

Fall 2016

"Same Story," Different Countries, by Rachel Austin



"Same Story" Different Countries is a multidisciplinary project that incorporates literary and historical research, music, poetry and dance. With a focus on issues of oppression, resilience, resistance and liberation, the production reveals themes that resonate with individuals and groups in the United States, South Africa and beyond. The production has a goal of raising awareness of the history of racism, while prompting the audiences to focus on the healing needed to move forward into a

unified future. I attended the "Same Story" Different Countries (SSDC) trip as a dancer. From this journey, I gained a new world perspective and a new appreciation for art as a means of facilitating discussion.



I began the journey with little experience traveling outside the United States. Through this experience, I gained a desire to immerse myself in different cultures and to see the world. In South Africa, I met some of the friendliest and most welcoming people I have ever encountered. On the first Sunday, we performed our production at the Holy Cross Anglican Church in Soweto, ZA. Immediately upon entering the church,

congregation members welcomed us with warm smiles and hugs. We were immersed into the church service and following our performance, we were invited to sing and dance with the incredible church choir. I was amazed by their gratitude and willingness to talk about their own racial struggles, connecting them to our production. After the service, a teacher during the time of the Soweto Uprising shared her



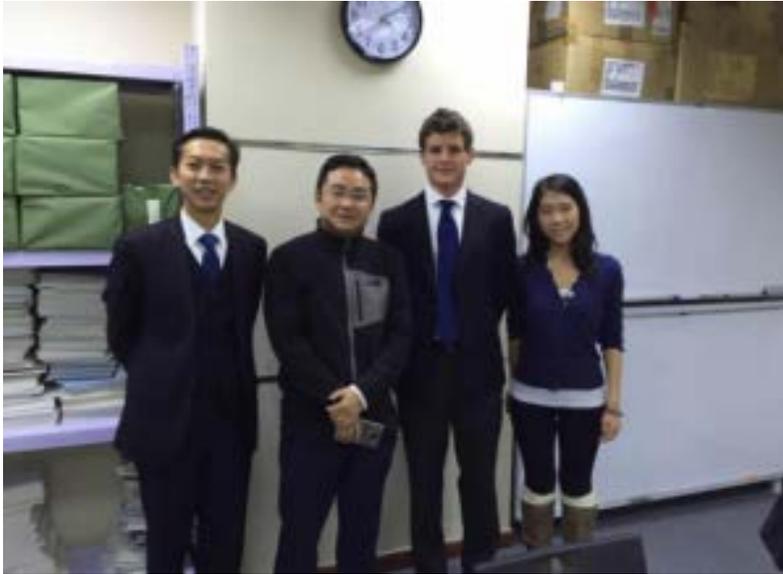
story, along with our choreographer's father, who fled the country and became a professor in the United States.

Following this incredible experience, each time we performed I learned something new about South African culture. The students at the schools that we performed at were so excited to meet us and often started conversations in regards to racial tensions they experienced. At many of the schools, students volunteered songs, spoken poetry, music, or dance expressing racial conflict. I was amazed at the openness of the students and their appreciation for our work. Along with learning valuable lessons from the performances, I was able to learn a lot from interacting with assorted South Africans, including our drivers, people on the street, fellow dancers at the companies we visited, etc.. I was amazed at the quantity of languages known by each person, preserving the culture of the many different communities.

Along with learning so much about the culture and societal struggles, I really enjoyed learning about the medical care. At the Apartheid Museum, I learned that during the period of apartheid, black Africans feared hospitals and clinics and often compared them to prisons. White doctors treated most Africans and were often overworked and unable to attend to all the patients. Although the medical system had improved following the abolishment of apartheid, medical care remains an issue in South Africa. We were able to visit ADAPT (Agisanang Domestic Abuse Prevention and Training), a nonprofit organization combatting gender based violence in South Africa. They offered crisis counseling, criminal justice system assistance, youth and school programs, community trainings, and some medical care including primary care, emergency treatment, and selective surgeries. The medical care portion was small and roughly 20 people stood in line in receive treatment when we visited. The director said that they lacked enough physicians and medical supplies in order to serve the population. As a student currently applying to medical school, I was struck by a desire to help.

