

2022 EXPERIENCE REPORT NEWSLETTER

VIH PROGRAM

THINK GLOBALLY
ACT LOCALLY



Preparing Leaders for Tomorrow's Global
Challenges

TABLE OF CONTENT

Arcadia University	p.3
Carlow University	p.4
Chatham University	p.5 – 6
Duquesne University	p. 7 – 8
Robert Morris University	p. 9 – 11
Temple University	p. 12 – 15
Thiel College	p. 16 – 18
University of Pittsburgh: Bradford	p. 19 – 21
University of Pittsburgh: Greensburg	p. 22
University of Pittsburgh: Johnstown	p. 23 -24
University of Pittsburgh: Oakland	p. 25 – 30
Washington and Jefferson College	p. 31 – 33

ARCADIA UNIVERSITY | NICOLE DUCRAY

Experience Report:

Nicole Ducray had the opportunity this past summer to study the Dutch public health system and the Dutch language in Amsterdam, Netherlands through a program offered by CIEE. In the classroom, she learned about some policies and regulations that are specific to the Netherlands, such as the decriminalization of drugs, euthanasia, sex work, and abortion rights. In addition, she learned about the structure of the health system and how it is compared to the U.S. She learned that even a system like the Dutch



which is ranked #2 in the 2021 World Index of Healthcare Innovation has its flaws. One of the major drawbacks of the Dutch public health system is that there are long waiting times for care because there are restricted budgets and price controls that limit the amount of care they can provide. Lastly, she learned about the major issues affecting the Dutch like the prevalence of Dementia and the housing crisis.

In her Dutch language class, she learned simple phrases and keywords in Dutch from a teacher who actually lives in the Netherlands. Nicole was able to use what she learned in the classroom at food markets, cafes, and shopping malls through field experiences. For example, the class took an excursion to Zaanse Schans where they learned about the history of the windmills and were able to use their Dutch phrases to order in the café. Outside of the classroom, Nicole discovered a new sense of independence for participating in activities alone. This does not mean she did not invite others to experience events with her. But when everyone already had prior commitments, she decided to do it herself. Through this mentality, she was able to experience the culture by visiting a museum, two parks, and a local swimming pool. She is excited to bring this mentality home to experience every opportunity that is presented to her. However, most of the time she spent her days making connections and lifelong friendships with her peers. During her stay, they were there supporting her every step of the way. This gave her a community of individuals that she cannot wait to reconnect with after the program concluded.

CARLOW UNIVERSITY | EMILY BOLTON

Experience Report:

Emily Bolton spent 4 weeks living in Sligo, Ireland. She was a part of a group of students from Carlow University that spent time working with the special needs population in a variety of services. While in Sligo, Emily volunteered at a day center for adults with special needs. The center assisted the service users with securing work experiences, grocery shopping, recreational activities, and overall functioning. From spending much of her time at the center, Emily was able to experience how the special needs population is treated in Ireland. She assisted in shopping outings as well as creating resumes for the service users to obtain work experiences. She learned just how independent those with special needs can be.



On the weekends and evenings, Emily went on different excursions with her classmates from Carlow. One of Emily's favorites was learning about the deep history that was rooted in almost anything. By visiting the Tobernalt Holy Well, she discovered how important religion had always been to the Irish. During her third weekend, Emily and her classmates took the train to Dublin and spent the night at Trinity College. There, she was delighted to visit Mercy International, the home of Catherine McAuley, the founder of Sisters of Mercy, who founded Carlow University. Through her time in Ireland, Emily deepened her interpersonal skills while obtaining experience and knowledge for her future career in social services.

CHATHAM UNIVERSITY | MIKAELA LANE

Experience Report:

Mikaela Lane spent 4 weeks studying abroad in Florence. During her time there she took *The Culture of Food and Wine in Italy* and *Critical Perspectives on Italy: Contemporary Culture and Society*. Both classes opened her eyes to the history of Italy as well as what Italy is doing to continue its legacy of being a hub for culture and quality. These classes contained a fraction of all the information Mikaela absorbed during her travels. On weekends she and the friends she had made ventured outside the city of Firenze to other must-see areas of Italy. She visited Venice, the Amalfi Coast, Luca, Malian, and Sienna. The variety of destinations exposed Mikaela to the distinct cultures, environments, and staples of each region. Half of the fun of these destinations were the trip there. Navigating the train system, planning, and adapting said plans, and remaining safe have instilled in her a sense of confidence. These difficult excursions, as spectacular as they were, challenged her to think on her feet, remain calm in high-stress situations, and navigate group dynamics.



Learning about the sustainable practices Italy instills in not only daily living but also commercially has and will continue to motivate Mikaela to implement these practices into her daily life and create change in her community. Food waste is a huge factor that is necessary to consider when trying to decrease the number of greenhouse gasses. The CO₂ emitted by the thousands of tons of food waste is something that Italy has been able to decrease. They've done this by locally grown produce, having a trash system designed to make composting and recycling too easy to not do, and designing packaging and supermarkets that are eco-friendly. Mikaela made a conscious effort to discuss topics such as racism, women's rights, and politics. These conversations took place in the classroom during her sociology course. They also occurred at tables surrounded by fellow classmates from all over the United States, over carbonara with hostel visitors from all over the world, and temporary neighbors also residing in Florence. All these different perspectives, none being the same, have impacted Mikaela more than we can tell at this moment. They provided her with a range of stories that she holds dearly. She hopes to use this insight to be better equipped to help others, whether that be supporting them through a similar challenge or being better equipped to educate those around her.

