

Fall 2014

Ashley Bostwick in Barcelona, Spain with Barcelona Connect

This past summer, I had the opportunity to live and work in Barcelona, Spain in order to improve my Spanish language skills. It's safe to say that my summer was richer with experience than I could have ever imagined.



I arrived in Barcelona on May 29th and stayed until July 25th and was greeted by an ambassador to my program, Adelante Abroad. My experience with this program was nothing short of excellent. The apartment I was placed in was located conveniently close to the metro stop near La Sagrada Familia, an incredible basilica designed by Gaudí. I lived with a single woman who'd rented her room to me, allowing for plenty of language practice in the household.

For the first two weeks in Barcelona I attended an intensive Spanish class for six hours a day. Since everyone was from a different country, including Japan, Turkey, Ukraine, and Italy, we had no choice but to speak Spanish as that was the only language we had in common. While it was difficult to get our point across at times, my speaking proficiency soared over the course of those two weeks.

Three weeks in, I started my internship writing for a magazine, Barcelona Connect. With both online and print versions, I was busy as a bee writing up articles and press releases for events that were to take place all over Barcelona and in surrounding areas.



Not only did I gain a tremendous amount of professional experience through my internship, but I also got to explore one of the most beautiful cities in the world each and every day. Since my sense of direction is basically nonexistent, I found myself discovering new streets and sites and people every day. Barcelona is broken up into eleven different neighborhoods or *barrios*, each with its own style and personality, so to speak. Getting lost amongst the winding alleys of El Born, Barcelona's oldest and most historical district, was definitely one of my favorite pastimes.

I was absolutely fascinated to learn about the differences in culture between America and Spain. While I definitely experienced culture shock at times, this experience taught me to be a global citizen. Instead of focusing on the differences between cultures, it was important to connect with Barcelona locals by highlighting the similarities between us.

I've never been somewhere and seen so much pride in the culture. From almost every window hangs the unofficial Catalan flag, declaring that that specific house believes that Catalunya should secede from Spain. Although the sentiments were not usually violent, you could feel how strong their pride was just by strolling through the streets. Although most people speak Castellano, or traditional Spanish, everyone in Barcelona speaks Catalan, which sounds like a mixture of French and Spanish. It was difficult to understand at first, but with a little practice and patience I picked up enough to get by.



These two months have absolutely been the most amazing and eye-opening of my life, I'd like to thank the Honors Program for their immense generosity. Without the Honors Enrichment Award, living and working among the locals of Barcelona would have been impossible.

Celeste DiLauro in Cuzco, Peru

This summer, I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Peru for three weeks. I traveled first to Lima to see the beautiful coast of Miraflores and to eat delicious seafood. Then, I ventured to Ollantaytambo, a quiet town in the Sacred Valley. There, I learned more about the native culture and saw beautiful Inca ruins. After two days in the Sacred Valley, I traveled to Machu Picchu with my sister. I was overwhelmed by the beauty and intricacy of the ancient city. Finally, I went to the heart of Cusco, where I would spend the next two weeks. For the first week of the trip, I was a tourist who was learning about the Peruvian culture through tours of museums and ruins. Now, I would begin the section of my trip that would allow me to learn about Peru in a unique way.



For the following two weeks, I volunteered at the Mother Teresa orphanage, which houses children ages 4-18 with disabilities. I was not aware of the severity of the children's conditions until I arrived at the orphanage. I was surprised to find nearly every child in a wheelchair and unable to speak. I was



also surprised that the orphanage has an adult section consisting of men and women with disabilities. Each morning I arrived, I would change the kids out of pajamas, feed them, brush their teeth, and put them down for a nap. There was rarely much down time or even much time to do anything other than serving the kids' basic needs. But when there was, it was difficult to do activities with the children. Many of them clench their hands or feet, so I would go to each and massage their hands or take them out of their wheelchairs and hold them. Though the facility was quite clean, I was saddened by the lack of resources, such as wipes, as well as stimulation for the children. I think the children could benefit from having music or someone to read to them.