In the future, I hope to continue to travel and experience new cultures. In particular, I hope to return to South Africa to provide medical care to patients in need. This trip has helped me to become more aware of the large disparity between social classes and continued racial tension occurring around the world, pushing me to go out into my community and advocate for the need to help each other and fully embrace diversity and difference in all capacities of our lives. I look forward to continuing to discover new ways to help, returning to the United States with a new desire to serve others. As stated in the Apartheid Museum, "Humanity was born in Africa. All people, ultimately, are African". Following this journey, I am truly proud to have a piece of this beautiful continent in me.

Investigating Environmental Protection in Beijing, China, by Ben Chadwick



For two weeks in the Winter of 2016, I traveled to Beijing, China, to investigate the environmental pollution and how it is being dealt with. Beijing has been suffering greatly from air pollution and soil pollution as well. I was able to directly observe how this has effected the city, how people are dealing with it, and discuss the topic with top experts and scientists in the area. In the beginning of my trip, I met with the director of the Research Center of Corporate Social Responsibility – China Academy

of Social Sciences (CSR-CASS). This group of people working for CSR-CASS helps develop the theory of China CSR, promote social responsibility, and also has a role in assessing companies in China. The Research Center's assessment of companies can be found in the books they publish. The Blue Book and White Book of CSR report and record the progress and characteristics of social responsibility in China. During these days, I also visited Beihai and Jingshan parks. Because of the air pollution, many people including myself wore masks which have filters. The weather was also very hazy. Some locals were upset by this haze, because when viewing the Forbidden City from the top of Jingshan Park, one can usually see the entire city. However, because of the air pollution not much could be seen.



Also in my trip, I had the opportunity to visit many different science laboratories. Some were university laboratories, and some were government and some private. Because energy sources like coal is worsening environmental problems in Beijing, new energy sources are developed. For example, at the Chine Academy of Science's Institute of Microbiology, many research groups are engineering bacteria to create biofuels. I was able to visit some of these laboratories which do this, and learn about their projects. The ideas revolving around

environmental sustainability have influenced students in high school as well. Here are some pictures from a fashion show at LuHe high school in Beijing. The students only used recycled

products to create their outfits and dresses. The student with the long black dress made hers from trash bags. Others used theirs from old curtains or toilet paper even.

Most people can only notice the air pollution as a problem in Beijing. It is talked about on the news there, the weather is often foggy, and people are wearing masks. However, most people do not know all the problems caused by pollution. There is also a big issue which I was able to discuss with Dr. Wang Xiao Guang, the Beijing Rongzhi Corporate Social Responsibility Institute Director, which is the soil pollution. As director of the Rongzhi corporate social responsibility institute, Dr. Wang works with many private companies to help them create a plan to get a better environmental impact score from China's CSR. Important technologies which companies will need to utilize in the future to help the environment include soil cleaning technology. Much of the land in Beijing is polluted and this a major health hazard, and it also affects commercial real estate greatly. I also met with Professor Sun Jirong at the Beijing Business Incubation Park. At this incubation park, the professor and his staff works with graduate students from various Beijing Universities, to help start their businesses. Their future assessments by the China CSR is one thing they can help them with as well.



Many people I met used London's issues during the industrial revolution as an example of what China faces now. They say London took 50 years to clean their country and so China will take this amount of time. Some say 15-20 years because we have better technology today than in the past, and some say 50-80 years because the problem is worse in China. However, it also depends on what the definition of "clean" is, and what state the environment is in after this amount of time. I believe if people are aware of the problem and continue to care, the environment in Beijing can improve quickly. I

enjoyed my trip greatly, and hope to return soon to an improved China.

