



A Journal of Study Abroad Experiences and more



China | Costa Rica | Trinidad and Tobago



ASU AROUND THE GLOBE!

CULTURAL EXPLORATIONS

STUDENTS STORIES FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

GLOBAL. POTENTIAL. REALIZED

Albany State University Office of International Education

504 College Drive, Albany, Georgia, 31705

Billy C. Black Building, Rm 391



**A Journal of Study Abroad Experiences**

**© 2018 Albany State University, Albany, Georgia**

**Chief Editor**

Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe, English, Albany State University

**Editorial Board**

Dr. Michael Smithee	ms@smitheeassociates.com	Syracus University, Retired
Dr. Charlotte Klesman	cklesman@abac.edu	Communications, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Dr. Geneva Diamond	Geneva.Diamond@asurams.edu	English, Albany State University
Dr. Donyale Childs	dbouie@asurams.edu	Nursing, Albany State University
Dr. Kathaleena Monds	Kathaleena.Monds@asurams.edu	Business, Albany State University
Dr. Florence Lyons	florence.lyons@asurams.edu	Visual and Performing Arts, Albany State University
Dr. Anthony Owusu-Ansah	Anthony.Owusu-Ansah@asurams.edu	Education, Albany State University

**Student Editor**

Ms. Aishat Motolani

**Layout and Design**

Ms. Aishat Motolani

**Printing**

Albany State University Word Processing Center.

Unsolicited manuscripts are welcomed from all students who studied abroad and their faculty. The deadline for submission is usually two weeks after the study abroad program and the articles are submitted to the Office of International Education (internationaleducation@asurams.edu). The study abroad stories should contain information on the countries of study, objectives of the study abroad program, courses taken, major tours, program activities, experiences, cultural lessons learned and one or two recommendations. The stories should be told in two pages with 4-6 pictures included

ASU Global Issues (AGI) is published by the Office of International Education, Albany State University (ASU), Albany, Georgia. It showcases global engagements, especially study abroad experiences and other international activities at ASU and its commitment to campus internationalization by ensuring diversity and International learning through various programs. Opinions expressed in The Issues are not those of the University.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without a written permission from Albany State University (ASU), Albany, Georgia. ASU is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. (SACS).

This project and publication is sponsored in part by ASU Office of Student Affairs Office and Office of Title III.

Copyright 2018, ASU Global Issues

ISSN: 2330-3042

# Table of Contents

Editor’s Note.....	04
Gilman Scholarship Recipients.....	05
Costa Rica Study Abroad by Shaqeira Wilson.....	06
Costa Rica Study Abroad by I’reka Jordan.....	08
China Study Abroad by Alexis Merilles.....	10
China Study Abroad by Tiana Spearman.....	11
China Study Abroad by Amber Kennedy .....	12
China Study Abroad by Taisha Mcbridge.....	13
China Study Abroad by Shenelle Forde .....	14
China Study Abroad by Tiffany Roesler .....	15
China Study Abroad by Jeremy Brantley.....	16
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Chelsea Wooden.....	18
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Chernika Carter.....	19
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Amanda Hardeman.....	20
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Briana Dyson.....	22
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Luchita C. Haley.....	23
Trinidad and Tobago Study abroad by Patrika Anderson.....	24
Trinidad & Tobago Faculty Report, Dr. Irma Gibson .....	26
2015 International Education Week, “International Access for All ”.....	33
Information on Benjamin Gilman International Scholarship .....	36
2012-2018 Gilman Scholarship recipient.....	37
ASU Study Abroad Scholarship Fund Form.....	39

Kindly visit International education’ website for more stories, reports and to read past publications of ASU Global Issues:  
<https://www.asurams.edu/academic-affairs/oie>

## Editor's Note

With a renewed commitment to academic excellence, Albany State University is creating more access for students to enhance the quality of education they receive before graduation. This volume of Global Issues is yet another evidence of great international experiences from students who studied abroad in different countries: China, Costa Rica, and Trinidad and Tobago. Most of the students are first generation students who have never flown before. Their stories might not be exhaustive, as each student has a limited space to convey a month's experience;



however, they provide us a bird-eye view of the students' experiences and their perspectives of the world they witnessed for the period of their study abroad. This Issue also provide the faculty members' summary report of courses taught, cultural trips, and program outcomes. I invite you to read these enlightening stories, which also provide a rich resource data for international ed-

ucation research, program development and instruction.

**Nneka Nora Osakwe, PhD**



**Director, ASU Office of International education**

**Chief Editor, Global Issues**



**Albany State University, Albany, Georgia**  
**STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS 2015**  
**Total Funds Awarded to ASU: \$47,500**



Keith Hicks  
 Business Management Major  
 Study Abroad Belize



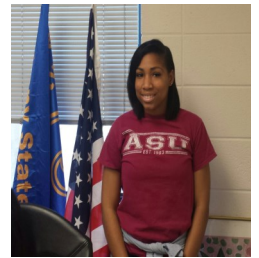
Shenelle Forde  
 Mass Comm. Major  
 Study Abroad China



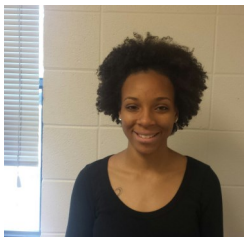
Kristal Israel  
 Mass Comm. Major  
 Study Abroad China



Amber Kennedy  
 Mass Comm. Major  
 Study Abroad China



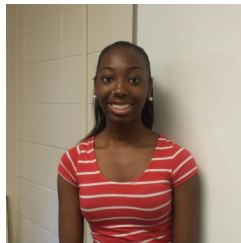
Taisha McBride  
 Mass Comm. Major  
 Study Abroad China



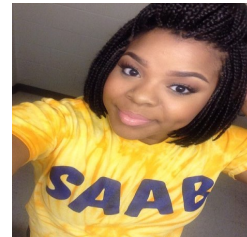
Kayla Belcher  
 Spanish Major  
 Study Abroad Costa Rica



Catiana Foster  
 History Major  
 Study Abroad Costa Rica



l'Reka Jordan  
 Biology Major  
 Study Abroad Costa Rica



Shaqaira Wilson  
 Spanish Major  
 Study Abroad Costa Rica



Angelica Troy  
 Sociology Major  
 Study Abroad France



Dafene Brown  
 Political Science Major  
 Study Abroad Japan



Amanda Hardeman  
 Social Work Major  
 Trinidad & Tobago



Luticha Haley  
 Social Work Major  
 Trinidad & Tobago



Brandon Thomas  
 Social Work Major  
 Trinidad & Tobago

**The Gilman Scholarship programs are for undergraduate students to study abroad and are funded by the U.S. Department of State. Undergraduate students who receive Federal Pell Grant funding are qualified to apply.**

**Want to get involved? Need more Information?**

**Contact the Office of International education at 229.430.1662 or email us at [globalprograms@asurams.edu](mailto:globalprograms@asurams.edu)**

**Facilitator: Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe, Director– ASU Office of International education, Room 231**

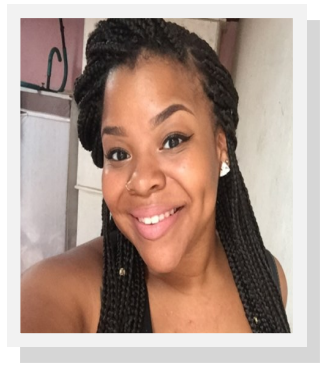
**\*Check out their website at <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program>**

# Costa Rica Summer Study Abroad

## Shaqiera Wilson

1st Position ASU Study Abroad Presentation

Spanish Major



### *Abstract*

Studying abroad is an opportunity for students to become totally immersed in another's country culture. Every student had an objective to attend class every day and explore the country's culture through excursions provided by the program. My host country was Costa Rica and I can truly say that I was fully immersed in everything that Costa Rica had to offer. I had two classes to take SPAN 3101: Advanced Spanish Conversation and Composition and SPAN 3201: Civilization and Culture of Spain.

One of the major excursions was the trip to Manuel Antonio National Park. It included a weekend stay in the city of Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica and admission to one of the most beautiful national parks in the country. I also had the chance to relax on the beach and eat lunch with capuchin monkeys. In addition to daily activities and excursions, I learned to be optimistic and independent. I decided that I would try new things instead of frowning upon them or backing out. Studying abroad is a life changing experience and I have gained a lot from it.

### *Courses Taken*

One of the major requirements for Study abroad programs are classes and internships. In Costa Rica, I went to class every day at Academia Centroamericana de Español (ACCE). Within the first two weeks of being there, I had class in the morning from 8am to 12pm. But during the remaining weeks, I had classes in the afternoon from 1pm to 5pm. Like I mentioned before, I had two classes which were 4 hours a day. SPAN 3101: Advanced Spanish Conversation and Composition was a major course that focused on understanding, speaking, and writing Spanish. Students gave oral presentations and wrote compositions on assigned topics. SPAN 3201: Civilization and Culture of Spain was an elective course based on a historical survey of culture of Spain from the Pre-Roman era to the present. Students wrote compositions on assigned topics, watched cultural movies, and had group discussions on them. Classes were taught by teachers of ACCE and Professor Tedrick who was from Savannah State University.

### *Activities and Tours*

Along with class, the tours and excursions were my favorite parts of studying abroad. Costa Rica had breathtaking beauty and I had the pleasure of seeing its beauty first hand. Our group traveled to many cities within Costa Rica such as, Grecia, Alejuela, San Jose, Sarchi, and Manuel Antonio.

On June 28, 2015, we were at the City walking tour in Grecia. We explored the city that we stayed in. It was a small city filled with many people, stores, and bars. There was a big church and park in the center of the city. There weren't any street names or traffic lights.

Our next stop on July 7, 2015 was at the Britt Coffee Tour. At the coffee tour, our group walked around a trail looking at how coffee is grown and processed. We also had the chance to taste the different types of coffee. I became a faithful coffee drinker because of Costa Rican coffee.

On July 11, 2015, we had a full day excursion to Poás Volcano and La Paz Waterfall Gardens also on this day, our group visited the Poás Volcano to see its crater. Due to the bad weather, I was unable to see the volcano's crater. La Paz Waterfall Gardens was the following excursion. In the gardens, we visited a butterfly and bird sanctuary. There were tons of plants and other animals which included jaguars, oxen, frogs, and monkeys. I cannot forget to mention the beautiful waterfalls that were in La Paz.



*Taken at the butterfly and birds sanctuary*

## Costa Rica Summer Study Abroad



On July 19 2015, we went on a Canopy & Rafting tour. This day was the most anticipated and most frightening! Our group had to swing through 13 zip lines. It was very fun and scary. The rafting tour began in the San Lorenzo River and finished in San Carlos; it took about two hours to complete. We paddled through level 3 rapids and tons of rain. After this particular day, I felt tired but invincible!

### LIFESTYLE!

Living and interacting in this country wasn't as difficult as I expected it to be. My living accommodations were similar to those in the U.S. I had a loving and caring mother who made sure that my roommate and I were comfortable in her home. She prepared breakfast and dinner for us and sometimes a little snack. She cared for us as if we were her own. My mama tica's home was a modern house equipped with appliances, WiFi, and many bedrooms. Immediately, I noticed a few differences in Costa Ricano. The shower system was powered by electricity and it worked differently from the showers in the United States. I had to be careful not to touch the showerhead and risk being shocked. Another difference I noticed was the freshness of food. When I went to the super market with my mama tica, she bought fresh chicken, fish, and fruit. I was amazed at how the meat was neither packaged nor frozen. When she cooked the food, I could even taste the freshness of the food.

