

Monteverde, Costa Rica

Lauren Newton



Program: Community Engagement in Costa Rica, Spring Break 2018

Majors: Political Science and Psychology

Earning the Career Development Badge:



I was partnered with the Monteverde Institute in Costa Rica to make my work there sustainable to the community and environment. The purpose of the Institute is to advocate, educate, and improve sustainability movements in Monteverde. Despite cultural, language, and lifestyle differences, we were required to work as a team for the betterment of the community. Being able to share our passions created a bond that I learned greatly from. My time at the Monteverde Institute taught me about the importance of adapting in order to network. Without the help of the wonderful Institute staff, I would have never been able to accomplish things in the community and learn as much about Costa Rican sustainability.

Earning the Community Engagement Badge:



My Community Development and International Aid class went to Monteverde, Costa Rica and applied the lessons we learned about community engagement to help solve problems Costa Rican locals faced. We worked with the community to renovate a community cemetery. The local cemetery was no longer a place people wanted to spend time

and we needed a way to make the environment welcoming to those grieving. As a group, we helped to build a bathroom, refurbish the surrounding walls, clean and fix graves, and otherwise improve the land. It was incredibly humbling to see such a large group coming together with the community needs in mind.

Transferable Skills:



I am applying the skills that I learned abroad in everyday life, school, and work. I have learned a great amount about the culture of sustainability in both the community and environment. This new knowledge has impacted my lifestyle. I am continuing to change my behavior with the community goals in mind, as well as educate others about the importance of this.

Additionally, I have an understanding of how to overcome cultural differences when networking, helping me in both school and work. I am more willing to reach out and value teamwork than before this experience, leading to many opportunities in my career.



“My student experience has been greatly impacted and improved through a learning abroad trip. I have expanded my world knowledge and cultural experiences. Being able to connect with a lifestyle completely different from my own has opened my eyes to a million possibilities for my future.”