CHATHAM UNIVERSITY | ISABELL SMITH

Experience Report:

Isabel Smith is a third-year undergraduate student at Chatham University in the Environmental Science program and the International Studies program focusing on the Middle East. Her long-term goals include working to promote sustainable communities and maintain healthy ecosystems through renewable energy and ecology. She has interned at The Ohio State University working as a lab assistant and facilitating a research project on microbial community differences in types of compost. She has also interned with the Wayne County Sustainable Energy Network, working to promote sustainability and renewable energy on the local level.



Isabel is pursuing a certificate on the Middle East to reconnect with family history because she believes it is important to understand and be connected with your history and culture. In her free time, Isabel likes to read, go on hikes, and spend time with friends and family. She studied abroad in Amman, Jordan during the summer of 2022 studying Arabic and completing an internship. She interned at the Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (in Jordan) as a project intern completing research on climate change in Jordan, Arabic to English translations, and marketing projects and action plans. She now has elementary proficiency in Arabic and will continue her studies in Arabic at Chatham University this fall. She is passionate about ecological restoration and living sustainably and is hoping to pursue a career in this field through getting her master's degree in restoration ecology after graduating from Chatham University in April 2023.

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY | EMILY SAMPLE

Experience Report:

Emily Sample had the opportunity to spend eight weeks in Barcelona, Spain studying the Spanish language, culture, and history of Spain through art and architecture within CIEE's Barcelona Campus. During her time there, she lived with a sweet local woman who assisted her in learning the language as well as the cultural norms of the Spanish community. In class, she was able to take trips to nearby cities and buildings to learn about the history



of the area and grow a deeper appreciation for Spanish history and art. These trips opened her eyes to all the history that can be found in Spain within buildings and art installations that she would have not known about without her study abroad opportunity. Her daily experiences surrounded her with new local foods, customs, and conversations and she took these as opportunities to learn and appreciate the European world. Emily learned that Spanish life greatly surrounds family and spending time with close loved ones. The Spanish culture also emphasizes rest and making sure all employees and members of the community are receiving what they need in order to have a fulfilling life.

Although Spanish locals enjoy downtime, everyone dresses much more formally abroad, which resulted in retiring sweatpants for cute skirts and business casual outfits. When she wasn't being taught in class, she used her new knowledge to have conversations with locals at cafes or on the metro which greatly increased her ability to speak Spanish. One of Emily's favorite things about Spain was how nice everyone is, even to "guiris" (a Spanish word for tourist). This assisted in a lot of new cultural values formed personally that she will bring back to the States and engage in within her original culture. Throughout Emily's time, she tried many local meals and gained an appreciation for the polychronic time culture Spain values. She also grew a great enjoyment of the ease of public transportation in Barcelona, as well as their health system and it was very enjoyable to see how flawlessly these systems work abroad. Because of her study abroad experience in Spain, she has made the decision to work towards obtaining a job in Barcelona post-graduation and moving to Spain permanently.



DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY | CEILIDH WAGNER

Experience Report:

Ceilidh Wagner went to Ireland, specifically Dublin to study research in the aspect of Nursing and Midwifery for the University College of Dublin. While there, she learned a great deal more about the struggles Ireland went through to gain independence and the potato famine. She did not know that one of the main instigators of the Easter Uprising and then the war for independence was a dual citizen, Irish and American. She also learned the names of the people involved



in the uprising. She also learned all about the troubles, which she had no idea about until she arrived in Ireland, and how the troubles between the Protestants and Catholics continue today, but not to the extent they did before Bill Clinton intervened in 1993 and peace was reached in 1998.

While Ceilidh was learning all of this critical historical information from the tours and sightseeing, she did, she was also learning about research in Nursing. This was a topic she had never considered interesting before, but she began to become interested as she learned more about what goes into the research, whether it be quantitative or qualitative, and the different types of research models that should be used based on what would be best for the situation (Meta-analysis, Cohort studies, randomized controlled trials), as well as how to formulate a research question, and how to verify through a CASP checklist if a research study is reliable. She learned all this through her Irish teachers of all different ethnicities, interesting her in a way she was never interested in before.

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY | LAUREN HUNSECKER

Experience Report:

Lauren Hunsecker had the opportunity to study abroad at the American College of Greece for a total of five weeks in Agia Paraskevi, Greece. She attended classes daily and in her spare time in the evenings practiced learning the Greek language by studying with her roommates and friends. They even practiced speaking the language with local shop, restaurant, and kiosk owners. Her courses allowed her to gain knowledge about ancient Greeks and how Greece truly represents the cradle of democracy. This was an important part of Lauren's



immersive experience in Greece because as a political science student, much of her studies have involved studying ancient Greek philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato and their works. Being able to see where they lived and how the culture influenced their works put a new perspective in Lauren's mind as she continues her education, however this time in a master's degree program.

When Lauren wasn't attending classes or practicing Greek with friends she enjoyed "island hopping" while in Greece. She was able to travel to three different islands: Aegina, Paros, and Spetses. This was where Lauren was fully immersed in Greek culture because these were non-tourist island locations that were in a sense cut off from the rest of Greece even though they were only a three-hour ride from the Piraeus port in Athens. She learned the importance of living in a collectivist society where people care for the community above all else. The Greek citizens she encountered on the islands were more than welcoming in introducing new aspects of Greek culture to Lauren and her American friends—aspects such as food, dancing, speaking, and even driving! While back in Agia Paraskevi, Lauren enjoyed learning to use the Greek public transportation system which allowed her to embark on a bus and metro to downtown Athens where she was able to visit the Acropolis, Agora, and ancient Greek neighborhoods such as the most beautiful and oldest neighborhood known as Plaka. This experience was incredibly rewarding for Lauren because she was truly able to immerse herself in Greek culture in nearly every way—educationally, professionally, and socially to gain a greater appreciation of life itself.