Costa Rica has taught me how to live, learn and love. Living in a foreign country can be seen as unbelievable, however, it was possible. I learned to adapt to the changes that I faced, even the changes that I knew I couldn't overcome. I had a huge problem with being seen as dangerous or mean. I knew that I was a foreigner because of the color of my skin, my culture, and my unique hairstyle. I just didn't like when people stared at me or turned their backs on me as if I was an alien. People would also lock their cars when I walked by them. That really made me upset, but I couldn't change the stereotypes that some Costa Ricans had about foreigners.

As I practiced my Spanish every day, I began to fall in love more with the language and the culture. I can truly say that I reached my ultimate goal of becoming more comfortable speaking Spanish. I am still not fluent, however, I am progressing. With the knowledge gained from this experience, I will continue to study Spanish and engage more with the culture. After graduation, I plan to work within elementary schools as a Spanish teacher or an ESOL teacher.



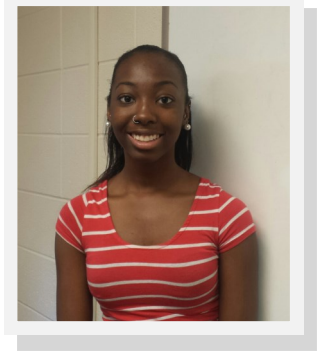
*Costa Rican Art*

Study abroad is a wonderful experience that everyone should take advantage of. It taught me how to adapt to differences that I faced and to be optimistic. I also learned about a culture that I would never forget. I encourage students who are learning Spanish or other languages to learn it in a foreign country. Although it won't be easy, it will all be worth it.

# Costa Rica Summer Study Abroad

I'reka Jordan

Biology major



## *Abstract*

The Costa Rica Study Abroad Program is designed to give students the opportunity to spend time in Costa Rica studying the history and culture of Latin America. Students are required to take a minimum of two 3 hour courses for a total of (6) credit hours, also each student is required to stay with a host family throughout the trip. The classes I chose were SPAN 1001 Elementary Spanish I & SPAN 1002 Elementary Spanish II. There were also several tours and excursions planned for us throughout the trip such as the weekend excursion to Manuel Antonio, the coffee tour, a full day excursion to Poás Volcano and La Paz Waterfall Gardens, San Jose city tour, Los Chorros, the Sarchi shopping tour and the full day excursion to Canopy (zip line) and Rafting tour. Overall this trip was an amazing experience, I was able to make global connections with the staff at my school and was able to make Costa Rican friends as well. Even though living in Costa Rica was a culture shock, I maintained a positive attitude and kept an open mind. One of the main lessons that I learned on this trip was independence and to never take for granted what I have back at home. If I had to give two recommendations to individuals interested in studying abroad I would say to stay open minded and learn about the culture and show interest in it because it will make your experience 100 times better.

## *Courses Taken*

The courses that I chose were SPAN 1001 Elementary Spanish I & SPAN 1002 Elementary Spanish II. Those particular courses are designed for students with little or no language study. They are designed to enhance students' abilities to listen to, speak, read and write everyday Spanish. The courses are also an introduction to the Spanish culture. The school in which I attended was Academia Centroamericana de Espanola (ACCE) and was located in the city of Grecia. The classes were designed to be hands on and interactive, therefore each classroom could only hold a maximum of 4 students. My class consisted of myself as well as two other students. Each week, every class would rotate and swap professors. The first week I had professor Melina, the second week was professor Loly, the third week was professor Monica and the last week I had professor Linette. For the first two weeks classes were from 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Monday- Friday with a 30 minute coffee break at 10:00 a.m. For the last two weeks

classes were from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday with a 30 minute coffee break at 3:00 p.m. Initially, I found it a little difficult to learn the material partly because I had to get used to several professor's teaching style. As I explained earlier, we had to swap professors and I had already gotten used to another professors teaching style. Also, I found it a little difficult to learn Spanish in Spanish, but after a couple of days I started to understand the material and the professors. This was real immersion. Every day we covered new material such as regular as well as irregular verbs in present, past and future tense. We covered basic commands, vocabulary, numbers, and also comparative uses such as comparatives with nouns and comparatives with adjectives.

## *Activities and Tours*

Every week, there were tours or excursions planned tour. The first tour was on June 28th at 10:00 a.m., it was a city walking tour in Grecia. We toured the main Church as well as the local stores within the city. That following weekend which was July 4-5th we went on an excursion to Manuel Antonio National Park and Beach. The national park and beach was beautiful and full of wildlife. There were tons of monkeys in the trees and we even saw a few sloths. On July 7th, at 8:00 a.m., we toured a coffee plantation. The tour was very informational on how to grow and produce coffee as well as how Costa Rica distributes their coffee to the United States. On July 11th at 8:00 a.m. we went on a full day excursion to Poás Volcano and La Paz Waterfall Gardens. The hike to the volcano was beautiful and seeing the actual crater was a breath taking experience. On July 18th-19th, we went on a half day excursion to Los Chorros as well as canopying and rafting. Rafting and canopying were by far my favorite excursions because of the different activities that took place.



Cultural lessons that I learned on this trip were independence and that just because something is different, does not mean it is bad. I plan on taking what I have learned and sharing it with others in hopes of recruiting more students to study abroad as well as using my global connections towards my career. By simply staying open minded and eliminating value judgments and prejudices that you may have about your new culture, you'd be surprised with what the world has to offer.

## FUN TIMES IN COSTA RICA!



***Abstract***

During the 2015 China Study Abroad experience, I took two courses (photojournalism and international journalism). There were many tourist attractions in China; however, the most popular seemed to be the Great Wall of China and the Forbidden City. These two sites are heavily visited throughout the year. During this program, we participated in many activities. A few include: bike riding through the island of Xiamen, visiting a temple used for religion, and taking a trip to Piano Island. When traveling to another country it is always important to have an open mind. One of the most vital lessons that I learned was that people are not going to be exposed to the same things that you are. Everyone is unique and that is what makes them who they are. I would recommend everyone to study abroad, if they have the opportunity because it will definitely be a memorable experience.

***“Class activities and Tours”***

The courses that were taken covered a variety of international concepts and broadened my horizon concerning “news worthy” information. These courses met every Tuesday and Thursday at 8:00AM-11:30AM for about three weeks. Dr. Zhou was the instructor who provided us with the information needed to complete any assignments. When we were not in class, we went on tours to many historical sites. Some of these sites included: the Temple, Hakka Houses, Piano Island, and even a local kindergarten school.



This law was put into place in order to decrease the rapidly growing population. While away, I was able to teach a short lesson to a small group of kindergarteners. This experience allowed me to grow as a future educator by taking me outside of my comfort zone and gave me the ability to bring back some of the strategies I learned to my classmates.

Overall, I truly enjoyed my study abroad experience. I was exposed to many new concepts and an entirely different culture that I now have a greater appreciation for. I am beyond grateful for this opportunity and I plan to share my experience with as many people as I can in order to get more students involved .



During many of the tours, I noticed the amount of pride that Chinese people have for their country. The country, by itself is extremely historic. I also learned that the Chinese culture is a lot different from the American culture. In China, education is extremely important and there is a lot of pressure for students to become successful. As an education major this was very interesting to me. In addition, people in China are only allowed to have one child per household.



## Tiana Spearman

### Mass Communication

#### Abstract

On the duration of this study abroad trip I learned many lessons and made many friends along the way. Being the second time around traveling to China this trip was still life changing and I got the chance to visit different parts of the country. Last summer I went to China with the University System of Georgia and got the opportunity to study at Zhengzhou University. This summer was extremely different in many ways such as climate, culture and courses. I took three of my major courses; International Journalism, Internship, and Photo Journalism. These classes taught me different things pertaining to journalism. The major tours include visiting The Great Wall of China, The Forbidden City, Xiamen University, Putuo Temple, Xiamen Daily, The Newspaper Museum, Cambridge Red Oak Kindergarten, Rainbow Beach and Piano Island. In China I learned that we are very blessed and spoiled in the United States. Things that we take for granted for here they have to work very hard for in this country. I would recommend next year that this program be a little more organized. From having this experience the previous year, there was a major difference in the organization of the two different programs.

#### Courses Taken

Dr. Zhou taught the Photo Journalism, International Journalism, and Internship class. The only class that was a structure of a class room was International Journalism. We met on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 8:00-11:30 am in an actual classroom on the campus. This class was very different and a great experience within itself. It was different because the class was integrated with Chinese students from Xiamen University. This gave us a chance to interact with them being that we all had the same major. We did several interviews them which we used to make international news. This course helped me to distinguish between the international news and national news. Photo Journalism wasn't an in class course we met and Dr. Zhou explained our assignments and the meaning of Photo Journalism. The Internship course was very exciting for myself and my classmates. On July 2, 2105, my classmates and I visited Xiamen Daily. Here we met the VP of the newspaper, two interns, and the editorial staff.



It was a very great experience because we learned a tremendous amount about the newspaper and advertising. Going to Xiamen Daily showed me that the media system in the United States is very similar to the media system here in China. The only big difference is the fact that the government runs the media system but it does not fund it so therefore this is a barrier for what types of stories the media can produce.



#### Tours and Activities

We took many tours on the duration of this trip but my two favorite tours would be to the Putuo Temple and the Piano Island. These tours stood out to me mainly because we got the opportunity to see the beautiful Island from two different points of view. These two tours also had lots of culture involved as well. Visiting the temple showed us the religious parts of Xiamen. At this temple many Chinese citizens were there praying and this was very interesting to see. After walking through the temple we took a 45 minute hike up the top of the mountain and the view was incredible. On Piano Island we got to tour the museum with many different pianos that hold value and history. We then hiked another mountain and had the incredible view from the top of the Island and could see the whole city of Xiamen.



campus where both American and Chinese students were put in the same learning environment.. We discussed what type of events were internationally newsworthy, how different countries reported on the same events differently, we were also able to hear the opinion of the Chinese students who had a better understanding of the culture of the media in China. Through these courses I have been able to learn that

Having the opportunity to travel abroad again was a blessing and also bonding with the students on the trip. I can defiantly say I made lifelong friends on this trip. With the knowledge I gained on this trip I plan to encourage more people of my culture and age range to travel outside the country and see the world for what it really is. There is more to life than being detained in your own little world for the rest of your life. "Traveling, it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a story teller." – Ibn Battuta

**Amber Kennedy**

**Mass Communication**

The objective of the China Study Abroad program is to give students the opportunity to experience life in another country, to gain a personal cultural development, all while receiving college credit and making friends from around the world. This year the program allowed students to take up to nine credit hours. Though the maximum was nine, I only took six because those only two courses would help me get closer to graduation. The program included tours of several major monument and cities such as Shenzhen, Xiamen, Beijing, and Shanghai. In these locations we had the opportunity to have conversations with major paper and media industries. This communication served as our internship, in hopes that we will learn something from these newspaper and media industries. In addition to the free lance style of internship, I also took International Journalism which was taught by Dr.Zhou, professor of the Mass Communications program at Albany State University. International Journalism was hosted in a classroom in a neighboring building on



the attribution of certain stereotypes to a nation can be very misleading. The biggest lesson I learned was, "in many ways they are just like us and in many ways they are different." I realize that all college students are struggling with the same things. This lesson is one that I could not have learned in a traditional classroom. The information I learned about China I learned from the students who actually live there. In the class, we had about four assignments where we interviewed each other and found stories while we got to know each other.