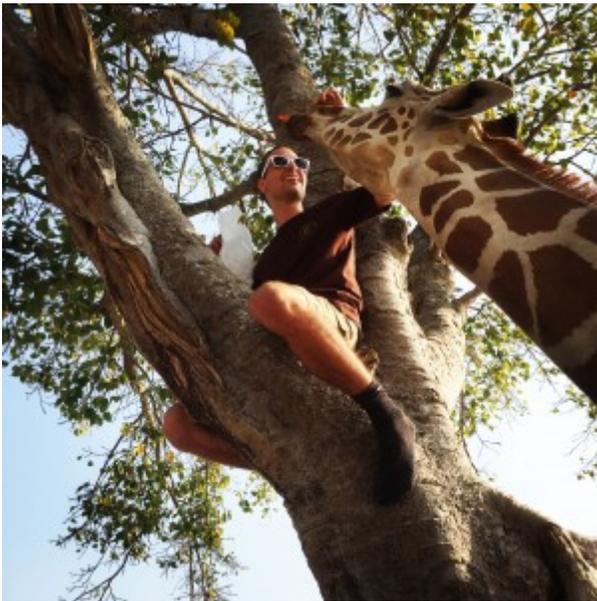
At the orphanage, I was drawn to a boy named Matais. I believe he has Cerebral Palsy and is severely undernourished. I have had a lot of experience with children and have found myself connecting to them by talking and doing activities. However, I connected to Matais in a different way. It was challenging to get any feedback or response from him, whether it was when I rubbed his feet or held him. I had a connection with Matais because I felt as though he needed someone just to be there for him, and that I could do.

My experience was extremely draining, both emotionally and physically. It was upsetting to see detached children, many of whom are in chronic pain. I did not see any visitors, so I do not think

the children's families visit often, if at all. My work at the orphanage made me see the importance of family and having a life filled with supportive, loving people. There are a few full-time volunteers at the orphanage who live there. I greatly admire their dedication to helping others. One of the volunteers explained that she had an aneurism many years ago and needed brain surgery. She was so thankful to be alive and healthy that she sacrificed her career and now works full-time at the orphanage.

I am extremely grateful that the Honors Program at UD offers the Academic Enrichment Award. I had the opportunity to see a culture through an entirely new lens.

Brian Griffiths in Thailand with the Safari Park Open Zoo

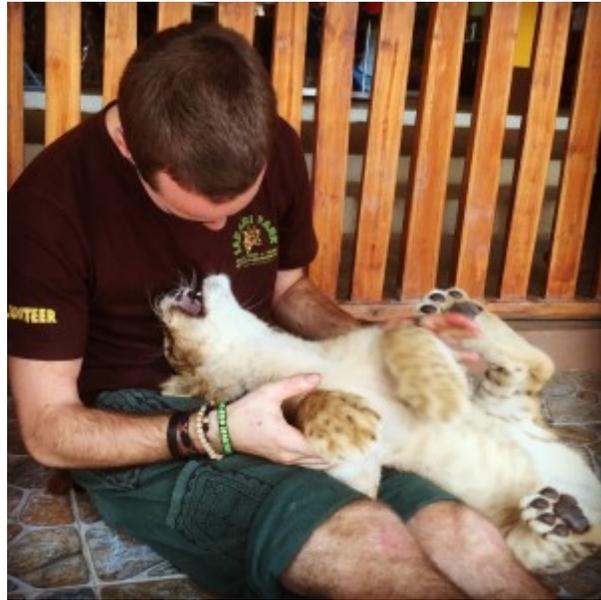


I began to plan this trip with the goal in mind to discover whether or not I wanted to pursue a career working with wildlife and to be able to apply my skills to a site that really needs our help. I had no idea what to expect about the Safari Park or Thailand in general, so I went in with a really open mind. The trip was hampered early, within 3 hours of arriving in Bangkok, when all of my equipment and money was stolen but we ultimately arrived at the park safely. The Safari Park Open Zoo combines a rescue center that takes in any exotic animals that were being sold on the black markets with an open zoo attraction in which tourists can hop on a bus and go on a safari.

The volunteers split into teams each day to take care of the Rescue animals, Birds, Cubs, Big Cats, and Ungulates (giraffes and zebras). On the Rescue Team, I loved being responsible for the diet of the various animals, which included macaques, gibbons, binturongs, jackals, rabbits, deer, a civet, a cassowary, and a langur. I would “chop the diet” for the animals while other volunteers cleaned the cages. Lots of these animals you could pet and interact with. Some, like Dobby the gibbon, would hold your hand, play with your hair, or let you scratch his back. We spent lots of time making enrichment items for the different enclosures, especially for the monkeys, which gave my engineering work some practical applications. The monkeys would self-harm when they were bored, so this part of the Rescue team was absolutely key.

