International Education Grants

Supporting student-initiated research and internships for international engagement

Activity Report
2009-2010
Introduction

In 2009 and 2010, 16 students received International Education Grants to perform projects during summer and winter breaks. The projects have been located in 12 countries, including the United States, as well as two overseas territories of France. Grant recipients have come from many disciplines and have ranged from first-year students to seniors.

Project proposals were evaluated by a faculty and staff committee and awarded using the following criteria:

- A demonstrated commitment to International Education, as evidenced by coursework, language study, study abroad, and other activities,
- The strength and feasibility of the proposed project,
- The strength of connection between the proposed activity and the student’s prior educational experiences and other activities, and
- The strength of the student’s academic record.

Summer 2009

Julia Heney’10
Majors: French, Creative Writing
Project: Martinique on Foot
Location: Martinique, Overseas Department of France

Julia’s academic focus has been on the post-colonial literature of Europe and the African Diaspora, which led her to study abroad in Senegal and France. Between these two adventures, a course in Caribbean Literature at Beloit sparked an interest in writings by authors from France’s overseas territories, such as Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guyana, where African and French influences have combined to shape the Creole culture. Julia therefore decided to explore concepts of identity among Creole people of the French Caribbean, spending two weeks in Martinique, gaining a sense of place and social context for the writings of authors such as Aimé Césaire, who joined black writers from Senegal and France in the “Negritude” movement of the mid-twentieth century.

Church in Martinique. Photo by Julia Heney’10

Ahmad Javid’10
Major: International Relations
Project: Democracy in Afghanistan - Summer Internship with the German Marshall Fund
Location: Washington, DC

Ahmad, who is an Afghani citizen, is concentrating his studies on international diplomacy and policy. In Washington, DC, he worked as the Development Intern in the Economic Policy Program for the German Marshall Fund (GMF). In that role, he primarily worked on foreign aid effectiveness, transatlantic security and development, and fragile states. He also joined in projects with GMF’s Transatlantic Taskforce on Development and Security. Ahmad was able to continue to work with the GMF during his semester abroad in Brussels, Belgium, and has been offered another summer internship this year with the GMF in Washington, DC, as well as a full-time position following his December 2010 graduation.

Anna Noyes’10
Major: Creative Writing
Project: The Story of Cirque Nouveau: An Integrated Approach
Location: Paris, France

Anna spent the summer in France, pursuing an ethnographic study of cirque nouveau, an artistic collaboration and intimate performance style that centers around a theme. Examples of popular cirque nouveau include the famous Cirque du Soleil company. Through family connections, Anna had an unparalleled first-hand view of the exclusive world of cirque nouveau, and, through it, a unique
window on French culture. Exercising skills she learned in anthropology courses, Anna compiled over two-hundred pages of field notes. She is currently completing a work of creative nonfiction that blends fictive techniques, journalism, ethnography and travel writing, for submission to Intelligent Life Magazine, an off-shoot of The Economist.

Keara Sommer-Grohens’10

Majors: Dance & Education: Youth and Society
Project: Sustainable Urban Re-greening Internship with Planet Drum
Location: Bahia de Caraquez, Ecuador

Planet Drum works within the city of Bahia de Caraquez, which was once an Eco City, rebuilding and working towards the re-vegetation of the eco system, destroyed by El Nino in 1998. Keara spent the summer observing an afterschool environmental education program for youth and working on sustainable urban greening projects that replanted and nourished trees and green spaces with minimal resource consumption. Of her experience, Keara says, “I have become more aware not only of the value of water and sustainable living, but I learned about native Ecuadorian trees, how to maintain a greenhouse, how to do so with little to no funding, and also of the great importance of eating locally and supporting local businesses.”

Daniel Weyl’10

Major: Anthropology
Project: Refugee Resettlement Internship at Lutheran Social Services
Location: Washington, DC

Daniel’s studies at Beloit have concentrated on ways to apply anthropology in the world. While studying abroad in Kolkata, India, he became interested in the role of the anthropologist as social worker and mediator. With this in mind, Daniel used his grant to take a position as Reception and Placement Intern with Lutheran Social Services in Silver Spring, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC. As intern, he coordinated and collected furniture donations, assisted in locating and preparing apartments for refugee clients. He also worked side-by-side with newly-arrived refugees, assisting with their orientation to the US, integration and settlement.