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY | SHAYLIN MCGUIRE

Experience Report:

Shaylin McGuire spent four weeks in London, England studying human rights and wrongful convictions. Her classes involved a mix of reading texts, briefing criminal cases, listening to guest speakers, intellectual discussions, and debates. These classes gave Shaylin the opportunity to speak with victims of wrongful convictions and human rights activists that have fought for change in the world. When she wasn't in class, Shaylin was able to explore the beautiful sights of London and nearby cities. She visited Stonehenge and Bath, where



she was enriched with the history of both historical sights. Shaylin also saw Big Ben, the London Eye, and Buckingham Palace on a guided walking tour. When Shaylin had a free weekend, her and her new friends took a train to Canterbury where they walked down streets full of life and cultural experiences. They also stopped at the beautiful gardens of Canterbury that were just past the castle. Shaylin was then lucky enough to experience the surreal sight of the White Cliffs of Dover, which is where she saw the most breathtaking views.

On one of Shaylin's field activities for her courses, she visited Old Bailey and was able to sit in on a criminal court hearing where she listened to the prosecution give an opening statement. During that same day, Shaylin went to Parliament and took an audio tour with her class. They visited the House of Commons and the House of Lords while learning about the English government and how it has become what it is today.

All of these trips proved to be amazing experiences for Shaylin, and her international experience helped her to understand cultural differences in a real sense for the first time. She quickly learned how to become accustomed to the different ways of living in another country, which provided her with skills that can be useful in many more contexts.

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY | MELAYNA PONGRATZ

Experience Report:

Melayna Pongratz spent 8 weeks in Scotland studying education, creative writing, and landscape photography through the International Summer School program at the University of Stirling. During her time in Scotland, Melayna learned about the country's education system. She had the opportunity to visit a local high school and speak with students and educators about their experiences working and learning in a Scottish public school. She



gained knowledge about the development and implementation of Scotland's national Curriculum for Excellence as well as how it compares to other educational frameworks within the United Kingdom and around the world. Additionally, she gained experience in the arts of short story writing and photography. By analyzing the work of Scottish creatives and drawing inspiration from them to develop her own work, she deepened her understanding of narrative building and how it can be used to share information about histories, traditions, and contemporary issues. Together, these experiences aided in the ongoing growth of an educational and artistic perspective that is influenced by educators and creatives out of the United States.

In her free time, Melayna explored Scotland's vast and ever-changing natural landscape, hiking, and taking photos of its mountains, lochs, and glens, which gave her the opportunity to learn about climate change and environmentalism in the country. She also visited numerous national museums and monuments to gain knowledge of Scotland's traditions, history, art, and literature. Finally, she spent a great deal of time visiting Stirling's independent coffee shops, which gave her insight into the local economy, the diverse Stirling community, and the country's vibrant coffee culture.

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY | ZIPPORAH SEWELL

Experience Report:

Zipporah Sewell spent two months this summer studying Incan history, climate change, Indigenous knowledge, and volunteering with children through ISA WorldStrides in Peru. During her time in Peru, Zipporah was able to visit various Inca archeological sites including Machupicchu, Sacsayhuaman, Lake Titicaca, and more. With these excursions along with her classes, she was able to see first-hand as well as learn about the depth and importance of Incan culture and history. While living with locals and being surrounded by such a strong presence of history at the dinner table and everywhere downtown she was able to immerse herself in the current culture fully while actively studying its history.



In her free time, Zipporah took salsa classes, and cooking classes, as well as visiting museums all throughout the city and hanging out with local college students. Her favorite activity that she participated in was feeding monkeys in the jungle of Puerto Maldonado. One of the highlights of Zipporah's abroad experience was her service-learning placement where she was able to teach basic English to children aged 3-5. There she was able to use her love of children and learning to help them learn a new language while also being able to soak up Peru from a child's perspective. This experience was incredibly rewarding because she developed new methods of teaching with a language barrier. Furthermore, she learned a plethora of knowledge from her students which in turn helped her learn so much about herself.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | KAL BROWN

Experience Report:

Kal Brown spent six weeks aboard in Chiang Mai, Thailand studying diplomacy in Southeast Asia, environmental sustainability, and Buddhism. The course work Kal took during the summer expanded his knowledge of international relations, political structures within Asian nations, and the spread and development of Buddhism throughout the regions. Additionally, Kal learned about how the



Lanna Kingdom, and the Kingdom of Siam avoided colonization by the British and French Empires. Most importantly during his course work, Kal was able to learn about how Buddhist philosophy influenced the culture of Thailand and how older religious practices of the Lanna Kingdom were preserved. The most important course that Kal took while in Thailand was the Hill Tribe Study, in which he visited villages in northern Thailand of the Hmong people, the Palaung people, and the Karen people. During these visits, Kal learned about their languages, cultural practices, and history with the government of Thailand.

