities, transportation choices and housing during their journeys all impact their risk profiles. Students on shoestring budgets are more likely to make compromises on accommodations and transportation, such as staying in less expensive hotels, hostels, home-share rentals or campus dorms, perhaps with people they’ve only recently met. Student travelers also often rely on walking, biking, using scooters or public transportation like trains, buses, ride-sharing services and university-provided vans and shuttles. These forms of accommodation and transportation may be less secure than other options.

When compared to the typical business or leisure traveler, students are likely to be more adventurous and immersed in local culture, conduct more intra-country and regional travel, engage more in nightlife activities, and spend more time at their destinations. Even the most diligent traveler can become complacent about personal wellbeing, and being adventurous exposes students to greater safety, security, health and even cultural and legal risks.

The risk-mitigation advice, tips and resources on AIG Travel's Student Travel Safety microsite are directed primarily at students, but much of the content is pertinent for *all* travelers, and may also serve as a resource for parents, faculty and study abroad organizations as they seek to facilitate student travel safety.

Universities and study abroad programs are responsible for their students' wellbeing and can take vital steps to help decrease risk and offer appropriate duty of care for their students. Also, parents and guardians, who often finance student travel abroad, have a need and a right to know the safety and security precautions being taken.

"One of the greatest tools that student travelers and those who are responsible for their care have is the opportunity to research destinations, areas to avoid, local health concerns, laws and cultural issues," Rutledge said. "It's vital to understand whether any prescription medication that may be needed is allowed, how to pack it, how to call internationally and locally within the destination, how to ask for help in the local language, how any applicable travel or health insurance is designed to work, the financial and other requirements that local hospitals may impose if treatment or admission becomes necessary, etc."

As a travel safety advocate, AIG Travel continually looks for ways to educate customers and the broader traveling public on how to stay safe and minimize risks to ensure an enjoyable journey. In addition to launching the Student Travel Safety initiative, AIG Travel recently implemented a safety campaign focused on helping members of the LGBTQ community travel with confidence and pride, and expanded the AIG Travel Women's Travel Safety initiative.

For more information about AIG Travel, its products and services, and its initiatives to help ensure safe and enjoyable travel experiences, visit www.aig.com/travel or www.travelguard.com, or follow AIG Travel on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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