Pork for Christmas, by Laura Donohue



The day after finals I was on a plane destined for Aalborg, Denmark. On my third plane ride, a Danish woman asked where I was headed and I quickly replied “Aalborg” with a beaming face. With a look of disgust she replied, “Oh God, why?” At this unsettling response, I explained that I would be spending the next month working on a swine farm. Like most people, she looked at me as if I was slightly unstable. That is the look I got from most people when I explained my holiday plans. After all, I was leaving my home for the holidays to work on a pig farm. I hadn’t met my employers and only exchanged two emails with them. Yet, I was ecstatic at the opportunity to learn and see a foreign country. I had no idea what was in store, and I couldn’t wait to get there.

I could never have prepared myself for what the month had in store for me. I arrived in Aalborg and was greeted by the Lunds, a family I befriended during my previous summer in Iceland. We drove home and got settled. Two days later I was driving through the dark Danish winter to Egelund svinefarm to start working. That Monday I changed into the overalls and gray sweatshirt I

would wear everyday for the next month. And in I went. My first thought: “how do I breathe in

here!?” My eyes watered in my first lap through the stables past 2,300 pigs. I met the three boars, 100 poults, 600 sows, and 1600 piglets. I was thrown right in on the first day. I gave sows and piglets vaccines, painkillers, and vitamins. I castrated piglets and sorted through teams. That week I artificially inseminated sows and poults. Within a week I had already seen nearly everything that went on at Egelund.



Yet, every week brought new adventure. One week I shadowed a swine veterinarian and saw other swine operations. In conversation with Erik Staun, the owner of Egelund, I learned the logistics and costs of managing a swine farm. From discussion with Erik and the swine veterinarian, as well as seeing other farms, I quickly realized that I was working at one of the



best swine farms in the world. Erik upholds a high standard of welfare for his pigs and ensures he is always providing his animals with the best care available.

Although this winter was mostly about the pigs, I spent the month immersed in Danish culture. I lived with the Lunds for three weeks, Erik Staun for four nights, and a nearby family in Nibe for two nights. This meant that I spent the holidays with three different families and I got to see how three different families lived. I learned very valuable things including the Danes love for sausage, cheese, coffee, and marzipan. Danish Christmas will forever be inseparable from a piece of chocolate covered marzipan in my mind. I spent my last three nights exploring the beautiful city of Copenhagen. The few sunny hours of the day were spent walking countless kilometers through the city admiring the architecture, people, art, and culture. On my last night in

Copenhagen I thought of all the incredible people I met and I knew that this past month was an invaluable gift to me. The friendships and lessons I learned are ones that I will carry with me in my professional career and my everyday life.

South Africa: The Same Story, Different Countries Project, by Marielle Kraft



During this winter session, I spent two weeks in South Africa with 23 other UD student performers, dance professors, local choreographers, artistic directors, and community supporters touring with our Same Story, Different Countries production and project. The SSDC project has been two years in the making, and it explores the past and present racial issues in the U.S. Civil Rights movement and South African Anti-Apartheid. My role in the project was twofold: I sang in the production and I taught my research-based lessons to children in schools we visited across Johannesburg and Cape Town.

We spent our first week in Johannesburg, where we dug deep into the history of Apartheid through performances at local schools, churches, and studios.

We heard first-hand accounts of the devastating trials and triumphs of the black and coloured South Africans during the time of Apartheid and beyond, gaining a much deeper understanding of why we were there sharing our project. We were dancing and singing through the exact events they lived through. Our stories are the same, half way across the world. One of our most memorable performances in Johannesburg was at Holy Cross Anglican Church, which is right in Nelson

Mandela's neighborhood in Soweto, and the massive congregation whole-heartedly embraced us. We felt like we were part of the community, even if just for a few hours, and every move we made in our performance carried so much more weight. Other standout moments in Johannesburg include visiting the deeply moving Apartheid museum, performing at the beautiful Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy, and exploring the Lion & Rhino Animal Reserve.