Kal also traveled around the city of Chiang Mai, Chiang Dao, and other regions in Northern Thailand to learn the history of the Lanna Kingdom and the spread and influence of Buddhism in the Kingdom. Kal visited several museums and historical sites and participated in cycling tours, and trekking tours to learn as much about the region as possible. During these tours, Kal got to see the effectiveness of the Royal Project, a program started by King Rama IX to help preserve the forests of northern Thailand and to provide income for the people in the northern hill tribes. In addition to his time spent in Northern Thailand, Kal visited regions in southern Thailand to learn better learn about the national park system in Thailand and the efforts that the government has put in place to preserve the forests, beaches, and coral reefs that provide not only the natural beauty of the nation but provide an abundance of food that the country has. These experiences further expanded Kal's knowledge of effective environmental policy and diplomacy.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | SOPHIA COMPORT

Experience Report:

Sophia Comport spent six weeks in Seoul, South Korea studying graphic design and Korean language at Yonsei University through CIEE's Summer Korean Studies program. Her computer graphics course helped strengthen her skills in Adobe programs and reinforce her passion for design. The Korean course challenged her to develop her Korean comprehension skills further, and her



immersion in the country gave her the ideal opportunity to practice speaking with locals. In addition to campus life, Sophia participated in some of Yonsei's special activities such as weekly Taekwondo classes, a K-pop dance class, and Korean rice cake making class. CIEE also provided her with many excursion opportunities such as an overnight trip to the coastal city of Gangneung and its historical buildings, a samgyetang cooking class, Korean acoustic band concert, visit to the President's Blue House, tour of Changdeokgung Palace, and more.

With the convenient public transportation in Korea, Sophia was able to explore the city and plan outings in her free time including a Lotte World trip, visit to Starfield Library, and seeing the sunset at Han River. Being an experienced dancer, she took dance classes at the famous 1 Million Dance Studio and also took ballet classes at Seoul Tanz Station. As an advertising major, she was fascinated by the imaginative ads woven into Seoul's cityscape and enjoyed gathering inspiration from the unique packaging designs for Korean beauty brands. While exploring the city, Sophia was able to visit many themed cafes and restaurants like the keychain-making cafe, Japanese souffle pancake cafe, samoyed dog cafe, and traditional Hanok-style cafes. She got to try a variety of delicious Korean dishes like tteokbokki (rice cakes), naengmyeon (cold noodles), and various K-BBQ, and she even visited two Michelin-star ramen places. She also took a weekend trip to Jeju Island off the southern coast of Korea where she enjoyed the natural beauty of the island's shore and tried Korean seafood pancakes. This experience in South Korea has further expanded Sophia's global mindset and molded her into a more confident, independent woman. She is looking forward to where in the world she'll go next.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | ALEXANDRA NUCCIO

Experience Report:

Alexandra spent the majority of what would have been her summer, amidst an African winter in Botswana. With an expectation to study public health, she would have never imagined the curriculum would be so interesting and engaging. Between site visits to different NGOs and hospitals, to shadowing doctors in public clinics twice weekly, she felt she was taught in a very immersive, Montessori style manner. Outside of her academic endeavors, she was granted the opportunity to go on an African safari, visit Cape Town (a city in the country of South Africa similar to Honolulu), and meet new friends.



Despite the grief associated with moving away from her African friends, Alex plans to exchange letters with them as time moves forward. Alex is particularly fascinated with birds and enjoys photographing them, and her time spent in Africa allowed for the expansion of her knowledge on birds and nurture her photography related talents. In addition to all of the new, impactful experience, Alex was able to use her time away as a means to spiritually reset after having been recently diagnosed with a chronic and disabling condition affecting her autonomic nervous system in 2020. If there's anything about her trip abroad that widened her intellect, it is the unexpected sense of connectedness she experienced with those around her, prompting a stronger feeling of what she describes as “universal connectedness”.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | SOPHIA ZEGARSKI

Experience Report:

Sophia Zegarski was given the opportunity to travel to Prague in the Czech Republic for four weeks. There she studied humanities with a focus on Czech culture, history, and literature. She was able to visit multiple cultural sites that directly related to the history studied throughout her course. During her time in Prague, Sophia observed how capitalism expanded in Central Europe in the 21st century after the fall of communism. She interviewed several people who were teenagers at the time of the Velvet Revolution to gain insight into how both economic



systems have affected individuals. Additionally, she took time to absorb how society and culture differ in Prague compared to the United States. Sophia also took the time to broaden her interest in music while abroad. She visited the Popmuseum in Prague, a museum dedicated to the history of rock music in the Czech Republic, specifically in the 1950s.

There, she was able to talk to the curators of the museum and discuss how despite the shutout of Western culture in the communist era, Czech rock music was often inspired by American folk and rock music. This was one of many experiences that demonstrated to her how the international influences of different nations can affect even the smallest elements of culture. Overall, Sophia learned a great deal about international relations, economic influence, and cultural differences around the world. This was instrumental in developing her leadership abilities and in understanding cultural differences and how they influence people and their decisions.

THIEL COLLEGE | PAIGE LONG

Experience Report:

Paige Long spent 6 weeks this summer taking classes at the IES Abroad Center in Vienna, Austria. During her accelerated semester, she took two psychology courses, The Psychology of Prejudice and Discrimination taught by Professor Jennifer Daigle, and The Psychology of Society in Vienna taught by Professor Suzanne Preston; fulfilling her 6-credit hour maximum. Throughout her semester, she gained two completely different, but beneficial sets of knowledge that returned with her to be applied to her future work. Paige had two crowning achievements during her semester abroad, one from each class she took. The first being her position paper for The Psychology of Prejudice and



Discrimination, where she argued that the criminalization of abortion was not a violation of human rights; a position contrary to the one she held. This paper was extremely challenging for her to write, as it conflicted with several of the identities she holds; however, she still felt the experience was beneficial, as it taught her how to attack the argument, rather than the person for holding that argument. She received a 94% on the paper, ending the semester with a 95% overall in the class.