I learned that there is no right or wrong when it comes to cultural rules. This has taught me that the American or Western style of living is not the only way nor is it the best way. I appreciate the mind opening experience. Not only did I get to live in a traditional style dorm but also I get to eat at many restaurants that most tourists would have overlooked. With the knowledge I learned from this overall experience , I look forward to sharing my experience with those wish to

study abroad, also to help enlighten those who think they know what China is like, and most of all I am going to stop taking my lifestyle for granted. Certain things I thought of as basic living requirements I now see as luxury.

In conclusion, I do recommend everyone to experience such memorable moments, studying abroad like I did. When you travel be open to new foods and new ideas of what is socially acceptable in other countries.



**Taisha McBridge**

**Mass Communication**

### ***Abstract***

The objective of the China study abroad program was to grant a group of college students an opportunity to see a different part of the world, and focus on how the two different countries conduct their media and advertising outlets. This program also helped the students become more open minded of different circumstances in a different country with different culture customs and traditions. I took three courses during this program which was an equivalent to nine credit hours. The courses consisted of MACO 3303- photojournalism, MACO 3331- international journalism, and MACO 4498- media internship.

### **Courses, Lessons and Tours**

During this program, we took tours around the different cities of China to visit historic sites such as; The Great Wall of China, Forbidden City, news media companies, the printing press museum, and the Hakah house, just to name a few. A few major program activities that were my personal favorite were visiting the host family, bicycling along the shore, creating custom opera masks, and witnessing how the news paper is manufactured. Living in a different country for four weeks I learned numerous of lessons on the trip. The biggest lesson I learned was how to be more patient. In China everyone seems to be in a rush which showed me how much patience I have. One thing I might recommend would be more organization and stability with the program activities and agendas. The three courses taken during my study abroad trip were to basically help me understand the differences between Chinese and American news media. The objective of MACO 3303 was to understand the role of still photos in journalistic reporting and to be able to understand and recognize how and when to capture newsworthy moments. MACO 3331 objective was to understand how Chinese media and journalists work and recognize the difference and similarities between the two systems. Lastly, the objective of MACO 4498 was to gain insight in the Chinese media environment and compare with U.S experiences. Two out three courses were taught by Dr. Zhou, internship was a working experience at Xiamen Daily. The meeting days and times for international journalism were every Tuesday and Thursday 8am-11:30am. Photo journalism class meetings varied. The overall class performance was very interactive.

**Shenelle Forde****My Experience**

While studying in Xiamen, I took two classes; internship and photojournalism. This has being the experience of a lifetime as I traveled to a country with thousands of years of history interwoven into a thriving modern economy. My favorite tourist attraction was visiting the Great Wall of China. Hiking a World Wonder is the most breathe taking experience ever. During this program, we traveled to Beijing, Shenzhen, Xiamen and Shanghai. While visiting this cities, we participated in activities such as shopping, bike riding, hiking and going to ancient attractions that one would have only seen on the television. Studying abroad has taught me that the world is ours! These memories will last a lifetime and I'm forever grateful.

When I received an email from the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, I was shedding tears of joy because I was spending my usually boring summer in China! Who can say they traveled to China? Yes, I traveled out the country before but never to the other side of the world. Still, I was prepared for this 13 hour flight and everything that came with journey.

While studying at Xiamen University, I took photojournalism and internship. We didn't have a specific time/place with these courses because they were more free handed classes. In other words, China was our classroom. In photojournalism, we had to capture "news worthy" images that would define our trip with the single click of camera button. We interned at Xiamen Daily where we met with the Vice President and learned how to run a successful newspaper company. The best part of China was visiting its historic sites. The Great Wall was my favorite because it's one of the Seven Wonders of the Medieval World. We traveled to Piano Island, the Forbidden City, Hakka Walled Village, Nanputuo Temple, Port of Xiamen, Kindergarten School and the Oriental Pearl Tower.

While studying in China, I learned so much about myself and also the citizens in this country. I've learned to be more open-minded about life. Not everyone has the same values and morals as you. Overall, I enjoyed myself in China, even though being outside your comfort zone can be a bit scary, I loved every minute of it.

When we first arrived in Beijing, we toured a place called Enamel Blue June 23, 2015, which was a shop that handmade vases and hand painted them in detail. It was an amazing experience to see them working hard and being diligent. We also went on a a tour to the Forbidden City as well later in the week. We saw so many artifacts and historical places inside like the garden. Everyone that was involved in the program was involved in the tours as well, including our tour guide.

One culture shock I just could not get adapted to was the people constantly staring at us because we looked so different from them. It was so weird being in a world where everyone appeared to me to look the exact same way, with the same skin completion, same body type, sand it seemed like same everything! It was also hard for me to learn how and why they like to drink all their liquids hot. After asking a few students in my class I found out it was because their bodies are just not use to the cold and when they do drink cold things it hurts their stomach. The last culture lesson was learning about their one child policy. It was hard for me to understand how they could be fine with not having any siblings because I know what its like to have siblings. Part of me kind of agreed with the policy because the policy was put in place to control the high population.

I plan to use the knowledge I gained in China for everyday life in America. One thing I admired about the Chinese was their unity They really love each other which is why the crime rate is so low, unlike America where its White Americans versus Black Americans. In conclusion, China taught me how grateful and blessed I am, mainly because their government is stricter than ours.



I bonded with my classmates that I now call my China Sisters. I would recommend anyone to Study Abroad and experience an opportunity of a lifetime.



*Shenelle with her colleague and new friends out and about in China*

**Tiffany Roesler**

Mass Communication major

## Abstract

The objective of the program was to complete journalism courses while treating our surrounding culture and country as our own. There were three courses offered including Photojournalism, International Journalism and Internship. The program used these courses to explore and get a better understanding of China. The major tours included the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, Xiamen Daily Newspaper, Shenzhen Daily Newspaper, The Hakka Houses, The Straight Herald, and a PR branch in Shanghai to name some of the main tours. Students, with permission, had opportunities to explore the local community of Xiamen and engage in the local culture. Chinese student volunteers assisted us in exploration and translation as part of the program. The most important lessons learned were to respect and appreciate the differences in cultures and one shouldn't hesitate on trying new things because one will have no regrets. Anyone who wants to study abroad should research ahead of time about the country they are going to and come into it with an open attitude and heart.

## Courses

The three courses mentioned above were all geared toward learning what's it like to practice journalism in a country with restrictions as well as getting to know native Chinese students and people. Professor Zhou taught all three courses. International journalism was taught in a Xiamen University classroom, Tuesdays and Thursdays for three weeks from 8 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. Our internship course was once or twice a week and the location changed depending on the event the local Chinese reporter was covering. Internship students would shadow local reporters to see how they covered these news events. Photojournalism was a constant course meaning we were always expected to take pictures of interesting things and people wherever we went. The important thing about these courses was that we got a lot of clarification since our schedules and itinerary were always changing. We were also required to participate in all tours and activities set by the program. I was at every event, class, and activity. I made sure that I do not miss anything because I didn't want to miss out on exploring and learning new things about China.

## Tours and Activities

In Beijing we visited the Forbidden City and the Great wall on the first three days of our trip. We were guided by our tour guide Shine and all students participated. This was probably in the top two tours of the trip for me. It was amazing to see one of the Seven Wonders of the World. In Xiamen, the main tours were of newspapers and a trip to Gulangyu Island. All these took place over the course of two weeks. The newsrooms looked pretty similar to what we were used to in the states, but getting to talk to the editors was pretty interesting. Gulangyu Island was fun because of its cultural history. In Shanghai, the main tour was visiting a PR firm on July 21. It was very informative and we were able to make good connections.

Overall the trip to China was amazing. To all college students, I almost think it's a necessity that they should try to study abroad. It's truly the best experience I have ever had and has opened my eyes to so much more.

It makes you realize how big the world is and that people are so different yet so similar. From some of the things I learned, I am considering getting my masters degree abroad and maybe even living abroad for some time. To anyone who is just slightly playing around with the idea of studying abroad, do it!

## Jeremy Brantley

### Mass Communication Major

For the past month, I and seven other students had the unique opportunity to be a part of an ASU Study Abroad Program to China. The objective of the program was to allow us to explore the different aspects of Chinese culture and everyday life in China through tours and activities, while academically, we were to be administered three college courses pertaining to our major- mass communications - for the summer semester of 2015.

Our first stop in China was Beijing and we remained there for nearly a week. We were provided a tour guide named Shine, and he took us to three historic and wonderful sites in Beijing such as, the Great Wall of China, the Forbidden City, and the Tium Square; the great hall of the people. Fortunately, I had previously heard a substantial amount of information about the Great Wall. So, of all the sites we saw in Beijing, I was more astonished and amazed at the craftsmanship and longevity of such a historic site in China. Amber Kennedy, Tiffany Roesler, and me climbed the whole wall and made it to the very top. That same week, Shine took us to see the Forbidden City. On our way to the Forbidden City, we arrived at the Tium Square, which is the center of government for the people of China. When we reached the Forbidden City, I was impressed by the preservation of the very same buildings that housed some many historic Chinese dynasties.



Our second and longest stop in China was Xiamen where we spent about 4 ½ weeks living on the campus of Xiamen University. It was here where we received our educational experience with China. ASU Professor, Dr. Zhou joined us in the city as our official guide and also conducted the college courses which we were given at Xiamen University. As part of our grade for one of our courses, we were to take various trips and tours of certain sites and places in China that were historical, cultural and some that were in correlation with our group's academic majors.

These notable places were the Xiamen Daily, Nan Putuo Temple, Rainbow Beach, and the Hakka Houses. The Xiamen Daily is a city newspaper in China and we visited their offices to observe their jobs as news journalists and media employees. We were provided the luxurious opportunity to discuss and lecture amongst each other and the Xiamen Daily executives about the media industry and learn how news media works socially, economically, and physically. It was at the Nan Putuo Temple that we were allowed to see a glimpse of China's Buddhist religious culture. The trip to Rainbow Beach gave us a sense of awareness as to the future community plans that China has put forward for herself.



We attended an annual event of outdoor beach soccer and gathering of locals in consideration of housing in a new housing community being built by Rainbow Beach. The Hakka Houses was another tourist attraction that we were able to see. Yes, another great historic site in China. This site gave us an insight into the life of various Chinese families during historical times in the nation's past.





Our third stop was Shenzhen, China. This was one of our two short day stops before we were to head back to the United States. However, during this trip we also were afforded another unique opportunity to visit another media institution called Shenzhen Daily. They are a city newspaper company and we were invited to be given a tour of their company and presentation of their company's involvement in news media for China.



Our fourth and last stop was Shanghai, China. This was more of a tourist and vacationist type of place in China. Shanghai is the financial center of China and is home to many of the economic sectors that power China. On this stop, we were allowed to just have fun browsing the city and shopping in the various stores. If there was a city I could compare this too, it would be New York because just like New York it seemed as if Shanghai moved to its own pace and although, we had previously seen previous use, it was here that I saw the most rapid use of public city transportation and city activity.