Our second week was spent in Cape Town, and this paradise city was very different from our experience in Johannesburg. More European and less historic, Cape Town was full of adventures including the incredible views atop Table Mountain, enriching exchanges of both dance and research at the University of Cape Town, school visits to vivacious high schools, and an emotional final performance at Baxter Theater. My favorite day here was at Oaklands High School, where we first performed our show for a room teeming with hundreds of students in the morning, and then I taught my workshop to a large group of 8th grade students afterward. The students were fully engaged, willing to step outside of their comfort zone to choreograph their own short dances and learn about the topic of resilience in U.S. slavery. Then the students broke into small groups and discussed how they are resilient in their own lives. The vulnerable stories the students shared were moving and inspiring, and it was a moment where the teacher (me) was able to learn from her students.

Overall, this trip was incredibly enriching, exciting, expository, and enlightening. Not only could we share our project with a culture that can equally connect to and appreciate the stories of racial oppression and liberation, but our lives were changed in the process. It's so important to seek to be uncomfortable in the world around you in order to understand just how privileged you may be. This was an awakening experience for me, and I couldn't be more grateful for the Honors Enrichment award for being a reason this was made possible.

Vida Volunteer in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, by Amanda Kucharzyk



This winter, I traveled to Costa Rica and Nicaragua with Vida Volunteer, a nonprofit organization that sets up medical, dental, and veterinary clinics in Central America. The trip I chose was composed of pre-medical and pre-dental students. I participated in the dental program alongside ten other college students from various places across the United States. Following a day of public health orientation, we visited the community Barrio Irvin in La Cruz, Costa Rica. After becoming acquainted with our translators, we set up a nutrition workshop at Colegio Barrio

Irvin, the neighborhood's school. Working in smaller groups, we educated the local children about healthy foods, vitamins and nutrients, and the importance of a balanced diet. I was excited to practice my Spanish with all the enthusiastic children!

Our group was the first Vida trip to implement the what was known as the “Stevia Project.” Stevia is a plant that diabetic patients can use as a sugar substitute. The Vida community coordinators had identified the houses with diabetic patients prior to our arrival, so

we split into groups of four people and went to these houses. Once there, we educated the patient about his or her diabetes, how to manage it, and how to propagate the stevia plant. For the remaining time in La Cruz, we visited various households to collect general health information about each family member, including vitals. After the doctor spoke with the family, we provided recommendations about diet, exercise, and health in general. During the two-day public health project, we were able to help 39 families, plus the 15 families that we helped through the Stevia project. After our work in La Cruz, we spent a day at Playa Hermosa where we enjoyed sunbathing, snorkeling, swimming, and live music.



Once we arrived in Masaya, we split into our homestay groups. I stayed with four other girls in a quaint home in Masaya with our “Mamá Chilito,” her mother, and her son Diego. They had a section at the Masaya market where they sold local art. The homestays were my favorite cultural aspect of the trip. While in Nicaragua, we visited the Apoyo Lagoon and the Masaya Volcano. The dental team was led by Nicaraguan dentists Dr. Erick Collado and Dr. Isabel Soza. They were assisted by Nicaraguan dental student Reyna Villavicencio. After an

orientation day in which we familiarized ourselves with the tools, disinfection procedure, anatomy of the mouth, and common oral diseases, we were ready to set up clinics in Masaya and Granada. Due to available resources and time constraints, the clinic was able to offer extractions, fillings, cleanings, and fluoride treatments. We assisted the doctors by gathering the correct tools for each procedure, holding the tools and the spit cup, and cleaning up after the procedure was complete. After that, we provided the patient with a toothbrush, floss, and toothpaste. Then, we explained about proper brushing technique in Spanish... ¡No olvide cepillarse la lengua! (Don't forget to brush your tongue!) Over the course of four days, we served a total of 168 patients in the dental clinic.

