

When members were asked to reflect on what APUAF means to them, here is what they said:

"Meeting the other RDs and staff members working with American University programs in France has been greatly beneficial for our programs and for us personally. We are the only permanent American University program in our city and the exchange of information and the support has been essential to us. We look forward to each meeting not only for the always interesting and pertinent topics, but also to see the colleagues from all over France who share the same challenges at their multi-faceted jobs and have a great sense of humor! Merci APUAF! »

« Une communauté importante et rassurante, qui rappelle nos ressemblances, gomme les différences, les différents, les concurrences, et nourrit nos débats, nos réflexions, nos identités. Une plateforme redéfinissant sans cesse les missions communes, les enjeux partagés et les pratiques à améliorer, dans un esprit de mutualisation, de partage. L'occasion de moments qui nous sortent du quotidien, du bureau, de l'écran, de manière amicale, mais aussi l'épice de personnalités marquantes. Une arène aussi, où s'échangent et se redéfinissent nos identités réciproques, nord-américaine et européenne, hybrides, où surgissent les angles-morts et les impasses autant que les passerelles. »

"APUAF has given me the opportunity and the pleasure of getting to know better my colleagues in France and making new friends. I've discovered a network of inspiring individuals I can call for advice and resources when I'm in need and for whom I can return the favor. More than anything, APUAF has given me a sense of belonging to a real community. More recently, at the Forum in Athens, I had the opportunity to work on and present a conference panel session with two other amazing APUAF members with whom I have since become good friends. Having this community around me meant that I didn't even mind being stuck in Greece due to an unexpected air traffic controllers strike! Vive l'APUAF!"

"There is a before APUAF & an after APUAF for many of us in study abroad in France. This organization was not only very much needed professionally but also was crucial for many of us on a personal level. Much like a 12-step program, APUAF has become our crutch, our go-to, our support, our compass. Vive L'APUAF & Vive la France! »

« Un groupe de support et une communauté de pratiques qui nous permet dans une atmosphère collégiale, sympathique et humaine de partager nos préoccupations, défis et réussites et ainsi de mener au mieux nos missions localement en France. »

"I have very much appreciated the sense of community and the opportunities for professional development that APUAF has provided over the past 10 years. I was not part of the study abroad network prior to the creation of APUAF and I found the first few years of working in this field to be quite isolating. Being able to share ideas, compare experiences and learn from others doing similar work has made a world of difference to me both personally and professionally. I am so grateful to the founding members who conceived of APUAF and brought that project to fruition, and to the members whose hard work has contributed to the ongoing dynamic evolution of the association."

« Pour nous qui travaillons depuis 15 ans avec des étudiants internationaux et principalement Américains, fêter les 10 ans de l'APUAF, c'est retrouver des amis, des collègues, des clients... L'occasion aussi de mettre enfin des visages sur des noms ! »

"I am so grateful for the opportunities APUAF provides us to come together to reflect and share ideas and best practices. Some of my best ideas for program innovations have sprung from APUAF workshops and the inspiring projects that colleagues have shared. I direct a small program on my own and it has meant a great deal to me to gather physically or virtually with others who are confronted with the same challenges."

"APUAF has allowed us to feel more credible in our roles, more confident that our hesitations and critiques are legitimate, and more secure in our expertise."

"Before APUAF was created, it was hard to find a community within our industry, especially if you were new to the field. It's really thanks to APUAF that we now can welcome and support each other. I had begun my career with lots of motivation and energy, but I knew no one. I didn't attend profession-specific events very often, and as a young director, I felt intimidated to participate in Directors' meetings and such. It is really thanks to APUAF and the great people who represent its members that I have had the opportunity to work on ambitious projects, attend Forum events, and participate in our intellectual community. Ultimately, APUAF has helped me grow as a professional."

"Before the creation of APUAF, the CIEE annual RD meetings were essential to me as a lone RD in a small city. It broke the sense of isolation and reminded me that my challenges in running a study abroad program were shared by others. After the creation of APUAF, not only did I find the same convivial gatherings as before, but much more: professional development workshops, increased networking opportunities, a deeper connection with the profession at large, personal support with challenging student issues, information about best practices, etc. Ultimately, I possess more self-confidence in my role as RD."

"As the assistant director of a small program that is run entirely in-house and in which I am in fact the sole resident staff member, APUAF provides an essential link to a broader academic community and a network of peers in study abroad. From the point of view of the small program, APUAF is, in my view, immensely beneficial: it reaffirms the specificity and role of study abroad within a broader educational context, it acts as a forum in which practical information, knowledge and best practices are shared, and it provides the opportunity to meet and learn from experienced professionals in the field. To put it simply, it serves as a welcome reminder that you are not alone!"