The second crowning achievement from Paige's semester was her oral presentation for The Psychology of Society in Vienna, where she presented an Adlerian Analysis on the fictional character "BoJack Horseman." In her presentation, she applied Adlerian theory to the behaviors, actions, and lifestyle choices of BoJack. Furthermore, she designed a therapeutic intervention strategy for BoJack using Adlerian therapeutic practices. She received a 98% on the presentation, ending the semester with a 93% overall in the class.

When she was not doing schoolwork, Paige dedicated herself to integrating into Viennese culture. You were most likely to find her swimming in the Donau Canal, exploring the Museum Quartier, or at the local Prince Café! She discovered a newfound love for soft pretzels, and a new favorite dish: Kaesespaetzle! In addition to exploring Vienna, Paige took several weekend trips to other countries, including Budapest, Hungary, Munich, Germany, and Prague, Czech Republic. Paige is incredibly grateful for her time in Vienna, as it nurtured her personal and professional growth. She is looking forward to visiting Europe again in the near future.

THIEL COLLEGE | JASMINE PHILLIPS

Experience Report:

Jasmine Phillips spent an amazing 4 weeks in Seville, Spain studying Flamenco in Andalusia through CIEE. She learned the origins of flamenco culture, which not only was enjoyable but very eye opening. With students from other universities, Jasmine attended multiple flamenco shows, celebrated Corpus Christi and explored Spain and its wonderful culture. Her group also explored the Cathedral of Seville and the University of Seville together, also cooking traditional Spanish dishes together.



Notable excursions included the day trip to Cadiz, where they explored Victoria Beach and the historic city. Also exploring the Ancient Roman colosseum. The daytrip to Ronda was also very notable as well. In Ronda, the explored the bullfighting ring as well as the mountains and small shops.

THIEL COLLEGE | ALLISON WALSH

Experience Report

Allison Walsh traveled to Ireland, where she completed a nine-week internship in business sales and marketing. Working for Distinct Distribution, a wholesale beauty distributor in Bray, County Wicklow, she learned crucial aspects of good business practices such as how to use worldwide sales software, place customer orders, and how to effectively manage a team.



Through her internship, Allie was able to learn more about how businesses operate in Ireland and the U.K., where some of her company's business was from. During her time in Ireland, she stayed in Shankhill, a small town in County Dublin off the coast of the Irish Sea. An hour-long train ride away from the city, Allie spent many afternoons exploring the cultural and historical sites and monuments of Dublin. She was also lucky enough to be able to travel to the northern, western, and southern coasts of the country, and along the way learned a great deal about Irish culture, values, and lifestyles exhibited across the various regions of Ireland.

Allie's time studying abroad was a transformative and life-changing experience. In her internship, she had the ability to deep in her understanding of her field of study and improve upon various professional skills. During her time traveling around the various regions of the country, she developed an appreciation for Irish culture and learned about the turbulent past of the country and how that affects ways in which Ireland functions today. She made amazing friends along the way and is left with knowledge, stories, and memories that will last a lifetime. Allie is forever indebted to the Vira I. Heinz Program for Global Leadership for providing young women such as herself with the life-changing opportunity to study abroad.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD | KAMEO CHAMBERS

Experience Report:

Kameo Chambers had the opportunity to take her studies abroad in Sweden, and Croatia through the provider DIS Abroad located in Stockholm, Sweden. While in Stockholm, Kameo took two courses, one to learn how to tell a story through photography and the other to experience the career of a travel writer. The photography course enlightened her by visiting various exhibitions, art galleries, and lessons from real-world photographers. This class ignited a creative skill that was laid dormant in Kameo, rekindling her photographer's eye. It showed her that photography is more than just pressing a button on a camera.



The travel writing course opened her world view on the travel industry and jumpstarted her career as a travel writer. This class unveiled storytelling cheat codes and helped her cultivate her unique voice. On her study tour in Croatia, Kameo was introduced to their fascinating culture and traditions.

Outside of the classroom, Kameo made her mark on Sweden. As a DIS Summer Writer, she shared her experiences during her time abroad. In her free time, Kameo published several travel blog posts in Sweden, her artwork has been exhibited and published, she starred in a commercial, and had the opportunity to learn from renowned photographers, and an award-winning writer.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD | NATALI HEATER

Experience Report:

Natali Heater spent 4 weeks abroad in Dublin, Ireland studying child psychology as a Vira I. Heinz scholarship recipient. This class covered the mental illnesses a child can develop as well as the relationships between the child and their environment or family. This course was important for Natali's future criminology degree. She found that children in Ireland are much less supervised and generally have less developmental disorders than children in the States because of the different environmental challenges both sets of children face. When she wasn't in class, Natali liked to walk through Dublin and went on trips to Galway, the Aran Islands, Dun Laoghaire, and Glendalough. One of the most exciting things she did was going to the Cliffs of

Moher, where she climbed the rebuilt fort originally built in the 1st century named O'Brien's Tower, which helped name the cliffs as "Mothar" in Gaelic means "ruined fort." The entire experience helped Natali step out of her comfort zone and she is excited to encourage other students to have their own study abroad experiences as Vira I. Heinz cohorts.



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD | AMANDA VAN HOUTEN

Experience Report:

Amanda Van Houten traveled to the green isle of Ireland as a Vira I. Heinz scholarship recipient. There she spent eight weeks working at Ireland's premier private members' club in the heart of Dublin's city centre. Through the Panther International Internship Program, Amanda was placed at the Stephen's Green Club, where she collaborated with a diverse team of coworkers to offer outstanding dining services, accommodations for guests, and event spaces to the members of the club. Throughout her time in the program, she worked in every department to gain a well-rounded exposure to the club operation. At the end of the program, Amanda found she enjoyed the experience of working in reception the most. In reception, Amanda was able to interact more with the wide range of local and international members that the club welcomes. Here she was able to learn the importance of intercultural communication competency so that she can communicate clearly, listen well, resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and ask for or offer help when needed. During her international internship experience, Amanda was also able to further develop social/emotional growth skills by often starting discussions about cultural and global topics with coworkers and peers in the program. As a result, she can effectively manage stress, control impulses, and motivate herself in a working environment.