The Cubs team was definitely my favorite team, and I was lucky to get lots of days doing cubs. At the front of the park were baby leopards, baby lions, “teenage” leopards, and an enormous tiger (Blue) that visitors to the park could feed, play with, or take photos with. The cubs team

was responsible for managing how much the cubs are fed each time and making sure both the visitors and the cats are safe during the time that they are interacting. My favorite part of the experience was the bond you make with the animals. I remember on my first day I was tossed in with the teenage leopards with one bottle of milk and they just tore me up; one in my arms to drink, one attached to my leg biting, and one on my back. You come out bleeding from everywhere and with hurt pride. That was my first big realization that these are dangerous animals and their instincts are still quite strong. When you are afraid, they can smell your adrenaline and they associate that with prey. I realized that customers were also afraid of the big leopards, and didn't go in with them as much as the tiny leopards, but if nobody went in with them they would only misbehave more and more. I started to spend all of my free time in with those leopards then, bearing it out, and by the last day I could walk in the enclosure and sit on the floor and they would come up to me and sit in my lap, purr, rub me, and even lick my face (especially my favorite, Bitung). The change and promise that you see in these animals is just incredible, and something I will always remember.



Working with the Ungulates (giraffes and zebras) was also a highlight since giraffes are my favorite animal. Although potentially equally as dangerous as the cats, you could approach them as well.

The park did leave a lasting effect on me. As our stay lengthened we became less starry-eyed and more aware of the problems in the park and why volunteers are so key. A prime example would be the bears on safari, which are rotated like the other animals to be outside or caged. One bear, a Malayan Sun Bear, was too aggressive to be let onto the safari, and so he basically just spent his entire life in his small cage. This species of bear is extremely rare, and it was awful to see such

an incredible animal in such a state. Without volunteers that have the skills needed to rehabilitate and train the bear, he may never get to leave. As I stay in America now, my thoughts still return to the Sun Bear and how I can help in the future.

Michael Hoffman in Lima, Peru with MedLife



The day after finals ended I traveled to Lima, Peru for eight days on a Medlife trip. After being stressed for a week I was ready to get away to a warmer place and make a difference for a community in need. Little did I know just how bad the living conditions and medical care were for some people living on the mountains in Lima.

Medlife is a non-profit organization that works to provide medical care for those who cannot afford it in underdeveloped communities around the world. Medlife sets up multiple mobile clinics throughout different communities in a region. The clinics are broken down into tooth brushing, health education, triage, doctors, dentist, OBG's, and pharmacists. Medlife also

sets up projects where volunteers help to better life in the community.

On the trip I stayed in a hostel in the city of Mira Flores. I went with a few other students from the University of Delaware, but the majority of students there were from schools in Minnesota, Florida, and all over the county.

The second day there my group went to work on the project, which was building a staircase on a steep hill. This involved a lot of labor on a hot day and was very tiring but it was definitely worth the work. Our group formed a chain and would pass cement buckets up the hill in order to fill the framework. Different groups went to work on the project throughout the week and on the last day we all went back to see the finished project and had a celebration with the community. The community broke glasses of champagne on each staircase to inaugurate the staircase. They then went on to dance and sing for us. It was very rewarding to see how much the staircase meant to them.



On the third day my group went on a reality tour where we walked around the communities to see what life was like for these people. We passed a huge cemetery that had people living right above it illegally. There was garbage all throughout the streets and wild dogs everywhere. There was only one police station with one holding cell and one police car for many thousands of people. Their bathrooms were just a hole in the ground and it was unbelievable to see older people climb many flights of stairs up a hill, if they were lucky enough to have stairs. An earthquake would be absolutely devastating in these communities.

The rest of the week I worked in the mobile clinics. I assisted doctors by taking the temperature, weight, blood pressure, and height of the patients. I directed the patients where to go and learned from the doctors as they diagnosed their patients. The doctor would translate the Spanish into English for us but my Spanish definitely has improved after the trip.

One of the days a student who was volunteering offered a little kid an airplane blanket. The kid was saying something in Spanish that no one was able to understand. Once it was translated he was saying he had no money, he did not understand that it was a gift. Once the student said it was a gift in Spanish the kids face lit up and he hugged her and gave her a kiss. Everyone around was tearing up and it was definitely the most memorable moment of the trip and sums up how much we meant to the community. I would definitely recommend this trip to anyone and it wouldn't have been possible for me without the honors enrichment award!

Morgan Lehr in Tanzania with the Dare Women's Foundation

Last summer in 2014, I learned from Lindsay Yeager that many girls in Tanzania, especially in rural areas, could not normally attend school because they did not have access to feminine hygiene products. As a future teacher and passionate believer in education, I was blown away by this fact. As a team, Lindsay and I began to plan a trip to Tanzania where an organization called the Dare Women's Foundation was working to empower women and solve issues like the lack of feminine hygiene. During January of 2015, we went on the most immersive, intense, and eye opening journey of my life.



First, we planned to implement a system we created to help women start their own businesses selling antimicrobial reusable pads including distributing materials like microfiber and sewing machines, a manual we designed, and our pad design. We also planned to create a documentary film and book uncovering the serious challenges women in Tanzania face.