Daniel’s work with Iraqi refugees during his internship led him to write his senior thesis on Iraqi refugees and the humanitarian crisis in Iraq. He presented “Anthropological Insight into Iraqi Refugees’ Resettlement,” an analysis of his research, at Beloit College’s April 2010 Student Symposium.
Noah Watenmaker’10
Major: Economics & Management
Minor: English
Project: Hyperlocal Microfinance in Ghana
Location: Ghana

To bring an international perspective to his economics studies, Noah volunteered in the microfinance division of Volunteer Partnership for West Africa (VPWA). In this role, Noah used his economics skills to generate a two year cash-flow and debt-load financial forecast, and also began rewriting VPWA’s business plan. “This experience showed me the importance of entrepreneurship in developing countries,” says Noah.

Noah prepared a poster presentation on his project in conjunction with the annual Weissberg Chair address in March.

Sylvia Feng’10
Majors: Economics & Mathematics
Project: Economic Reform in 1990s India: Foreign Direct Investment and Labor Policy
Location: Mumbai, India

Sylvia is studying both economics and entrepreneurship. Fascinated by economic policies in India, she was puzzled by the lack of research on the outcomes of recent reforms. She went to India to get a first-hand perspective on this question and to discover a part of the world which she would like to make part of her career. With help from the family of a classmate at Beloit College, Sylvia interviewed business leaders in Mumbai.

Andrew Schmitt’11
Major: Russian
Project: The Rights of a Formerly Displaced Population: a Study of the Tartar of the Crimea
Location: Crimea, Ukraine

During his semester abroad in Moscow, Andrew visited the Crimea to investigate the ongoing legacy of the deportation of Crimean Tartars during World War II. This research sprung out of Andrew’s studies of Russian and Soviet history, and was designed to bring a first-hand perspective through interviews with Tartars, the indigenous people of the Crimean peninsula. Through informal discussions with Russians and Tartars, Andrew concluded, “The Tatars are generally of the opinion that their situation is intractable, yet convinced that they will still succeed and once more become the dominant ethnic group in Crimea.”
Oliver Wyckoff’12

**Majors:** Psychology & International Relations  
**Project:** Human Rights and Development in Rwanda: Global Youth Connect  
**Location:** Rwanda

Oliver joined other US and Rwandan students for the Global Youth Connect winter delegation in Rwanda. Global Youth Connect (GYC) is a US-based NGO working towards “empowering youth to advance human rights and create a more just world.” GYC teamed up with AJPRODO, a Rwandan NGO focused on empowering youth to improve human rights and advocate for socio-economic development, for the 2010 delegation, pictured below. This included a four-day human rights workshop, volunteer work, and site visits related to the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide.

“From my experience with underprivileged Peruvians, I have gained an incredible source of cultural awareness and a confidence in my abilities to work and learn effectively in entirely new and different environments,” says Catherine, who is studying abroad in Scotland in spring 2010.

Catherine Kealey’11

**Major:** Mathematics  
**Project:** From Beloit to Lima: Cultural Connections in Youth Development  
**Location:** Lima, Peru

Catherine has complimented and strengthened her studies at Beloit College with community engagement around youth development and education. Over winter break, Catherine worked in Lima, Peru as a volunteer for TARPUYSonqo, a volunteer group that works in various locations throughout Lima with children, people with special needs, and the elderly. A varsity soccer player, Catherine taught soccer and English to children at two separate youth centers. She used this experience to compare youth development practices between Peru and Beloit, where she volunteers with the Merrill Community Center.

“I learned more from this experience than I can put into words,” says Oliver, shown below, in the center of the back row. “The most powerful aspect of this trip was the visceral human element. We saw first-hand the devastation of the Rwandan genocide and heard personal stories of the devastation.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna Blankshien’10</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Education Youth and Society</td>
<td>Improving the Teaching of Indigenous Cultures: A Case Study</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Klein’13</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Joining the Orangutan Health Project</td>
<td>Gunung Leseur National Park, Sumatra, Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyce Kuenzli’10</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Education and Youth Studies</td>
<td>Bordering, Re-Bordering and New Possibilities for Change in Education and Society: attending the 14th World Congress of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies</td>
<td>Istanbul, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marissa Hutton’12</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Undeclared</td>
<td>Corsican Music Ethnography Intensive Workshop</td>
<td>Corsica, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate Wolf’13</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Biology &amp; Russian</td>
<td>Wetlands Ecology and Environmental Education</td>
<td>Muraviovka Park, Tambovsky District, Amur Region, Russian Federation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>