All in all, combined with the medical team, our group was able to help over 570 people during the public health and clinic days. I am so grateful that the Honors Program provided me with this opportunity to assist so many people, to gain shadowing and hands-on clinical experience, and to improve my Spanish. As a pre-dental student with a Spanish minor, this trip was extremely valuable to me.

Teaching at Albany Private School in Quito, Ecuador, by Sarah Miller



This past winter, through the organization Volunteer Connections, I traveled to Quito, Ecuador to help teach English in a private school. As a Spanish major, I was earnestly looking forward to a chance to speak Spanish to native speakers for a whole week. And, as my future plans involve teaching English abroad in Spanish-speaking nations, I was even more excited to experience a teaching role in a school full of children and teachers native to Ecuador. However, this week abroad living in Ecuador also allowed me to

experience the rich culture and history of Ecuador.

I lived with a host family of one single mother and her two young sons. They were extremely hospitable, warm, and welcoming. My host mother cooked breakfast and dinner for me and the other volunteers in her home every single day. Breakfast was comprised of coffee, tea, bread, butter, and jam. Dinner varied every evening, but it mostly consisted of chicken, rice, lentils or beans, and a simple salad. As my host mother did not speak any English, I loved speaking to her in Spanish in her house and throughout our meals.

Every morning, I took the bus to the private school at which I was a classroom volunteer. The school was called the Albany Private School, and it taught grades second through ninth. All of the students at this school came from the Albany Kindergarten School, where they began to learn English around the age of five. While none of the students were fluent in English in the school at which I volunteered, many of the students had a very good comprehension of the language by ninth grade. As a teaching assistant, I was paired with one teacher and followed her around to her seven different classes each day, half science and half English classes. She taught a wide range of ages, from the youngest to the oldest. In the younger classes, the children were very young and extremely rambunctious, so I mostly helped in discipline and maintaining some calm in the classroom. In the older classes, like our fifth and ninth grade English classes, I was able to take more of a leading teaching role. I helped the students with their classwork, their spelling and pronunciation of English, and taught a few grammar lessons. By the end of the week, I felt very comfortable standing in front of the class and switching between Spanish and English very fluidly in order to explain the lesson. At the end of the week, I really bonded with the fifth grade class and felt very sad to part from them. I took the cover picture with them on the last day, “Bring a Toy to School Day.”



On the weekend before I returned home from Ecuador, I was able to see a considerable amount of the culture and country of Ecuador. I explored historical district of the city as well as the rural mountains of the country. I visited Lago

San Pablo and Quilotoa, a massive crater lake in the middle of an inactive volcano at an altitude of 14,000 ft. I was also given the opportunity to visit the indigenous people of Ecuador, and they graciously opened their home for us to visit. Their way of life is beautiful, and it was so amazing to meet people so happy to share their culture with strangers. My volunteer trip to Ecuador was one that I will never forget, and I am so grateful the Honors Program allowed me the opportunity to experience something so incredible.

Performing and Learning in South Africa, by Dominique Oppenheimer



I have been part of the “Same Story,” Different Countries project since its beginnings in the spring of 2015, when I joined as a Summer Scholar and dancer for the production. The project combines dance, music, art, poetry, and historical research to express the similarities and differences between the United States Civil Rights Movement and the South African fight against apartheid. My role included generating research for the project, focusing on women’s activism in the two countries,

and acting as a dancer. Since that summer, I’ve been able to stick with the project as a “scholar/artist” as it has grown and traveled from Mitchell Hall on the University of Delaware campus to the Grand Opera House in Wilmington, to various schools and churches in the Delaware area, and now to South Africa.