Outside of her internship experience, Amanda enjoyed exploring the great city of Dublin on her own. Whether that consisted of strolling through the vibrant city parks, attending exhibits at renowned museums, or attending album launches of local artists. She thoroughly enjoyed noticing and celebrating the cultural differences she witnessed. Not only did this traveling opportunity help Amanda gain professional confidence during her internship placement, but also put her into situations where she learned to adapt and achieve self-reliance outside of the office. Growing up in a small village, Amanda had to adjust to living in the highly populated Dublin city area. One of her earliest personal achievements in the program was mastering the public transportation system to travel throughout the area on her own.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT GREENSBURG | ANNA NOEL BASS

RILEY

Experience Report:

Anna-Noel Bass-Riley spent six weeks in the city of Prague in the Czech Republic studying Creative Writing and Czech Art in Context with the School for International Training Program (SIT). During this time, Anna-Noel submitted eight pieces of writing for review to a Czech author named Petra Hůlová and read the work of four Czech authors and then was given the opportunity to ask them questions about their work. She also went to lectures by several local artists about how they use their art in activism. She ended



her six weeks by giving a presentation on two of the different artists she and her classmates listened to and then publicly read two of her writing pieces for an audience in a local bookstore.

Through this process, Anna-Noel improved her writing abilities and was given a broader context on how activism is done throughout Europe. When not in classes, Anna-Noel immersed herself in local culture. She visited several cities in the Czech Republic, including Brno, Most, and Slavkov u Brna, and went to several different museums, including the Czech Museum of Music and the Museum of Romani Culture. She also attended several theatrical and musical performances, from a traditional opera to an Aurora concert. Anna-Noel went to local cafes to write in almost every day and became friendly with staff and regular customers. She traveled to most places by herself using the local transit system, increasing her ability to function independently of others. This experience has allowed Anna-Noel to become more aware of her surroundings and herself.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT JOHNSTOWN | ALYSSA FLOWERS

Experience Report:

Alyssa Flowers spent four weeks taking a course on Irish society and culture at Dublin City University. Throughout the four weeks, Alyssa was able to learn various elements of Ireland's history that have influenced its culture and society today, including the impact of colonization, the Great Famine, and the Troubles. Through the CIEE Study Abroad Program, Alyssa was also able to visit sites that provided a tangible connection between class instruction and the real world, like the Kilmainham Gaol in Dublin, King John's Castle in Limerick, and Belfast – where



she took a Black Taxi Tour that illustrated how divisive the Troubles were, and in some ways still are, in Northern Ireland. Even though it was at some points distressing to learn about Ireland's history, she still gained irreplicable knowledge and valuable firsthand experiences about Irish culture and society. In her free time, Alyssa visited many of Dublin's natural attractions. This allowed her to learn how to navigate on her own while also immersing herself into Irish culture at places like Howth Beach and Pheonix Park. She also visited many historical sites like St. Patrick's Cathedral and Trinity College. Alyssa's time in Ireland not only encouraged her to step out of her comfort zone, but also nurtured her critical thinking and social skills.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT JOHNSTOWN | COURTNEY WALSH

Experience Report:

Courtney Walsh spent four exhilarating and event filled weeks in the Emerald Isle. Courtney resided in the capital of Ireland, Dublin, where she experienced day to day life as an Irish student. Courtney lived in student housing, attended classes for five hours a day each day, and studied in the classroom in Ireland. Courtney took classes in Global Communication and Irish literature. In the global communication class, she learned about many aspects of Irish culture including typically Irish stereotypes such as



drinking at pubs, the controversial Catholic versus Protestant feud, and the division between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

In her class of Irish Literature, Courtney diligently read many Irish poems and plays by Irish authors. These authors included the famous Irish known authors Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, William Yeats, Seamus Heaney and many more. In class Courtney explored the well-known areas in Ireland that were home to these famous Irish poets including commemorative statues, library exhibits and viewing a play at the famous Abbey Theatre. Throughout her time in Ireland, Courtney continuously took note of the sustainability techniques utilized in and outside of Dublin. Most notably, Courtney observed the massive utilization of public transit, most city-dwellers had not driven vehicles in YEARS! In addition, recycling stations highlighted where each item should be placed. In the outskirts of the city and most near to the bodies of water the areas were clear of litter as the citizens value the views and cleanliness of the areas. Specifically, one of the most notable attractions “Giants Causeway” recently banned large vehicles from crossing over the bridge to prevent air pollution that could impact the view.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – OAKLAND | BRENNA CALLAHAN

Experience Report:

Brenna Callahan spent the summer of 2022 studying the Arabic language in Amman, Jordan. The intensive Arabic language courses solidified Brenna’s current knowledge of the language from university and expanded her use of grammar and colloquial terms. Her experience was divided into three parts: classroom, homestay, and excursions. Brenna lived with a wonderful Jordanian family that took her in as their own, preparing meals each morning and night and helping with homework struggles. She came to love spending time at the neighbor’s house and found their conversations to play a pivotal role in her growth abroad. Brenna’s class went on multiple excursions, including Petra, Wadi Rum, Jerash, Ajloun, and the Dead Sea. She fell in love with each new site visit and enjoyed her time spent with Bedouin tribes in the Wadi Rum desert most.