This study abroad also included three ASU college courses that were instructed by Dr. Zhou called Internship, Photojournalism, and International Journalism. Photojournalism, we were to bring cameras to take pictures of the many amazing places that we would go and visit in China and tell stories through the art of pictures.

For Internship, we were given specific trips and invitations to certain companies to which referred to our academic majors and we received opportunities to observe the employees, staff, and executives performing their duties as well as given tours of the company's operation.



*I brought my own personal Canon digital camera and took many pictures of our group activities that we carried out from day-to-day in China.*

## MY REFLECTIONS IN CHINA

### • JEREMY BRANTLEY

While in this course I was also able to learn some interesting things about the everyday culture in China from my foreign classmates. One class session I had a conversation about dating and romantic relationships with Fay and Gloria, and I learned about the different customs of marriage union, age of marriage for men and women, and the family involvement within the precepts of marriage. They turned out to be very interesting and rather polarizing to me in comparison with what I am used to and exposed to in American culture. Through my interpretation, international news are news stories which contain content that has an international and domestic effect and international news worthiness. In class, we analyzed numerous news stories from China news media websites and U.S. news media websites to review whether certain stories were of international news quality. Upon this very same observation, we also saw eye-opening differences in the views of reporting between U.S. news outlets and China news outlets.

As I have approached the aftermath of this wonderful experience, I plan to try to immerse myself more deeply into the business of my academic major field, mass communications. Visiting news media companies in China allowed me to see that the formats and platforms for sharing news media with the public are drastically changing by the day. Whoever can find the most proactive ways to advance the media industry in the new age of innovative technology will be able to thrive in the business of mass communications, where advertising rules. In addition, this trip also ignited a new ambition for me to involve myself more with Albany State University Mass Communication clubs such as, ASU-TV and REAL 92.7 more heavily to better understand my craft.

## Chelsea Wooden

### Social Work major

#### Abstract

My classmates and I got to embark on a journey of a lifetime to Trinidad and Tobago. The trip took place from June 1 to June 30, 2015. For some of us, this was our first time traveling outside of the United States. The thirty-day journey taught us a lot about the country, each other, and ourselves. The presentation captivates a small segment of our thirty-day adventure. Summarizing this life-changing experience has been a major undertaking. The impact was phenomenal. I now have a keener appreciation for family, my country, and the small blessings in life.

#### Main Body Report:

During our visit to Trinidad, we took several interesting classes. Those classes included: History and Culture and International Social Work. The class that stuck out to me the most was history and culture. Our professor, Dr. Matthews, made the class very interesting. Not only did she lecture, but she also got us involved. Our first lesson was about the five different time periods of Carnival. When we learned about the various Carnivals, we had to present our favorite one and then talk about choice. After that assignment, we had to make our Mas. The second class was about the Calypso. Our assignment was to learn a calypso and sing to the class. The third class was about the steel pan. Dr. Matthews brought her steel pans and taught us “Happy Birthday” and “Amazing Grace”. On our last day in Trinidad, we came together as a class and did a presentation to talk about our experiences.

The tours in Trinidad were full of excitement! The tours included excursions to the University of West Indies, Embassy of the United States, “Wings” Traditional Indian Cuisine, and Temple in the Sea. We also toured Caroni Bird Sanctuary, Maracas Beach, Angostura Factory, Pitch Lake, and South Trinidad. We spent the last three days in Tobago. I enjoyed all of the tours in Trinidad. I believe I enjoyed Tobago because I got to scratch a few things off of my bucket list while I was there.

One of the cultural lessons I learned while in Trinidad was how some Trinidadians bury their loved ones. During the visit to Temple in the Sea, I had the chance to witness a cremation ceremony from beginning to end. During this process, they build a temple right before the family arrives. A procession of beautiful and somber music followed.

A committal service follows this process. Unlike caskets that opens and shuts, the one used here has no lid. The funeral director covered the body in flowers. Once these processes were completed the family took flowers from the bottom of the casket and placed them on the top. At that point, once the committal was done, the funeral home staff spread wood blocks and sugar cubes over the for the body to catch fire quickly. In the final stage, the undertaker burned the body, and in the following morning the family came by to spread the ashes.

What I plan to do with the knowledge I gained is to spread awareness about study abroad. With the experience I had, I definitely would recommend it to others. While I was in Trin-



idad, the world was my classroom so I learned so much more than I would have from sitting reading a book in a traditional classroom. I plan to keep everything I learned embedded in my in the front of mind. I gained so much from the classes, the people, and my environment. I cherish the simple things I took for granted in the USA!



## Conclusion

Halfway through the month, I was saying how much I was ready to go home. I was enjoying the overall trip, but I just wanted to be with my family. When the final day arrived, I was left with a bittersweet feeling because I met some friendly people I consider my new Trini family. I am going to miss each of them.

As I am typing this on our plane ride to Miami, I can say that in this month alone, I have learned a lot about myself and my patience. I enjoyed learning a new culture, meeting new people, and the serenity of a beautiful country. I am so glad I made this journey. It will forever be in memory as long as I shall live. To Trinidad and Tobago, I say, "Farewell." The experience has been life-changing. It is time for me to return home now, so until we meet again. I would like to take this opportunity to thank God for keeping us safe. I truly thank my family and friends for being my cheerleaders and prayers warriors! I will forever be indebted to the staff of ASU and UWI for making all of this possible .

### Chernika Carter

#### Social Work , Graduate Student

#### Abstract

I had the wonderful opportunity to study abroad in Trinidad and Tobago for the Summer Semester of 2015. The main objective of the Study Abroad Program is to increase cultural awareness through traveling abroad. The courses I took while studying abroad were Global Research and International Social Welfare Policies and Service Learning. During my time in Trinidad and Tobago, I went on some wonderful tours and gained so much knowledge. I had the opportunity to study abroad as a Social Work Undergraduate Student at Albany State University in 2007. I went to Johannesburg, South Africa and Cape Town, South Africa. Fast forward eight years later I am now a Graduate Student studying Social Work at Albany State University. I never thought I would study abroad again, especially as a part-time student with a full-time job. When the opportunity was presented to me, I initially knew I was going to be interested in studying abroad again. I was interested because Trinidad and Tobago Study Abroad program was in my major Social Work. This Study Abroad trip to Trinidad and Tobago taught me a lot about myself. I was appreciative of the opportunity to experience another culture.

I could also see the growth in myself since the first time I studied abroad. I was so very thankful that I was able to take the time off work, to travel abroad and live out my dreams. I would recommend students to study abroad because traveling opens your eyes to the world.



*Arriving in Trinidad and Tobago*

#### My Experience

I took two courses while I was in Trinidad and Tobago. The first class I took was International Social Welfare Policies and Service Learning. The objectives of this course were to learn about the Trinidadian and Toboggan culture through reading, class discussions, seminars, service learning, observations and visits to social, educational and cultural points of interest. This class was very interesting because, I was constantly learning by observing the culture in Trinidad and Tobago. At the University of West Indies (UWI), we also had some wonderful professors who taught us about the history of Trinidad and Tobago. I learned so much information I did not know prior to coming to Trinidad and Tobago. Also, as a part of the class I had to attend a service learning agency in Trinidad 2-3 times out the week. I was placed at the Strategic Learning & Special Education Institute for children with Autism. I got attached to working with the children and I deeply miss them. Working with the children at the Strategic Learning & Special Education Institute is an experience I will never forget and will deeply cherish forever.

The second class I took was Global Research. The objective of Global Research was to gain knowledge in a specific substantive area relative to global issues and also, to strengthen my skills by conducting global research, analyzing data, and writing a research paper. During this course, I chose

to write my Research Paper on Human Trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago. We had to meet with a UWI professor to discuss our topic. I had the pleasure of talking with Dr. Marshall and Dr. Patenaude. I became more knowledgeable about Human Trafficking in Trinidad and Tobago writing my Research Paper.

## Tours

While in Trinidad and Tobago, we got to participate in some amazing cultural tours: In Trinidad, we attended a Hindu Temple, Caroni Bird Sanctuary, Maracas Beach, Angostura Factory and Pitch Lake. In Tobago, we toured the whole island in one day which was so beautiful. The tours were amazing, and the food in Trinidad and Tobago was outstanding as well. I was introduced to Roti, Buss up Shut, Apple J and the remarkable stable restaurant in Tobago Jemma's Treehouse Restaurant. The food served at Jemma's Restaurant reminded me of soul food with a Caribbean flair. It was delicious!



*posing at scenery on the way to Maracas Beach*

I learned so many different cultural lessons while I was in Trinidad and Tobago. I learned the history behind the popular event in Trinidad called "Carnival". It was fascinating to see how people in Trinidad and Tobago embraced their culture and history through the food, and many different festivals they have. I learned to appreciate more what I have been blessed with.



*(Statue at the Hindu Temple)*

I gained so much knowledge about Trinidad and Tobago culture and history. I have a passion for traveling and giving back to the community. I learned a lot about autism by working with the children at the Strategic Learning & Special Education Institute. I plan on taking all of the knowledge I learned and applying it to my everyday life.

My study abroad experience was a one in a lifetime experience. I would recommend any student whether, undergraduate or graduate to participate in the Study Abroad Program. The experience and cultural awareness, I gained is nothing I could have been taught. It is something I had to experience. Study Abroad for a second time proved to me that it is never too late to live out your dreams. I am already deciding where I will travel abroad to next!!!!!!!

**Amanda Hardeman**

**Social Work**

## Abstract

On June 1, 2015, a group of ten students, including myself, under the direction of our social work professor- Dr. Gibson-embarked on our study abroad journey. The group spent thirty days in the beautiful country of Trinidad and Tobago. The program was designed to allow students to explore and address global and international issues, outside of the traditional classroom setting. For social workers, it is a part of our ethical values to do research and be competent in addressing global and social issues, as we service a diverse population of clients. Growing up in inner-city Atlanta, being the oldest child, and coming from a single parent home, I always felt like the odds were against me. As the first person in my immediate family to attend college, for me studying abroad is more than a dream come true, because I never even dreamed I would have such an opportunity. Taking full advantage of this opportunity, I completed two courses, service learning, and visited unforgettable tours and excursions.

## Courses

The two courses offered by Albany State University through study abroad are Global Research and International Welfare Policy. The Global Research course is an interactive course that provides a platform for exploring and researching current global social issues, outside of the traditional classroom setting. The second course is International Social Welfare Policy and Service Learning. This course introduces students to issues regarding social welfare in a global context. The course

allowed me to obtain a diverse, international perspective on social work development, and the policies that govern the welfare of the people. In addition to classroom learning, the course provides international onsite academic service learning experiences through field outings and internships. Since the major purpose of the trip was to immerse ourselves in the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, the majority of our classes were history and culture classes. The classes were taught on the campus of the University of West Indies by Professor Mathis. The class was held once a week. The course taught us the history of carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, and why it is such a prominent part of Trinidad's history and culture. Professor Mathis used a hands-on interactive approach to teaching the class. The activities included learning to play the steel pan (the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago and the instrument of carnival), sing a calypso (the national music of Trinidad and Tobago and the sound of carnival), and design masks (the dress of Trinidad and Tobago's carnival). In addition to the history and culture classes, the group also took two classes under the direction of Dr. Gibson, Albany State Professor. The classes and meeting with Dr. Gibson gave us insight on the assignments, papers, and expectations of the group.