When I joined the project team in 2015, going to South Africa seemed like a far off dream, but traveling through Johannesburg and Cape Town this January was well worth the wait and hours of intensive rehearsals. Continuously reworking and practicing the dances in the production was vital for making them their best for South African audiences. It felt so special to perform for these audiences, from the congregation of the Holy Cross Anglican Church in Soweto near Nelson Mandela’s former home to the students of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls. Preparing required a lot of adaptability, as we only had a few hours in each space to

rehearse. However, at the end of each performance, the sweat and confusion seemed worth it when we received applause and kind words from audiences and would join them, sharing freedom songs from the United States and sometimes learning South African songs as well. Additionally, at some of the high schools we went to, one of the performers and fellow Honors student, Marielle Kraft, would lead a workshop for students on resilience, integrating the arts into her lesson. Helping with those workshops and interacting individually with the students was one of the highlights of my time in South Africa.



In both Johannesburg and Cape Town, the project team and I also had the chance to gain knowledge about the history and culture of South Africa. After the performance at the Holy Cross Church, for instance, we had the opportunity to speak with a woman named Ma Fikile Ncgobo, who was one of the teachers of the students involved in the 1976 Soweto Uprising. We also had the chance to go through the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg and Robben Island off of Cape Town, where we

received a tour from Lionel Davis, a man who served seven years in the prison because of his anti-apartheid activism. At Moving into Dance, one of the first mixed-race dance companies in South Africa, we were able to take classes in both Afrofusion and contemporary dance styles and learn how the company performs educational outreach to local communities. These experiences enriched our understanding of South Africa and of the themes we have been working to present in our production over the past two years.

As an international relations major, an English major with a concentration in Ethnic and Cultural Studies, and a dance minor, this information deepened interests that have been sparked in my studies at UD. I am encouraged to move forward in examining the possible connections between the arts, cultural exchange, and human rights work. This project has been a formative experience that I will not forget, and I am so thankful that the Honors Program has helped me gain the tools and skills necessary for this journey.

Trek to Senegal with BuildOn, by Madeline Willis



This past January I traveled with the BuildOn trek team to Mborane Sereer, Senegal, which became the most valuable, memorable experience of my life. BuildOn strives to break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and low expectations through education and service. In Mborane Sereer, we were assisting the community in breaking ground on a primary school that the BuildOn at UD chapter fundraised for this past year. I was honored to be a part of this trip because I believe in BuildOn's methodology and values. As soon as we arrived in the village, the community

members' motivation and dedication to completing the school was evident. Everyone danced and sang and cheered and welcomed us with open-minds and kind hearts. At the welcoming ceremony, everyone signed the covenant which outlined expectations of the community and BuildOn moving forward with the school. Some signed by stamping fingerprints, but everyone was included which made it a really special moment for the community.



My host family included Tata Anna Ndong, Grandma Marie Ndieg, my host brothers Aliou Faye and Cheikh Diouf, and my roommate from BuildOn, Tali. They welcomed us into their home with open arms, and we got to learn about their culture through various activities including preparing meals, doing laundry, and attending dance ceremonies, a wrestling tournament, a mock wedding, and a gender talk. In the afternoons and at night we bonded most with our host family and their friends. We played jenga, Frisbee, and jumprope every night. The

boys got creative with Jenga and taught Tali and I words in Sereer using the blocks. One night, Tata Anna let us stay up extra late, and the boys led us in some yoga and exercises. The kids' personalities revealed themselves most during playtime, and these are the memories I treasure most.



By the last night, we had all become so close that saying goodbye was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. The sense of friendship, love, and admiration that we had developed for each other over the last week was almost tangible in the silence as we all sat with tears welled up in our eyes. Each day the worksite began with a group circle, stretching, and words of inspiration. The infectious smiles and incredible work ethic of all the community members motivated me to put in 100% effort all day every day. One day we even had a chant "Never

give up!" I worked at the brick-making station for most of the time each day because I became friends with the crew and they would call me over after the morning circle saying, "Diib, come tap tap!" The sense of community and togetherness in Mborane Sereer was overwhelming and truly unique. They are the most peaceful, hardworking people I have ever met, and I am honored to have had the chance to live with them and work with them for a week.