During our trip, we spent nine days in Machame Village near Kilimanjaro, two days in Kabuku Village, one day in Moshi court, four days doing translating and editing work while visiting national parks in the area, and several days traveling. In a short time, we were able to accomplish even more than we had originally thought, and we documented incredible and moving stories to

share with the world. Many women we interviewed had endured rape, domestic violence, or discrimination. Most widows had their land taken from them when their husbands died. All of the women had little to no access to feminine hygiene products which, due to the nature of their grueling and laborious work, often left them with medical conditions like fungal infections.

While the work we did there proved extremely emotionally draining, I was inspired and empowered by the Dare Women's Foundation. It is the foundation's goal to improve the quality of life for women in Tanzania, and in large part, that goal is accomplished by bringing women together to give them a voice and a purpose. For example, we interviewed a woman who told us how as a young woman, she had to take care of an infant child and her husband who had terminal cancer before he died, and she was forced to move off of her land. She said in the interview that sometimes she feels hopeless, like she has no reason to live. Yet the next day, she came to our lesson on how to make pads with the community of women, her friends. She showed such an eagerness to learn and said how excited she was to use the pads and sell them for profit to pay her child's school fees. To see that kind of hope sparks in a woman who has endured so much truly makes the effort worthwhile.



Upon returning to the United States, our work has not stopped. After updating our sponsors and supporters of the great success of our trip, we have received an overwhelmingly positive response. For example, in May 2015, we will be featured on the cover of IGS's Global Magazine. Also, I have been asked to develop a children's book and I have been made the content editor of the new website we are soon launching for the Dare Women's Foundation as we increase the organization's online presence. This project has changed me and helped countless women, and I cannot thank the Honors Program enough for

their infallible support.

John McCarron in New Delhi, India

Sometimes in order to change the world you need a little more than just good intentions and a smile. Of course it's a great place to start, but helping your fellow man takes a total devotion to the cause. Despite broadening my perspective on Indian culture while learning the fundamentals of eastern medicine, realizing this pearl of information was the most important thing I took away from volunteering in India.



I began my journey in New Delhi, India, where I was greeted by the kindest of hosts through the humanitarian organization, VolunteeringIndia. There I became oriented to Indian customs and tradition, visiting sites from the local market in Delhi to the Taj Mahal in Agra. To make a bit of a generalization, I gradually noticed how incredibly kind and friendly everyone in India is! A smile never goes unreturned, and don't expect to be lost for more than a minute before a well-intentioned stranger comes to your aid.

After exploring the hazy concrete Jungle known as India's capital, I embarked on a 15-hour bus ride into the Himalayan Mountains towards a small town called Palampur. For one month I worked as a volunteering pre med student in a privately owned underprivileged hospital with some very knowledgeable and skilled physicians and

surgeons, and my experiences were both inspiring and humbling. I won't pretend that my tireless efforts saved lives every day, or even impacted the community in a clearly visible way. However, I will ascertain that my time spent in the hospital helping perform tasks such as assisting geriatric patients in and out of their beds, taking blood pressure and vitals of post surgery patients, and applying gel to aid with ultra sound procedures reduced the stress on the doctors in a severely understaffed hospital, and made a positive contribution to the people of Palampur. My biggest contribution came when I observed that nearly every case in the hospital was related to poor renal function, resulting in kidney stones. I talked to a few physicians and did a little research during my down time. I created a poster, now hanging in the hospital, which displays what I determined to be the best advice for the average Indian citizen in Palampur on how to prevent kidney stones. If I can't directly help the sick, maybe I can prevent them from developing the problem in the first place long after I'm gone.



So this takes me back to my first point; good intentions aren't everything. And although I was a little disappointed I didn't exactly change the world, seeing the potential impact I can make in

While in Peru, Machu Picchu was a must-see. Our group left the hostel at 3 am and took a train and two buses to get to the scene, but boy was it worth it. Not only was the view gorgeous, we learned so much about the Incan history. We even hiked to the top on a path called Sun Gate Trail to see the best view possible. I didn't realize nature could be so beautiful. Until next time, Peru!

Naimisha Movva in Peru with Medlife

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.”- Martin Luther King Jr. I had the amazing opportunity to spend the first week of summer break in Peru volunteering with MEDLIFE (Medicine, Education, and Development for Low Income Families Everywhere) thanks to the Honors Enrichment Award. MEDLIFE works to extinguish the injustice in healthcare in Peru, Ecuador, and more recently in Tanzania and India. My time in Peru was spent providing medical care to remote communities, building stairs, and exploring Lima.