### **Excursion**

The tours and excursions were designed to expound on the history and culture of Trinidad and Tobago. Tours first tour was to the United States Embassy on Friday, June 5. There we had a very relaxed informal conversation with a Public Affairs Officer, Mr. Stephen Weeks, who shared with us his experiences over the past seven years working for the US Embassy. One of his job roles is to recruit and help students from other countries attend college in the United States. On Saturday, June 6, the group went to Maracas Bay Beach. The beach was beautiful, and along the way we enjoyed some of the natural beauty and scenery of Trinidad. On Sunday, June 7, we visited the temple at the Sea, a Hindu temple. The actual Temple in the Sea was so beautiful, enriched with culture and religion. While we were at the site of the Temple in the Sea, there was a Hindu funeral ceremony taking place. The family welcomed us to look upon the ceremony as a part of us exploring their culture. The group visited the Angostura Rum Factory on Thursday, June 11. The rum factory had so much history on not only rum, but also on her country of Trinidad and Tobago. We also got to tour the factory and warehouses where the actual manufacturing of the rum was taking place. The last excursion was to Pitch Lake on Saturday, June 20. It is amazing how beautiful nature can be. While on the tour, we got to see cashew plants and beautiful water plants.

Although being in Trinidad and Tobago was a non-stop 24/7 cultural learning experience, I feel like I really learned a lot about the culture of the Trinidadian people at the steel pan festival in St. James, Trinidad. The festival was a time that allowed us to truly immerse ourselves in the culture of the people. In our culture lecture, we had previously learned about the different characters of the Trinidadian festivals, and all were represented at the festival.



The Jab-Molaisse men and boys were walking around dressed as blue devils and they put on a full show using fire and gasoline. The Dame Lorraine women had on their costumes stuffed to dramatize their features, and the Jab-Jab men walked around the streets hitting very large whips on the ground mocking the slave masters from the slavery era. The festival was truly fun because it allowed us to blend in with the natives, eat and drink their foods, and see how such festivities defines their culture.

The entire trip was packed with valuable information and experiences; however, I feel that I gained the most knowledge through service learning. The service learning agency that I am working with is St. Mary's Home for Children. The children that reside at this home all come from unique situations and backgrounds. Many come from a history of some form of abuse. St. Mary's home for Children cares for 48 children ranging in age from 2-19. The agency specialized in reaching the specific needs of the children. In the beginning, I did not want to be placed at a home for children because I had my stereotypes of children in homes being unruly, misbehaving, and disrespectful. However, the children at St. Mary's are a joy to work with, and most keep a smile on their faces, even the ones with mental or physical disabilities. They have definitely changed my perception and I am forever grateful for the time I got to spend with them.



In conclusion, studying abroad in Trinidad and Tobago is an experience that I will never forget. I was given the chance to live and learn in a different country, and experience things that many people will never experience. With Trinidad being a developing country, I was able to personally witness another level of poverty. As a social worker, the global issues that I have witnessed in Trinidad and Tobago, will only enhance my knowledge in the field. While in Trinidad and Tobago, I did empirical research on the topics of social workers addressing the needs of students with disabilities and healthcare in Trinidad. As the experience came to an end, I know that what I have gained from this experience surpasses what a textbook on international social work and global social welfare would have ever teach me. I not only recommend social work students, but also students across all disciplines in Albany State University to participate in a study abroad program. The program has taught me to my conquer fears, I have been able to analyze and correct some of my own perceptions and stereotypes, and I have grown as person and as a future social worker. Looking back it is amazing how much this experience has changed my life in a few short weeks, and I will forever be grateful.



### ***Abstract***

The objective of the 2015 Trinidad and Tobago experience was to become more cultural competent as well as learn about international social work. There were two courses completed: SOWK 4310/ 7139 Global Research and SOWK 4460/7139: International Social Welfare Policies. In these courses, we had to do journals, a blog, excursions and two papers. We had six lectures five held on UWI campus and one at home. Our three major lectures were taught by Dr. Matthews where we learned about the history of carnival, the music of carnival and the instrument of carnival. We also went on many excursions weekly which were: the Caroni Bird Sanctuary, Pitch Lake, Maracas Bay, the Angostura Factory, United States Embassy, Wings Restaurant, Hindu Temple and Tobago. All of these experiences were very informational. At the end of the trip, we completed a PowerPoint presentation reflecting on our experiences for our professors as well as some of UWI staff.

### **Main Body**

I was chosen to go to the St. Mary's orphanage with children from ages 2-17. I fell in love with those children. We were given a lecture on basically international social work. The professor gave us so much insight on things that are happening in Trinidad which are somewhat the same problems that are happening in the United States. We listened to a lecture on the history and culture of the carnival. I was so surprised that this celebration was started by the French because it seemed like it came from black people. We participated in the festival down on St. James Street. It was really a great experience seeing all the things we had just learned about from Dr. Matthews lecture that week. If we hadn't went to that lecture I would have been so confused on why everyone was dressed the way that they were and what the different characters meant. We had a lecture about the history of the calypso. This was a type of music I have never heard before and some of it actually sounded good. I liked how the different songs had so much meaning whether it were social or political problems. We traveled to the Pitch Lake. I didn't know what it was I just heard that it was a lake of asphalt. As we walked, there were many little creases in the asphalt that had clear rain water that was so pretty to me because the asphalt was hot and the water was so nice and cool. We learned about the history of the still pans. The still pans are a very important instrument used in Trinidad. This instrument can be made using a pan and a

hammer. I enjoyed the nylon pool the most because the water was so beautiful and I loved the story behind the sand. We learned a lot of information about the Indian culture something I never really knew anything about and I really enjoyed it. We also went on a boat ride at the Caroni Bird Sanctuary which I thought I wouldn't like but it was very peaceful and calming as we rode. We also went to the rum factory which was very insightful; the best part was the tasting.

### Conclusion

I learned so much information while in Trinidad and Tobago. The things I saw and learned will stick with me forever. I find myself missing being there because I had gotten used to Trinidad and Tobago; it felt somewhat like a home away from home. We met many wonderful people and kids and saw a lots of beautiful sights. This trip was truly an opportunity of a lifetime and I hope to visit there again someday.



*Nylon pool*



*Hindu temple*

Hello everyone! I am Luchita Haley. I am currently studying abroad in the country of Trinidad and Tobago. So far it has been an experience that I have always dreamed of. Growing up in Smyrna, Georgia, I dreamed of traveling the world and seeing different places. I doubted my dream would be attainable because of the circumstances that I dealt with growing up. Since then I overcome those obstacles. Now at the age of 22, I am starting off that dream by studying in Trinidad and Tobago.



One of the things that I enjoyed during my trip is our classes. My favorite class was the class that discussed the history and culture of Trinidad and Tobago. During our lecture our professor Dr. Mitchell discussed the history of Carnival. Carnival was brought over by the French. It was once celebrated by the slave masters in the privacy of their home. The slave masters would dress up to mock their slaves. The women would dress up and emphasis their breast and buttocks to mock the slaves as well. In the beginning, Carnival was not celebrated by the blacks because they were not allowed. Over time, all races were allowed to participate in Carnival. Many characters have been made over the years that many people still dress up as during Carnival.

One thing that I liked is seeing the things that we talked about in class. We attended a Heritage festival as one of our excursions. I had a wonderful time at the festival because it was time where I got to interact with the locals. I also got to see some of the things that we discussed in class.

I also got the opportunity to experience some of the things that this country has to offer. One of the places that I enjoyed was the beach in Tobago. The island was a beautiful place to visit. It was amazing to me to see two different oceans on one island. We also got the opportunity to visit a waterfall while in Tobago. Being the daredevil that I am, I also got the chance to jump off a cliff into the water. It was an amazing experience to do. This trip has taught me a lot about myself and the things that I can do. I am thankful for the opportunity to go on this trip and experience something different. I encourage other to visit another country if given the opportunity to do so.

***Abstract***

The main objective for this study abroad trip was for ten students to become culturally competent and diverse. These are two very important aspects of Social Work. Along with nine other students, I was exposed to a number of enriching and life changing experiences. We went on many excursions and endured many endeavors that enlightened us about the Trinidadian culture; whether it was socially, professionally, personally, or academically. While on this study abroad trip we took two courses: Global Research and International Social Welfare Policies and Service Learning. These were not your traditional class settings. The country itself was our classroom. Also as part of the trip the ten students were placed at service learning agencies. All of the agencies were geared towards the two most vulnerable populations in Social Work, the elderly and children. Some of the major tours we went on were the campus tour of The University of West Indies (UWI), The U.S Embassy, North Coast Tour, Maracas Bay, The Caroni Bird Sanctuary, Tour of Central and South Trinidad, Temple in the Sea, Pitch Lake and more. The tours of Tobago included a variety of historical sites of the island, the famous nylon pool, and visits to historical beaches. This thirty day trip opened my eyes to a whole different way of living. I have learned that it is okay to be out of your comfort zone. In order to be an effective Social Worker, you must know how to deal with people from all aspects of life. As far as recommendations, I feel as though every student should be exposed to the idea of studying abroad. Trinidad and Tobago is a wonderful and beautiful place to visit and to learn a new way of life. Not only is it good for just Social Work majors, but it is a remarkable place for all of the majors offered on Albany State's campus.

**Main Body Report**

The two Albany State University Courses for the Trinidad and Tobago Study Abroad Program were Global Research and International Social Welfare Policies and Service Learning. The main objective for Global Research was to provide students with the opportunity to expand our knowledge in an area that pertains to global issues, culminated with a ten page paper on our chosen topic. In the paper, we had to analyze information and make a comparison between Trinidad and the United States. The second course was International Social Welfare Policies and Service Learning.

The bulk of this course had to deal with our service learning. Two to three students were placed at various agencies within Trinidad. I had the pleasure of being placed at Cyril Ross Nursery. This is a home to about 25 children who have been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. When I was first told that I would be at Cyril Ross, I became skeptical, because of the status of the children. HIV/AIDS is an area I have never dealt with before, and consequently I was scared. I was scared because I did not know much about the actual disease and I did not want to mess anything up. To my surprise, I love working with the children and I was comfortable with being around them. We went to service learning two to three times a week during our month in Trinidad. Also, as a part of this course we had to complete two major assignments: a Global Social Welfare paper and a final group presentation. Aside from the two ASU courses we took classes at the University of the West Indies (UWI). Our first official in class session was Tuesday June 9, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. with Dr. Karene-Anne Nathaniel-De Caires. This was a Social Work based lecture that lasted approximately three hours. We talked about everything from child welfare to poverty to infrastructure and politics. The next class was History and Culture with Dr. Mathews. This was a three part lecture on the history and culture of Trinidad and its famous Carnival. The first lecture was held Thursday June 11, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. and in this lecture we learned about the different races and holidays of the country. The main focus of this lecture was the "Mas" of Carnival, which is short for Masquerade. The "Mas" is the look of Carnival. This section discussed how Carnival came to be. It all started off with slave owners who held private masked balls and dinners during the Pre-Lenten season. The slave owners would dress up like their slaves, parading around and mocking them. The men usually wore a costume called the "Negre Jardin" and the women wore a costume called the "Multruse." Over the years the costumes became less and less significant, but the concept of Carnival still remained. The next lecture was with Dr. Gibson. This lecture was on International Social Work lecture. It was held Wednesday June 17, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. Before the class, each student had to get a local newspaper and find an article that pertained to some aspect of social work. During the class meeting, we discussed our articles and compared the issues to those of the United States. As class went on we had a visitor Dr. Ford who came in and enlightened us on issues that had to deal with infrastructure and water preservation. Our second to last class was History and Culture 2 with Dr. Mathews, which was held Thursday June 18, 2015 at 9:30a.m. In this class we talked about the second part of Carnival, which is the "Calypso." The Calypso is known as the vocals of Carnival. It is considered a musical editorial.