Brenna thoroughly enjoyed the “little moments” of her time abroad. She loved walking to the local gym after class, spending evenings at cafes studying with friends, and shopping at local markets on the weekends. The local Jordanian community was welcoming and always there to lend a hand if needed. Brenna enjoyed her short but memorable conversations with cab drivers and the stories from her professors about previous student groups experiences. Although she was weary of the trip prior to her flight taking off, Brenna would not change one moment of the last few months and will be forever grateful for the lessons her experience abroad in Jordan has taught her.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – OAKLAND | NATALIE KOLOGRIVOV

Experience Report:

Natalie Kologrivov is a rising senior at the University of Pittsburgh. She grew up in a small town in North New Jersey called Wyckoff. She has four sisters and two brothers in addition to her dog, Laila. She is currently in the Master of Athletic Training program at Pitt and will graduate in 2024. She also is pursuing a minor in Sociology to deepen and broaden her understanding of society as a whole. In May of 2022, Natalie studied abroad in Greece for four weeks traveling to Tolo, Olympia, Karpathos, and Athens. She was one of thirteen students in her program, all of which were from the University of Pittsburgh, Oakland. In Greece, she studied Sociology of Sports and Sociology of Tourism. The program focused mostly on tourism, specifically how the economy relies on tourism. She explored different types of dependencies such as the Island of Karpathos. She studied there for about two weeks and realized the economy of the island mostly depended on tourists spending money.



While in Karpathos, she traveled to a village on the southern and northern borders, as well as traveled up into the mountains to experience the village up there. Karpathos mostly relies on vacation tourism with some support from sports tourism due to the high winds in August that are good for windsurfing and other water sports. Tolo and Olympia however, mostly relied on tourists who were looking to explore historical sites. She didn't notice beaches or vast vacation spots but both areas had extensive historical backgrounds and importance. Finally, she learned that Athens relied the least on tourism due to the population but the main contributor to the economic stability that they have now was the 2004 Olympics where the revenue came from tourists and athletics. Overall, for the month that she was there, Natalie explored that while Greece is a strong independent country, it would not be as strong or independent.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – OAKLAND | HALIYAT OSHODI

Experience Report:

Haliyat Oshodi spent 8 weeks in Gaborone, Botswana studying public health. Through the CIEE program, she was able to study community public health, pre-professional health care issues in Botswana, and the Setswana language and culture at the University of Botswana. Through her studies, she was able to gain a deeper understanding of the healthcare system in Botswana and how it could be improved.



She had the opportunity to observe several clinics around the city twice a week, where she learned how the clinics operated and their differences from the United States. She was also able to observe amazing things, such as a baby being born. In addition to this, Haliyat was able to visit many public health facilities such as the Sbrana Mental Health Hospital, where she learned about how people with different diseases or disabilities get treated. One of Haliyat's most notable experiences was creating her first health intervention in the village of Kgope in the Kweneng district. She had the opportunity to visit the village 3 times to help put together a health intervention that can help the village for years to come. Haliyat, along with other students in the program, decided to create a health expo where there were health screenings and presentations on sexual and reproductive health, general health and wellness, and alcohol and drug abuse. There were also many resources such as seeds for farming and food given out to the village.

Haliyat's study abroad experience did not only involve studying but also going on multiple game drives and excursions like the Khama Rhino Sanctuary and Mokolodi nature reserve to view the wonderful wildlife Botswana had to offer. She saw various animals such as rhinos, elephants, giraffes, and zebra. She also attended braais and visited cultural villages to immerse herself in the culture. She had the opportunity to visit Cape Town and Victoria, Falls Zimbabwe during holiday breaks. During her international experience, Haliyat learned more about the importance of public health and is inspired to go even deeper into the field by getting her Ph.D. Haliyat misses everyone from the program and hopes to return to Botswana soon.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – OAKLAND | SELENA PERMYASHKIN

Experience Report:

Selena Permyashkin had the opportunity to spend four weeks in Florence, Italy through CEA made possible by the generosity of the Heinz Endowment. She studied Italian at a local school in partnership with the University of New Haven. Her focus was to become as proficient as possible in her short time there. Outside of class, her days were filled exploring Florence and surrounding areas with friends she made through the program. By learning the native language, Selena was able to immerse herself into the culture by speaking to the locals and forming friendships with the workers at the cafes and restaurants she frequented. Along with her friends, Selena planned out trips across Italy and was able to visit eleven cities in just four weekends.



One of the highlights of her experience abroad was becoming friends with locals her age who helped her practice her Italian, and also became their local tour guides and showed them the hidden gems of Florence. Another fond memory was discovering her favorite art gallery, Palazzo Pitti. As a painter herself, she enjoyed looking at the paintings and sculptures and spent hours there walking through the rooms lined from floor to ceiling with historical pieces of art. Selena is confident that her study abroad experience could not have gone any better. It was truly the experience of a lifetime. Selena is excited to incorporate her experiences abroad into the remainder of her university career and beyond.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – OAKLAND | KEELEY THOMAS

Experience Report:

Keeley Thomas had the opportunity to spend six weeks in Colombia with the School for International Training’s “Building a Culture of Peace” program. Her experience in the country was divided between two locations and their corresponding rural homestays: the historic port city of Cartagena, Colombia and the town of Sincerin in Bolívar, Colombia. She studied the process of peacebuilding in the historical context of the country as well as the Spanish language. Her time in Cartagena was split between Spanish classes at Centro Catalina Spanish School in the morning and seminars on the social dynamics of peacebuilding and reconciliation in the afternoon, where she studied with



a small group of seven other students from the United States. During a weekend excursion to Santa Cruz de Mompox, a colonial town located along the Magdalena River, she and her group visited San Sebastián and learned about the history of violence in the area and the exploitation of land for the sake of said violence. Program excursions were facilitated by the Fundación por la Educación Multidimensional, or FEM, a non-profit organization based in Cartagena that works to dismantle historical inequities in the surrounding areas through sustainable development projects and the acknowledgment of salient stakeholders.