When I landed, I met thirty-eight people from across the nation. For the entire week, I shared a room with five other people which seemed insane at first but by the end, I could not imagine it any other way. The primary purpose of this trip was to provide medical care to communities who cannot access it. There were three doctors, a dentist, and a gynecologist with our group that conducted basic examinations. At the education station, adults learned about illnesses such as cancer and diabetes. I worked with two of the doctors, did triage where I took vital signs, pharmacy, and tooth brushing. I was in awe when I would hand basic medicine like ibuprofen to a patient and they would hug me! It was amazing to be included in their community. Speaking Spanish helped me bond with the patients and allowed me to expand my conversational skills.



Besides providing medical care, the group did rotations contributing to a development project which in Peru is building stairs. Many of the homes were on steep hills and the people put their lives in danger daily in order to walk all the way down. As we were walking to the stairs, I slipped almost fell. It was frightening to say the least but the Peruvian women carried their babies on their backs down these hills. I have a newfound respect for these women who work, maintain their households, take care of their children, and put their lives in danger to carry buckets of water to their homes. In order to receive access to electricity and water in Peru, each homeowner needs a property title which a family cannot get unless their home is accessible. MEDLIFE partners with a community to build stairs and help them get property titles. At the end of week, we had built a staircase and celebrated with the people. It was extraordinary to see people who had nothing share their food with us. This reminded me of a little, malnourished boy I gave my chips to earlier in the week. As we were playing, he offered me chips. This sense of giving and kindness was in every individual I had the pleasure of

interacting with during the week. This trip taught me that you can conquer the difficulties in life if you are determined and positive.

Between the mobile clinics, we explored Lima and Paracas. We ate all of the Peruvian dishes, visited the Larcomar beach, did a boat tour of the Ballestas Islands, and dune racing in the desert oasis of Huacachina. Every day was a new adventure. Peru gave me new friends, great memories, and the desire to continue exploring and serving others. I want to see the world.

I owe this unforgettable experience to the Honors Enrichment Award and saying thank you does not even begin to fully express my gratitude for this opportunity.

Laurne Terasaki in Costa Rica and Nicaragua with Vida



With the generosity and support of the Honors Program at UD, I had the opportunity this past winter to travel with an organization called Vida to impoverished and rural communities in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. A group of 16 volunteers, including medical, veterinary, and dental-focused students, as well as bilingual doctors and staff, provided medical, dental, and veterinary care in three communities over a span of two weeks. Before I set out on my trip, I didn't know what to expect, except maybe swarms of mosquitoes and ample supply of rice and beans.

Day one was filled with excitement as we practiced taking physical exams on fellow volunteers,

learned about common illnesses, and attempted to learn medical terms in Spanish. But I don't think that anything could have prepared me for the following day when we visited Los Chiles, a community in northern Costa Rica. Populated mostly by illegal Nicaraguan immigrants, "houses" there were nothing more than wood and black plastic bags tied to posts. Many of the people who lived there worked in agriculture, and some had no source of income other than the crops they grew.

Instead of setting up a clinic, the medical team surveyed the households and collected data to provide insight as to whether or not it would be a good area to have a mobile clinic come a few times a year. Each person welcomed us with open arms and kindness that I was unaccustomed to, but which was a pleasant surprise. During our exploration of the community, I had the chance to see the poverty and conditions that many





Costa Ricans and Nicaraguans live in. It was heart breaking, yet inspiring. Though they had so little and lived simple lives, they worked without complaining so their children could have a better life. It gave me a greater appreciation for all that I have, and made me want to work harder to become a doctor and work to improve global health.

A few days later, we arrived in El Manguito, our first stop in Nicaragua. Over the course of three days, we attended to almost 100 patients. The hot, one-room school building with dust-

covered desks was nothing like a typical American doctor's office. We saw cases of parasite infection, common colds, malnutrition, and chronic back pain, among others.

We then traveled to Los Chilamates, a community near Managua. There, we served over 60 patients in two days. Every patient we saw was grateful for the smallest thing, whether it was ibuprofen for the sore knee of a seventy-year-old man still working in agriculture, or multivitamins to promote growth in a bright child. In those two weeks, I made life-long friends, played soccer games with local kids (and lost), donated school supplies that we had collected at UD, and practiced my Spanish with anyone willing to put up with my American accent. We also explored the natural beauty of Costa Rica and Nicaragua, visiting a hot spring and a lagoon filled with rainwater.

This trip was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity, and I am so appreciative to have had the chance to learn, adapt, and experience life in Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

Samantha Fino with the Olifants West Nature Reserve in South Africa

Transfrontier Africa located in Olifants West Nature Reserve, part of the Balule Nature Reserve, is the only NGO research hub for the greater Kruger National Park, one of the largest game reserves in Africa covering about 19,633 square kilometers. This landscape contains more species of large mammals than any other African game reserve, several of which are in danger of extinction. Transfrontier Africa's main mission is to preserve these threatened and endangered species through population monitoring and anti-poaching efforts. The locations of individuals in various threatened populations determined through research are used by the wardens of the anti-poaching unit as a means of focusing their efforts for the protection of the overall populations.