The messages behind Calypso's can be very influential and controversial. The last class was held Monday June 23, 2015 at 9:30. This class was the final part of the History and Culture session. This class was about the final part of Carnival, which is the "Steel Pan". The Steel Pan is considered the sound of Trinidad. The Steel Pan is a member of the percussion family. This instrument produces some of the most pleasant musical sounds I have ever heard. We had the pleasure of learning how to play it. First Dr. Mathews taught us how to play "Happy Birthday" which was fairly easy, and then it got more complicated when she taught us to play "Amazing Grace." The History and Culture classes were my favorites, because we had the opportunity to interact in each class by doing something that pertained to the lecture for that day.

Besides going to class and service learning, the rest of our days were spent on exciting excursions and tours. Our very first tour was on the campus of UWI. Let me first start off by saying how big the campus was. It took us a couple of hours just to visit part of the campus. My favorite part of the tour was the Whispering Wall. Our next excursion was to the U.S. Embassy. We met with Steven Weeks, a public affairs officer. He enlightened us on the importance of the Embassy, and how it was there for our safety in case something was to happen. My favorite part of this trip was taking pictures with a cutout of President Barack Obama. Later that day we went and had dinner at a place called "Wings". They served traditional Indian Cuisine. The food was pretty good. I enjoyed the curry chicken, and buss-up-shut. The interesting thing about this place was that we had to eat with our hands, no cutlery was provided. The next day we went zip lining. This was a first and last experience for me. I have a fear of heights so I was very skeptical of going at first, but I thought to myself this is a once in a lifetime opportunity. I actually enjoyed myself. I doubt I will ever go again, but at least I can say I have. The next major excursion was the visit to the Temple in the Sea and to the Caroni Bird Sanctuary. The Temple in the Sea visit was very interesting. We actually got to see a funeral. Some of the students were intrigued by it, while others were not so. Our visit to the Bird Sanctuary was fun. We got on a boat and our tour guide took us out where we were able to see all of the beautiful birds of Trinidad. The boat ride was relaxing we saw a lot of different things. During our second week we went on three different tours. On Sunday June 7th, 2015, we toured the north coast of the island and took a trip to the famous Maracas Bay. We all had a great time. After class, we toured the Angostura Rum Factory. It

was interesting to learn about the history of the factory and its rum. On Saturday, we were supposed to visit Gasparee Caves, but we did not because our tour guide never showed up. So, instead our bus driver Sam took us to a lookout point where you could see the entire city of the Port of Spain for pictures. On Sunday, we visited Dr. Mathew's church. I had a great time. Their churches are not much different from ours. It was a little hard to understand the speakers, but I got the message for the most part. My favorite part was the worship. I love to hear good music. Our last excursion in Trinidad was Saturday and we visited Pitch Lake and toured south Trinidad. The last weekend of our trip was spent on the beautiful island of Tobago. Although they make up one country Trinidad and Tobago are so different. Tobago has a more laid back way of living. It's more rural than Trinidad. Can you believe we toured the entire island in one day! This was by far my most favorite part of the trip. The natural beauty of the island was so captivating. We ate lunch at a place called Jemma's. This was the best food I had eaten while out of the country. We also went to Argyle Falls, we went on a boat ride on the glass bottom boat, we visited their famous Nylon Pool, this is the only place in the middle of the ocean where you can stand up and the water comes to your waist. We also visited other mini beaches while on our boat ride. I think Tobago was the highlight of everyone's trip.

In conclusion, I would recommend that everyone take advantage of opportunities like this one. It is truly a once in a lifetime experience. It changes your whole perspective on the way people live differently. With the knowledge I have, I will continue to share it with others and stress the point that becoming diverse is very important. I can do this through presentations, written reports, and public speaking.



*Class room*

**Trinidad and Tobago Study Abroad 2015 After Action Report**  
**By Trinidad and Tobago Study Abroad Program Coordinator: Dr. Gibson**

The Trinidad and Tobago 2015 study abroad venture began with a pre-departure session for the participants and their parents/guardians on 5/9/15 and culminated with a four week stay in the country of Trinidad and Tobago from June 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>, the date of return to the U.S. The ten participating students and I, the program coordinator were housed away from the campus of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine for the first time in the history of the program. Our home away from home was Norma's bed and breakfast, located in Valsayn, an upscale and secure neighborhood approximately one mile from the school. Although breakfast was included in the cost, students utilized their weekly food allowances to purchase additional food for cooking and for consumption from the local economy. An official orientation, including a campus tour and a unique and engaging library orientation, was held on 6-2 and 6-5, 2015 and a farewell/closing ceremony was held on 6-29, 2015. All were successfully executed. In addition to four 3-4 hour lectures about the culture, history and social, public health and economic issues that are common to the country, the students matriculated in two courses that were taught by the program coordinator: SOWK 4460/7139 (International Social Welfare Policy and Service Learning) and SOWK 4310/7139 (Global Research). Guest Instructors from the University of Trinidad and Tobago and the community were invited to briefly share with the students also. During the tour of study, a variety of learning initiatives that included cultural tours, fieldtrips and social/educational activities were fulfilled resulting in an intensive and comprehensive experience. The excursions are listed under the appropriate section in the body of this document.

**Personal goals** included an increase in self-awareness, self-confidence and an enhancement of the students' worldview and intercultural perspectives to positively impact and change their lives socially and otherwise. **Professional goals** were to acquire skill sets that can positively and unequivocally influence and enhance their career paths. **Academic goals** were to further enhance their interest in global academic studies and to influence subsequent academic research choices and decisions. The strategy of the program goals and objectives were to create a curriculum and an itinerary that embraced and supported the concept of service learning and civic responsibility, as well as academic, professional, personal and social growth. The study abroad schedule was strategically saturated with a variety of learning activities and opportunities for growth in self-awareness and social consciousness.

The 2015 cohort was provided with the best of what has been incorporated into the T and T program as a result of past suggestions and trial and error improvements, yet this group presented with its own unique complaints and challenges that have prompted additional changes and additions to the future execution of the T and T study abroad. After six experiences, I have finally come to realize that no program will ever be "perfect". However to successfully accomplish the mission of the program while addressing the expectations and perspectives of ten personalities from a genre of backgrounds, patience, dedication, commitment and passion that must originate from the heart of the coordinator are required. It is not an easy task. The verbal and written feedback that I received from the instructors and providers about the attitudes and behavior of the students combined with my personal observations and interactions

were not all positive and presented a few challenges and problems that resulted in a variety of interventions on my part . The specifics will be addressed in the final evaluation of the program. Overall, it appears that each student met the goals and objectives that were established despite the bumps and bruises that were experienced and witnessed throughout the 30 day program.

· **Courses taught: SOWK 4460/7139: International Social Welfare Policy & Service Learning and SOWK 4310/7139 Global Research**

· **Projects, activities, and assignments**

1. Students volunteered at a variety of clinical programs/social service agencies and dialogued on an informal level with T and T social service practitioners.
2. Students learned about the Trinidadian and Tobagoan culture through reading, class discussions, lectures, seminars, service learning, observations and visits to social, educational and cultural points of interest.
3. Students completed a social issues paper
4. Students matriculated in a series of lectures at the host institution
5. Students completed a group power-point/audio-visual project of their four week endeavor
6. Students interviewed and interacted with Trinidadians and Tobagoans
7. Students were exposed to the city transportation system
8. Students participated in cultural nightlife events and other festivals celebrating the history of Trinidad and Tobago
9. Students processed and documented their experiences through personal journals and class discussions
10. Students completed a research paper to provide them with the opportunity to expand their knowledge in a specific substantive area relative to global issues, to help students strengthen their skills in conducting global research, analyzing data, and writing outstanding term papers and to improve students' analytical and writing skills.
11. Students met with the instructor formally and informally as needed to discuss the topic that was the focus of the student's scientific investigation
12. Students met with and consulted with the professor regularly to discuss issues such as appropriate topics, research questions, hypotheses, theories, interpretation of data, and the proper use of the APA style.
13. Students consulted with and interviewed University of West Indies (UWI) and University of Trinidad and Tobago professors in a variety of departments and disciplines that closely matched the topic/problem of research that was chosen.
14. Students completed a Study Abroad Program Evaluation at the completion of the program
15. Students blogged their daily T and T experiences to the ASU family via ASU communications.

· **Tours integrated in course instruction: (refer to pictures below)**

*A trip to Maracas Beach and North Coast Tour*



*The Angostura Rum Factory Educational Tour*



*Embassy of the United States of America*



*The Indian Museum*



*A Spiritual/Religious Service at the Church of the Nazarene in Tunapuna, T and T*



*Caroni Bird Sanctuary Tour*



*Visit to Temple in the Sea and tour of Central and South Trinidad and The Witnessing of a Hindu Funeral Ceremony and Burial*



*Dinner at a traditional Indian Restaurant*



*International and T and T National St Vincent De Paul Presidents w/Group*



*Service Learning*

**Other tours include:**

- Tour of Pitch Lake (the largest natural deposit of asphalt)*
- Gaspree Caves Excursion and tour (unable to complete due to maintenance issues at the site)*
- A Cultural home-cooked Food Excursion/Social*
- St. James T and T Historical Celebration/Cultural Event*
- Visit to Chaguaramas/Macqueripe Bay Beach and Zip Lining Excursion*
- Celebration of two major holidays: Labor Day and the Religious celebration of Corpus Christie*

***A weekend excursion to Tobago where additional excursions included:***

- A variety of historic island tours*
- A visit to the popular nylon pool and tourist beaches*
- Argyle Waterfall excursion*
- Lunch excursion at internationally known restaurant: "Jemmas"*
- Excursion highlighting Tobagoan past times (jet skiing, ATV riding, shopping etc.)*

## **SOWK 4460 Course Highlights:**

- **Service learning activities:** The students spent a total of nine days at four service learning agencies where they were assigned duties at the discretion of the staff and according to the needs of the agencies. The volunteer hours varied but the duration for each visit was at least four to six hours. The Cyril Ross Nursery houses and provides services for children and youth who are diagnosed and living with HIV/AIDS; and the Institute for Strategic Learning and Special Education provides services for children who are diagnosed with Autism and other developmentally challenged issues. St. Peter's Home for the Elderly houses and addresses the needs of the "seasoned" residents of Trinidad and Tobago. And St. Mary's Home for Children houses and addresses the needs of youth who are orphaned, abused, neglected and/or at risk. These activities were a part of the SOWK 4460/7139, International Social Welfare Policy and Service Learning course. Additional related activities included a visit to the Cunupie House, an extension of Cyril Ross Nursery for young adults who are living with HIV/AIDS and are coping and in need of learning life skills. Additionally, all of the students were exposed to the various agencies via a structured, detailed and informative orientation session.