During her rural homestay in Sincerin, Keeley attended multiple workshops facilitated by the town’s “consejo comunitario,” or community council, a body advocating for recognition and aid from a municipal government that has otherwise abandoned them. Her group’s final project consisted of devising a community development plan and connecting the town of Sincerin with resources in the neighboring metropolis of Cartagena. Keeley left Colombia not only with a new understanding of the peacebuilding process, but also with how intersecting identities of gender, race, and ethnicity are paramount to the operation and success of such an endeavor.

WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE | SHELBY BAKER

Experience Report:

Shelby Baker studied abroad in Rome Italy. Shelby studied Intercultural communication and an art class with the intention to focus on culture in Rome. Baker's Heinz learning area was focused on learning, and she purposely chose culture as her main focus during her time in Rome. Shelby chose to go to Rome through International Studies Abroad (ISA) and took courses at the American University of Rome (AUR). During her time in Rome, many of Baker's classes had guest speakers who came to talk about their cultures and communication styles from all over the world. Baker hopes to go into the crisis communications field, which is a specialized form of public relations, so these courses were incredibly valuable for Baker's growth towards her career goals.



While in Italy, Baker traveled to Florence, as well as Pompeii, Sorrento, and Capri as a part of her ISA program. In Florence Baker and her fellow ISA students were able to browse what once was the Medici Family's personal art collection, as well as getting to see the statue of David created by Michaelangelo. These opportunities are some that stand out the most for Baker as a chance to experience the culture of Italy. During her trip to Pompeii, Baker was able to see how similar ancient and modern times really are. It was in Pompeii that Baker learned how many techniques we continue to use in modern society that were developed by ancient societies. Baker thinks that her time in Rome has helped her grow significantly as a leader and as a person overall.

WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE | JENSYNIA BAYNES

Experience Report:

Jensynia Baynes spent five weeks living in the beautiful Chaing Mai, Thailand. While in Thailand, she took three exceptional courses, Thai language, Traditional Thai Medicine, and Thai Cuisine. In the Thai language course, she was able to learn not only the common Thai language but also many social aspects of Thai culture. She enjoyed and delighted in several Thai cuisines with many local and habitual drinks. Inside and within Thai Medicine, she observed and was taught the-4 elements of Thai medicine, its fundamental importance to the human body, and the value of Thai Massage. Jensynia received hands-on instruction from a long-established professor trained in Thai medicine and Masseur Arts. While in her company Jensynia discovered and absorbed Thai massage and its many health benefits. She also learned Thai yoga and various method and natural remedies that can be used to treat injuries and illnesses. Jensynia, a lover of various international cuisines, also engaged and enlisted in an intensive and rigorous Thai cooking course. She was instructed in and was trained to know three Thai desserts and six local Thai dishes.



While In Chiang Mai, she went on multiple tours and trips. One of the most memorable tours she went on was the elephant tour, where she just had the opportunity to visit an elephant sanctuary where she learned the routine of the Karen communities. After learning about elephant history, different types of elephants, and their daily routines. Jensynia made elephant food, fed the elephants, and swam with the Asian elephants. The tour also offered bamboo rafting which provided a joyous experience for sightseeing and more chances to see these large animals in their natural habit. Jensynia, a lover of ceramic crafts and arts, also got the fantastic opportunity to tour and travel to the Craft and Culture experience. While there, she explored and witnessed the Chiang Mai Celadon glazed ceramics factory, where she was able to tour both the factory and the owner's private collection. Later she was able to create and paint her own pottery and enjoy a traditional Thai lunch. Jensynia's experience in Thailand opened her eye to how she can help her community by following the lead of Thai medical providers/workers. She plans to teach ways medicine and health care can be implemented in affordable and effective ways. Jensynia will treasure this experience for the reason of her life.

WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON COLLEGE | JORDYN WHITE

Experience Report:

Jordyn White, a rising Junior at Washington and Jefferson College, attended a five-week summer program in Heredia, Costa Rica, where she studied at the Universidad Nacional Costa Rica (UNA). During her five weeks, she took three courses: dances of Latin America, Government and politics in Latin America, and Spanish conversation and oral skills. Through these courses, Jordyn was able to learn how to perform dances like the merengue and bachata, but additionally, gained historical and political knowledge about all Latin American countries, while also bettering her pronunciation of the Spanish language. One of Jordyn's main goals while in Costa Rica was to improve her pronunciation. Through her university, she was able to get involved in organizations on the UNA campus, such as intermediate volleyball and the language exchange program, where Tico's and Americans can meet and practice each other's language with one another.



In addition, to Jordyn's on-campus activities she used her free time to truly explore Costa Rica. On the weekends, Jordyn and some of her other cohort members would plan trips to see attractions and experience more of the culture across Costa Rica. She traveled to places like La Fortuna, Puerto Viejo, and Manuel Antonio. These places expanded her perspective of the country, as every area embodied its own culture, like in Puerto Viejo, where there are more Afro-Latinas and even a different language is spoken. This experience has allowed Jordyn to expand her knowledge about the region and open herself up to more future travel experiences.