In the Balule Nature Reserve, there is a population of Black Rhinoceroses (*Diceros bicornis*) that contains 16 individuals. These individuals are monitored seven days a week, 52 weeks of the year, not only on their whereabouts within the nature reserve, but also for conservation efforts. Population monitoring is done many ways. One method is walking for middens, or specific locations where individuals will mark their territory. Another is through camera traps, motion-

triggered devices. Camera traps are deployed throughout the reserve, typically at waterholes and midden sites. The pictures are then retrieved from the SD cards and sorted for individuals to be identified. If there were any sightings of a Black Rhinoceros by either our team of research technicians or other reserve guides, the information of the individual and its whereabouts were recorded. The monitoring and protection of Black Rhinoceros populations at the Balule Nature Reserve is funded by the World Wildlife Fund.

A second species of main concern is White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*). This population is a lot larger with about 100 individuals, although still threatened by poaching. Along with the methods mentioned above, we also used radio telemetry to track White Rhinoceros individuals. Much calmer in nature, collaring White Rhinoceroses is not as risky as it is with Black Rhinoceroses. With radios and scanners, we would search the landscape for particular individuals if they were not spotted and identified through the methods above. The research team hopes to find the whereabouts of all individuals of both species about each week and become concerned if they go undetected for about a month.

The last species of main focus is African Elephant (*Loxodonta Africana*). With financial aid and collaboration with the Save the Elephants Foundation, Transfrontier Africa monitors populations in the Balule Nature Reserve. Through camera trapping and game drives, individual African Elephants are identified by their ears, acting like a finger print because they rip and tear over time. This information is being used to create a census of all the individuals so that their populations, demographics and migrations can be monitored for species conservation. While working as a field technician, I experienced several other species in their natural environment, such as Lion, Jackal, Hippopotamus, Hyena, Civet, Giraffe, Warthog, Zebra, Impala, Wildebeest, Waterbuck, Kudu, Steinbok, Sable Antelope, several species of birds, among others.

Overall, this experience really opened my eyes to the dangers that threatened and endangered species face, as well as how difficult it is to monitor and protect them from the conservation standpoint. I hope to use and continue this type of work in my future endeavors, and contribute to saving populations struggling against habitat destruction, global climate change, among many other pressures, in a world characterized by the growing human population.

Navika Gangrade with the ROAM Food Truck Conference in San Antonio, Texas

This year San Antonio, Texas hosted the annual ROAM Food Truck Conference. I submitted an Honors Enrichment Fund for this conference as I have the opportunity to be team leader for a group of five students working on starting a food truck at the University of Delaware. In conjunction with faculty in the College of Health Sciences and Lerner College of Business and Economics, throughout the course of this school year, the team will create a business plan for a food truck that provides flavorful and healthful items. Entering the summer, investors and financiers will be sought using the completed business plan. The ROAM Food Truck Conference delivered valuable insight, which I would not have obtained otherwise, on the exact process in starting a food truck business, as well as valuable opportunities for networking in the field.

Entering into the world of food trucks, business plans, and finances I was unequipped to handle the amount and style of work that this endeavor requires. The ROAM Food Truck Conference provided me with valuable information. As a 2-day conference, I participated in "Track 1," which had seminars on how to start a food truck. Some examples of seminars included: "So You Wanna Start a Food Truck? Business Planning," "Funding Facts," and "Marketing and Branding for a Food Truck." Furthermore, I had the opportunity to network with current food truck owners. I gained many contacts out of this trip, including contacts for a professional who offered to review the team's business plan and the (RED) campaign, who hopes to work with the collegiate food truck, once it starts.

In the free time, between conference session and in the mornings and evenings, I took the opportunity to explore all that San Antonio has to offer. As a historical city, I first visited the Alamo, infamous for the Battle of the Alamo. Next, I took a trip to Schilo's famous German deli and tried out the homemade root beer, pea soup, and knockwurst. Then I visited Market Square and El Mercado, a conglomeration of Mexican food and antique booths. Also, as part of the conference I was able to visit a food truck "park" and explore their marketing techniques and vehicles. It was a great experience to explore a city I have never been to.

Finally, I would like to thank the University of Delaware Honors Program for providing me with this opportunity. Without the financial assistance of the Honors Program, this trip would not have been possible. This trip directly benefits not only the team and myself, but the UD community, as the team is now very equipped with the tools and knowledge to execute our business plan and work towards the manifestation of our first nutritious, healthful food truck.