In connection with the service learning component of Cyril Ross Nursery, the group received a special invitation to meet and greet the St. Vincent De Paul (SVDP) International president Dr. Michael Thio and the first female president of T and T (SVDP) Sister Angelique Taylor. Dr. Thio informed the group that the Society is the most successful international Catholic charity group and promotes systemic change to allow for the underprivileged to become independent. He spoke of two methods used, including education for young people and micro-credit financing. After providing a brief history about the organization, he thanked the students for their volunteer service and encouraged them to continue to give back. ASU's T and T global ambassadors were proud to be a part of this historic event.

- **Overall Evaluation of courses**

The T and T cultural lecture sessions taught by a UWI history professor always receive high accolades from the students. Many times they are able to connect the rich and diverse history of the country that is learned in the sessions with the cultural and social festivals that are attended according to the social calendar of events. It is awesome to witness the ah ha moments as they recognize classroom knowledge outside of the traditional learning environment.

The measurements below were used to gauge and evaluate the course goals and objectives.

Overall, the course competencies were achieved and the majority of the students were able to meet the stated expectations based upon the quality of their completed assignments and class lectures and discussions. Suggested recommendations for changes etc. are included in the next segment.

### **SOWK 4460/7139 International Social Welfare Policy and Service Learning:**

The aspect of service learning that is both profound and paradoxical pertains to the resistance and protests that some of the students exhibit upon discovering that their placements may not be their first or second choice. It never fails that during each cohort some of them are upset about their placements. Many times, strategic decisions are made to place the students out of their comfort zone so that stereotypes and exposure to what they fear or dislike most are addressed accordingly and in an up close and personal learning environment. Once again, feedback from 100% of the students indicated that despite their initial reactions and disappointment to their service learning placements, they were eventually thankful that the decision was made. Discussions, blogs and reflections indicate that many lessons were learned, fears were overcome and stereotypes were dispelled during the time spent with the specific population and at the agencies. This revelation is always a proud moment for me as well. Despite the initial reaction, service learning appears to be the highlight of the program for all of the students.

#### **A. Increased academic/intellectual learning (Academic Development) (1)**

##### **Measures**

- Students completed a paper using a topic from a provided list
- Students matriculated in a series of lectures at the host institution
- Students completed a Study Abroad Program Evaluation at the completion of the program

#### **B. Increased engagement in intercultural learning (Global Competence) (2)**

##### **Measures**

- Students documented their experiences daily
- Engaged in conversation with locals

- C. Increased development in self-understanding, maturity, tolerance of ambiguity, and appreciation of cultural differences. (**Personal and attitudinal Development**) (3)
- Students processed through personal journals and class discussions
  - Students completed a Study Abroad Program Evaluation at completion of the program.
  - Students blogged their reflections to the ASU family

## **SOWK 4310/7139 Global Research**

### **Research Course Highlights:**

The research course afforded the students an opportunity to interview and gain up close and personal knowledge and feedback from The University of West Indies professors and faculty from various disciplines, colleges and areas of expertise. This was truly enlightening for them. The research interests of the students consisted of a genre of global issues from human trafficking to HIV/AIDS including topics that pertained to children with special needs and education, poverty, economics and healthcare, water conservation and preservation, street children, child welfare with a focus on abuse and neglect and food production and safety. Additionally all of the students obtained the opportunity to hone their research, writing and critical thinking skills while expounding their knowledge about a number of global topics and interests. Although reading all of the papers brings excitement and a certain level of intrigue, a couple of the topics captured my attention in the overall assessment of the content and the various completed research assignments. Those subjects were food production and safety, a first of its kind and a unique topic of discussion as well as water conservation, which raised the level of social consciousness of the student and increased her knowledge about this very important environmental issue. Regardless of whether the country is developing (T and T) or already developed (U.S.A.), both of these topics are important in the day to day operation of the countries and the citizens and should be top priorities and a main concern of all. All of the students were informed to some extent about their research and addressed the following criteria in the overall completion of their assignment.

**\*The final product of the investigation will be the term paper to be submitted by the student on 7-9-15.** This paper must be at least 9-10 pages, excluding the cover page, table of contents, endnotes or bibliography. The student is expected to prepare this paper to include the following **Thirteen (13)** components:

- 1. Title Page (Appropriately Spaced) (1 Page)***
- 2. Abstract (Up to 120 Words, Right-Margin Justified) (1 Page)***
- 3. Table of Contents (Appropriately Spaced) (1 Page)***
- 4. Introduction (Approximately 1 Page in Length)***
- 5. Problem Statement: Briefly describe the dynamics of the issue or problem area. Include demographics regarding gender, race, class, ethnicity, etc. This section should be no less than 1 Page.***
- 6. Review of the literature on issue or problem area: Expect to use at least 4 references to include peer-reviewed journal articles. Expect this section to be approximately 2 pages in length.***
- 7. Significance of the Problem: Focus on the issue or problem area. Be sure to include research that is relevant to the issue or problem area. This section should be no less than 1 Page.***
- 8. Interview/feedback from UWI Faculty Interview. This section should be at least 1 page, no more than 2 Pages. (First person language can be used in this section)***
- 9. Global Implications: Discuss a plan for assessing the effectiveness of change efforts; how will you know your intervention worked, and what theoretical criteria/framework will you use to determine effectiveness, etc.? This section should be no less than 1Page.***

10. **Intervention/Global Response:** Discuss the strengths and limitations of the intervention for this problem. Think about all of the interventions, micro, mezzo and macro. Provide evidence-based feedback that compares/contrasts the U.S and T and T. This section should be no less than 1 Page.
11. **Conclusion:** Conclude your analysis with your own reflections about your exploration into this problem and the discoveries that you made. This section should be no longer than 1 Page. **(First person language can be used in this section)**
12. **References:** Expect to use at least 10 or more references to include at least **five peer-reviewed journal articles** (1 Page).
13. **Appendix/Appendices (If Necessary)**

**For Graduate Students Only:** Consume the role of a (social work) manager/director in a human services organization in Trinidad and Tobago. The agency serves and addresses the population who is impacted by the issues and problems that are identified in your research topic for this paper. As a result, the provision of quality services and the day to day operation of the agency are impacted financially and the ability of the agency to thrive and to sustain these barriers is threatened. **What would your detailed overall plan entail to ensure that this much needed staple in the community survives?** Your social work knowledge, values and skills as an advocate, educator, critical thinker, enabler, mediator, change agent, broker, researcher and integrator are crucial to this comprehensive macro level resolution. Utilizing any of the various roles to develop your intervention and the overall results of your research paper, reflect and respond. The additional number of pages required varies.

**Grading Rubric for the Research Paper: 100 points**

Organization (cover page, table of contents, sub-titles, etc.)	10 points
Writing competence ( <b>grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure etc.</b> ) ( <b>CRUCIAL</b> )	10 points
Variety and quality of sources of information (demonstrate the ability to find and retrieve relevant information from various sources. A minimum of 10 different sources is required, <b>five peer reviewed</b> )	20 points
Analysis of information, comparison and evaluation of evidence based sources, your position supported by these sources ...	30 points
Clear application of the APA style throughout the paper (parenthetical references or footnotes whenever you paraphrase, quote, or use somebody's idea)	10 points
Bibliography/References (complete & well organized); at least 10 sources used in the paper, including UWI personal communication	10 points
Introduction (research question, hypothesis) and conclusion	10 points

**Evaluation of program:**

Although the Trinidad and Tobago 2015 Study Abroad program was met with unique challenges, these are not issues that can be addressed in an effective manner. This was the first cohort that lived off of the UWI campus. Although the facility (Norma's) was exceptional in every aspect of the imagination (secure location, immaculate accommodations, excellent meals and professional in their responses to all requests), the students initially failed to maturely approach the environment with an open mind despite the minor challenges that living off campus presented. For example, failure to maintain an open mind in regards to the food. Additionally, in spite of the preparations that were made to address laundry needs, the initial plan did not work out as expected. Another minor issue pertained to living off campus which limited the interaction with the UWI students and campus life. Although the students had several opportunities to integrate with campus life at their own discretion, some of them chose to do otherwise. Almost daily, while many of the activities were held on campus and provided the students with the choice to remain on campus afterwards, some of them chose to return to Norma's. This resulted in an increase in transportation expenses. Roundtrip fees from Norma's to UWI were already incorporated into the program costs, but because of the different preferences and schedules of each student a major challenge was presented that resulted in an increase in costs.

The sign out sheet specifically stated that students were to always travel in pairs or as a group to maximize the safety of each. Because of additional interventions and strategies between Norma's, the transportation staff and I, the situation was monitored and potential risks were addressed accordingly and appropriately.

Another major issue that presented a problem and impacted the flow of the program was failure of students, (one student in particular) to disclose medical problems on the study abroad application or after requests were made to update the applications in regards to medical issues and prescribed and over the counter medications. The student was sick after the first couple of days upon arriving in the country until a couple of days before departure and it impacted the experience of the student who was sick as well as the other students directly and indirectly as some of the excursions were impacted. Reports from other providers indicated that the student's medical issues, attitude and behavior impacted their activities also. This was clearly a blatant disregard to follow protocol despite being provided with several opportunities to do so prior to the study abroad departure. Although I had to accompany one student to the emergency room because of chest pains, this seven hour ordeal resulted in the diagnosis of a "pulled muscle". She had followed protocol and reported prior medical issues. This aspect of the application process is a serious matter and it is imperative that students honestly and accurately report their medical status and condition. Failure to do so should be a basis for dismissal from the program or a return trip to the U.S. because the implications could be life or death, unfortunately.

In addition to the initial attitude and behavioral problems that were encountered and included unnecessary petty whining and complaining (witnessed and reported) the main complaints pertained to the grueling daily schedule and the cost of the food, which were addressed repeatedly in the interest meetings. Based upon observation, the feedback from the participants during class sessions, informal meetings, individual sessions and evaluation surveys, **suggested changes for future T and T endeavors are to:**

- \_ assess the selection and screening of potential participants (require letters of reference; solicit bios in the early stages of the screening process)
- \_ adjust the cost of the program to account for the anticipated increase in the cost of transportation and miscellaneous expenses; adjust the departure and return dates of the program.
- \_ discuss and implement alternatives for addressing laundry needs
- \_ discuss the issue of dating and native house guests; establish specific rules and policies to address these issues and concerns as they pertain to safety and security issues.
- \_ mandate the submission of a medical clearance by each applicant who is accepted into the program.

The strengths of the program pertain to its longevity, the organization of the program itinerary, the service learning component of the program, the focus on self-awareness and self-assessment and the detailed expectations and diversity of the activities that pertain to educational, personal, social and professional advancement.

#### **□ Conclusion and recommendation.**

Recommendations for the 2016: Trinidad and Tobago SA program endeavor are to maintain the initiation of the recruitment phase within the first month of the Fall semester, revise/update the advertising brochure for the 2016 T and T SA program to reflect all changes, reassess and revise the recruitment and screening process to include letters of reference from department professors/instructors as one option and to implement the above suggestions.



## 2015 International Education Week (IEW)

### Theme: “International Access for All”

#### The Opening Ceremony

The event kicked off with the annual Parade of Flags, chaired by Dr. Chineye Ofodile, which started from ASU’s Wiley Hall and ended at the Billy C. Black Building Auditorium. When the parade and its participants arrived, Dr. Laverne McLaughlin and Nalucha Shakalima proceeded with the Country Roll Call. During the roll call the flags and their holders representing the nations present at ASU, walked across the auditorium stage to present their flags.