Aaron King with Volunteer HQ in Cusco, Peru

"Let's just make it there". That is what I was telling myself as I sat alone in Dulles International Airport, waiting for the the first of three flights that would eventually bring me to the

ancient city of Cusco, Peru. Over the summer I had signed up to do volunteer construction work with International Volunteer HQ (IVHQ) for four weeks. But my mind wasn't on the future construction site or the people I was about to meet. It was simply focused on making it to Cusco ontime without any missed flights or baggage. And by golly, one cancelled flight, stiff cot, and 20 hours later, I finally made it to Cusco in one piece.

One of the small things I love about traveling is the first time you walk or drive through a new city, just taking in all the foreign sights around you. And despite my excessive explorations around Cusco on Google Street View, actually driving through the streets for the first time was an amazing feeling. Not only because the

people and buildings looked different, but because I knew I was driving through the city I was going to call home for the next month. And even then, I knew I would one day look back at this first drive through Cusco and think to myself how little at that time I actually knew about this city and what it was going mean to live here.

My home in Cusco was a large volunteer house, with anywhere from 1220 fellow volunteers living there at one time. As I was hoping for, I lived with an eclectic bunch, with people hailing from New Zealand, Kyrgyzstan, Italy, Australia, England, Ireland, and Canada. As cool as it was to meet so many people from so many different countries, the structure of the program made the social dynamic a weird one. Every Saturday a handful of volunteers would leave the house and every Sunday a new batch would move in. And since most volunteers only stayed for two or three weeks, by the end of my four weeks, there was not a single person left in the house who was there when I first arrived. So one hand I had the chance to meet a lot of new people, but it was also hard to forge deep friendships in such a short amount of time.

For my construction work, I was placed at a school building located in the hilly poor outskirts of Cusco. I was lucky enough to work on this site for the entire month. So by a couple weeks, I knew the site backwards and forwards. Under the instruction of a local foreman named Marco (who did not speak a word of English) we plastered ceilings, cracked open carrizo (think cheap bamboo) with our hands, and installed ceilings on the outdoor bathrooms. No matter what we did each day, everyone left the site tired and dirty, which is a great feeling.

It is hard to sum up in a single closing paragraph what this month in Peru meant for me. It's easy to throw around terms like "eyeopening" or "lifechanging" but the real impact this trip had on me cannot be put into words. But to simply have the chance to live in a foreign country for a full month is something I'll never take for granted or ever forget.

Thomas Margiasso with the Safari Park Open Zoo in Thailand

This past January, I was able to volunteer for four weeks at the Safari Park Open Zoo in Kanchanaburi, Thailand with the help of the Honors Enrichment Award from the University of Delaware. I went on the trip with my roommate Brian Griffiths and our friend Justin Berg. Brian is an Environmental Engineering and Plant Science double major and Justin is a Pre-Vet and Biology double major here at UD. On a daily basis, volunteers at the Safari Park were responsible for cleaning animal enclosures, feeding the various animals, and creating enrichment for the animals in their free time. At the beginning of the day, we were divided into one of five teams: the Cat team, the Cubs team, the Rescue team, the Birds team, and the Ungulates team. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the term "ungulates" it has to do with the giraffes and zebras.

Personally, I was usually put with the Rescue team because I expressed my desire to build and create enrichment for the animals at the beginning of the trip. The animals at the "Rescue Retreat" are two gibbons, six macaques, one langur, two binturongs, two jackals, one cassowary, and several deer. After the morning enclosure cleanings and feedings were finished at about 10:30 AM, we usually had time to think about different improvements that we could make on the various enclosures. This could require constructing platforms, creating ladders for the monkeys to climb on, or hanging rope for the animals to swing on. As a civil engineering major though, I knew that I wanted to do a bigger project to really leave my mark on the Safari Park. That was

when I was assigned to build an addition onto the current deer enclosure that would more than triple it in size.

Lacey Perdue in Cusco, Peru

Flying into Cusco was like entering another world. Gone was the perfectly oriented grid of illuminated streets in Miami and here was the one room shack on the mountainside; its tin roof barely being held down by cinder blocks. My experiences in Cusco are a reflection of all the typical perturbations that every American comes to realize as they bear witness to the shocking poverty in third world countries. The safety of first-world ignorance is inadvertently shattered and the desolation overpowering the majority of the world takes precedence in the mind in the form of an overwhelming state of dual helplessness, the peoples helplessness to change their situation and your helplessness to save them, inevitably resulting in obliterating hopelessness.

Idem to all Americans my ambition was to help the less fortunate in Cusco but this daunting challenge was quickly met by the limits of its unfeasibility. Daily I worked with people whose teeth had rotted down to vacant oozing black holes, whose nails had become the consistency of wood, and whose feet had never known a pair of true shoes in a mobile medical clinic that was provided with doctors native to the country. Through these clinics care was supplied that the people had no hope of obtaining otherwise. Overall, a total 1365 people were helped in some way throughout the week, whether it was receiving fillings, medication, or pivotal health information as simple as how to brush your teeth. However, the fact remains that the clinics were the closest medical care facilities for some at a whopping eight hours away, prescriptions were limited by funds to over-the-counter American drugs such as Ibuprofen, and sustainment for the prescriptions was limited to a month. All of these facts supplicate questioning as to the impact volunteering can contribute in this medical form and as far and these statistics seem to go, it's obvious they insinuate a negative. Despite this, to limit both the work being done by clinics and the people of Peru to heart-wrenching facts such as these would be an injustice left only to infomercials.

The true value of the clinics lies in the fact that they make accessible what is otherwise unattainable. Therefore, they create the possibility of freedom from drudging resignation to present circumstance. I have no doubt that the people experienced immediate benefit simply by the way they came from undeterminable distances with literally a sheep in hand; attesting to their past experiences and satisfaction with the clinics. My original qualm was with the long-term permanency of the treatment, but after experiencing the appreciativeness of the people, their respect towards the doctors, and their willing compliance in contrast to what I have witnessed in America I rest assured that my trip to Cusco was valuable. Not only was I able to work alongside doctors who found helping others more important than their paycheck and who explained the reasoning for every treatment they administered, I was able to see firsthand the effect of accessibility on mentality. In America where everything is on demand this is a liberty that has diminished its value, but in Peru the relative rarity of access to anything results in its reception through thankfulness. Thus, adding to their quality of life unimaginably. The American way of life is in no means bad, to argue not to take advantage of the graces it presently offers would be harder than arguing idiocracy as an ideology, but to accept everything with thanksgiving would be an invaluable quality to procure from the Peruvians.

Consequently, it was the people walking down the fifteenth century cobblestone streets or across the mile high jungle covered mountains in their traditional alpaca shawls that made the trip worth it. Through them I was able to learn necessary information to prepare me for a medical career and to observe the intrinsic values of virtues simultaneously.

Nora Tang with World Wide Chile in Santiago, Chile

For a month this winter, I lived in Santiago, Chile, traveling to different parts of the country each weekend with World Wide Chile. During the week, I stayed in an apartment in Lastarria (seen above), a historical neighbourhood near lots of restaurants, museums, parks, and more. World Wide Chile is a very special program that sets up each student with an internship or volunteer placement in their field of interest. As a nursing student, I had the opportunity to work in the public health sector. For my first two weeks, I was in the women's health department shadowing midwives, and OB/GYN, and her interns. The differences between a Labor & Delivery unit in Chile versus the States are astounding: when a woman (or girl, really) was fully dilated, she was wheeled into a surgical center, an episiotomy was immediately sliced (before she even starts to push!), and forceps were used if the baby was not coming quickly enough. Then, the placenta and cord were pulled out, and forceps were used to scrape the woman's uterus clean. The brisk manner I encountered in L&D carried throughout the entire hospital. Because there are no nurses who work in women's health, there was no one to bridge the doctorpatient gap; therefore, women were left exposed in their stirrups while doctors whispered to each other about the severity of each patient's condition.

I don't mean to sound too critical. My shadowing experience was amazing. Every doctor and intern went so far out of their way to make me feel welcome and useful. I attended rounds with all of the attendings; I went to sexuality lectures with the interns; one resident walked me through the medical records for his most interesting cases and that was only in the hospital! I spent my last two weeks in an outpatient health clinic in a much poorer part of Santiago. There, I sat in on consults with mental health patients, conducted psychomotor tests on children, helped with diabetes education, and changed a lot of wound dressings. This, for me, was incredibly rewarding. Though many people would have been appalled by the ulcers and holes (yes, some went all the way through) that I cleaned in my patients' legs, I loved the hands-on practice. Not only did I get to hone skills I've learned with the University of Delaware, but I was able to use Spanish to explain to these strangers what I was doing and to ask them questions about how they got their injuries, what each medication did, etc.

Each weekend got better and better. We started with Valparaiso, Viña del Mar, and Paseo del Vino. After seeing Valparaiso (pictured above), I didn't think I could love somewhere more. But the next weekend, we went to Valle del Elqui, proving me wrong. We stayed in a little hippie hostel where we were fed fresh bread and apricot jam every morning. We did a sunset hike to stargaze atop a mountain, and I fell in love even more. Then, we ended with the Atacama. This topped all else. Our last day, we watched the sunrise over a geyser field, and we watched it set as we hiked across a mountaintop. Basically, this experience was the best month of my life.