*Parade of Flags along ASU 's courtyard*



*Dr. Lavern McLaughlin with an international student from Zambia, Nalucha Shakalima at the Country Roll Call*

The Office of International education hosted the annual International Education Week (IEW) from November 2-4, with the theme “International Access for All.” IEW started as an initiative developed by the U.S. Department of Education to promote programs that prepare Americans for the global environment and attract future leaders to study abroad, learn, exchange stories of their experiences across the globe. The China Study Abroad Panel Presentation included 4 young ladies who reflected upon their experience while studying abroad in China. Other students were also asked to briefly share their experiences while the studying abroad.



One theme was evident in each presentation: the great impact that studying abroad can have on a person’s life. All of the keynote presenters stressed the importance of using different resources to raise funds to study abroad and also discussed the scholarships they received from ASU and other organizations. The panel discussion started with professors from the Department of International education discussion their contribution to this year’s study abroad adventure. Each professor gave us highlights from telling stories about particular experiences to displaying power points of the classes that were taught in order to prepare students to go abroad .



*Panel with the Director of ASU’s Office of International education and Study Abroad program coordinators*

## Cultural Explosion

The Global & Cultural Explosion kicked off on Monday, November 2, 2015 after weeks of planning. The theme for this year International Education Week is **“International Access for All!”** International education’s Danielle Albritton presided over the event which featured several performances, a fashion show, and a cultural food festival. The cultural food festival started off the evening featuring foods from local restaurants like the Rice Bowl and Tropical Tastes in addition to food donations from ASU’s faculty and staff members. As attendees sampled the various food items they also explored the cultural stands set up around the atrium, along with the stands set up by study abroad students and Global Ambassadors.



*Director of Office of International education and faculties*



*Tasty cuisines from different cultures*

ASU division of Speech and Theatre Acting class students performed an original piece entitled “Violence Against Black bodies, I don’t Understand”; the group was led by Dr. John Proctor of ASU. The event continued with the International Fashion Show, where different global cultural attires were worn and displayed by elegant and handsome faculty/staffs and students’ models from ASU & DCSS. There was also Study Abroad Presentation done by the ASU Global Ambassadors, which included representatives from ASU’s International Students.



*Performance of “Violence Against Black bodies, I don’t Understand” by Speech and Theatre Acting class students*

Dr. Abraham Adeleke of ASU and ASU Yoruba Class Students also performed, after which, Dr. Leticia Alvira-Watson & ASU Latin Dancers also performs some salsa and Latino dance steps. Next, Dr. Mimi Noda’s Japanese class students performed the Japanese radio exercise, led by ASU Study Abroad alum DaFene Brown. They encouraged the audience to participate in this traditional exercise to relax their nerves and muscles.

The event came to an end with closing remarks and motivational speech from the amicable and hardworking, Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe, Director-ASU Office of Global Program.



*Japan Study Abroad student, Dafene Brown, sharing his amazing experience*

## The Student Panel Discussion

The Student Panel Discussion was used to further the ideals of International Education Week at Albany State University by using our own students who studied abroad in the summer of 2015 to speak, answer questions, and directly engage with the audience. To begin the event, each of the panelists introduced themselves and gave a brief synopsis of their study abroad trip, including excursions, host families, local cuisine, and cultural differences. After the introductions, the audience was invited to ask the panelists questions. The questions included topics like fundraising, scholarships, safety concerns, language barriers, and the study abroad courses that are required to participate.



## President's Honors Luncheon

The President's Honors Luncheon, sponsored by ASU President Dr. Art Dunning, was the culmination of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual International Education Week.

Dr. Candice Pitts of ASU Department of English and Ghana Program Coordinator presided over the ceremony, which had nearly 60 guests comprised of Albany State faculty, staff, and students. The Director of International education,



Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe, welcomed everyone, giving special mention to those from the Dougherty County School System (DCSS). In the absence of President Dunning due to illness, Dr. Ojemakinde the Provost and VP of Academic Affairs made the opening remarks on behalf of the Office of the President. Everyone who was involved or participated in International Education Week received recognition in the form of certificates. The student voted Best Overall Study Abroad Student, Oriel Myles, gave a keynote presentation that detailed her adventures in Ghana in the summer of

2014. Myles, a dual major in Marketing and Supply Chain & Logistics, spoke of the long hours traveling to Ghana, the amazing local cuisine, and the wonderful and hospitable host family her and the other students lived with for the trip. Myles included amazing pictures and video of her life-changing study abroad experience.

Following the keynote speaker, Dr. Osakwe gave her closing remarks, said special thanks to everyone for a wonderful International Education Week 2014, and was presented with a very special gift from the Global Ambassadors and her office staff..





## WORKSHOP

**Want to study abroad but not sure where to get the funds?  
The Gilman Scholarship provides up to \$5,000 or more!**

**Late Applications are due March 6, 2018**

Visit <http://www.iie.org/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program> for more information.

<https://gilmanapplication.iie.org/>

### Presenters:

**Dr. Nneka Nora Osakwe**, Director of Global Programs & Professor of English

**Mr. Mark Hankerson**—Coordinator, Writing Center (East Campus) & Instructor of English

**Monday February 12,  
2018**

**Time: 5:00 PM—6:30 PM**

**RSVP by email to [internationaleducation@asurams.edu](mailto:internationaleducation@asurams.edu)**

### ASU-Academic Excellence



**Vincent Mcpherson— Japan**

**Dewayne Gurley-Belize**

**Autumn Griffin-Belize**

**Markia Brown-Belize**

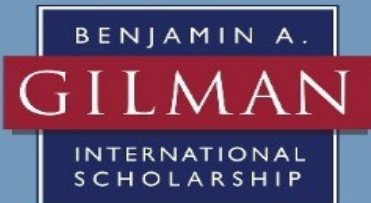
**Keshun Lawson-Belize**

**Cierra Green— India**

**Jasmine Smith- India**

**Autumn Bryant— India**

**Ladiamond Lett— South Africa**



# Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship

## ASU GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT (2018-2012)

	NAME	CLASSIFICATION	MAJOR	ACADEMIC YEAR	COUNTRY
1.	Tamia Hurst	Sophomore	Sociology	2018	Trinidad and Tobago
2.	Asia Clemmons	Junior	Social Work	2018	Trinidad and Tobago
3.	Nikesia Patrick	Sophomore	Psychology	2018	Trinidad and Tobago
4.	Jasmine Sparks	Senior	Teacher Education	2018	Japan
5.	Vivia Johnson	Senior	Psychology	2018	Trinidad and Tobago
6.	Aleshia Thomason	Junior	Nursing	2018	India
7.	Jamarius Allen	Senior	Supply Chain & Logistics	2018	Belize
8.	Edward Carter	Junior	Business	2018	India
9.	Jasmine Smith	Senior	Nursing/Spanish	2017	India
10.	Ladiamond Lett	Junior	Visual and Performing Arts	2017	South Africa
11.	Cierra Green	Senior	Nursing	2017	India
12.	Keshun Lawson	Junior	Marketing	2017	Belize
13.	Markia Brown	Sophomore	Marketing	2017	Belize
14.	Autumn Griffin	Sophomore	Accounting	2017	Belize
15.	Dewayne Gurley Jr.	Junior	Marketing	2017	Belize
16.	Autumn Bryant	Junior	Nursing	2017	India
17.	Vincent Mcpherson	Senior	English	2017	Japan
18.	Amber Barnhill	Senior	Early Childhood Education	2016	Spain
19.	Essence Harris	Junior	Mass Communication	2016	China
20.	Caryn Ivey	Senior	Mass Communication	2016	China
21.	Jamarius Willis	Junior	Business	2016	Belize
22.	Brandi Simpson- Warren	Sophomore	Mass Communication	2016	China
23.	Brenda Simpson- Warren	Sophomore	Mass Communication	2016	China
24.	Cameron Brewer	Junior	Mass Communication	2016	China

25.	Brandon Thomas	Sophomore	Social Work	2015	Trinidad and Tobago
26.	Kayla Belcher	Junior	Spanish	2015	Costa Rica
27.	Catiana Foster	Senior	History	2015	Costa Rica
28.	Kristal Israel	Junior	Mass Communication	2015	China
29.	Angelica Troy	Senior	Sociology	2015	France
30.	Shaqeira Wilson	Junior	Spanish	2015	Costa Rica
31.	Amanda Hardeman	Junior	Social Work	2015	Trinidad and Tobago
32.	Luticha Haley	Senior	Social Work	2015	Trinidad and Tobago
33.	Ireka Jordan	Sophomore	Biology	2015	Costa Rica
34.	Keith Hicks	Senior	Business Management	2015	Belize
35.	Shenelle Forde	Senior	Mass communication	2015	China
36.	Japonica Reese	Sophomore	Nursing	2015	Costa Rica
37.	Taisha McBride	Senior	Mass Communication	2015	China
38.	Amber Kennedy	Senior	Mass Communication	2015	China
39.	Gwendolyn Dorsey	Junior	Social Work	2015	Trinidad and Tobago
40.	Dafene Brown	Senior	Political Science	2015	Japan
41.	Brittany Green	Junior	Marketing	2015	Belize
42.	Keandris Hogan	Senior	Sociology	2014	Trinidad and Tobago
43.	Nickala Kendrick	Junior	Social Work	2014	Trinidad and Tobago
44.	Charles Mcginty	Senior	Mass Communication	2014	Trinidad and Tobago
45.	Candice Price	Junior	Social Work	2014	Trinidad and Tobago
46.	Sidney Wilson	Senior	Middle Grades Education	2014	Trinidad and Tobago
47.	Tahari Hart-Sanders	Sophomore	Nursing	2013	China
48.	Jonathan Payton	Junior	Business Management	2013	China
49.	Jennifer Swan	Sophomore	Arts	2013	China
50.	Tyla Jordan	Sophomore	Spanish	2012	Costa Rica
51.	Bianca Ward	Junior	Business Management	2012	China

# 100,000 Strong Study Abroad Scholarship Fund



Please help us make this possible by supporting our study abroad fund.

Study Abroad  
GLOBAL. POTENTIAL. REALIZED.



Questions?

Call 229.430.1662

I would like to make a tax-deductible gift to Albany State University Study Abroad in the amount of:

\$100     \$250     \$500     \$1,000     Visa     MasterCard     AMEX     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Bill me \$ \_\_\_\_\_     monthly     quarterly     one-time payment

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_    Expiration (MMYY): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_    Partner Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_    Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_    State: \_\_\_\_\_    Zip: \_\_\_\_\_    Email: \_\_\_\_\_

ASU graduate? (Yes / No)    Major/College of: \_\_\_\_\_    Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Is spouse an ASU graduate? (Yes / No)    Major/College of: \_\_\_\_\_    Year: \_\_\_\_\_

My employer, \_\_\_\_\_, will match my gift. *(Please enclose your company's matching gift form.)*

Please make checks payable to Albany State University Foundation, memo: Global Initiatives.



Office of International Education

For more information

Visit our website: <https://www.asurams.edu/academic-affairs/oie>

call: (229) 430-1662

or email:

[internationaleducation@asurams.edu](mailto:internationaleducation@asurams.edu)

