

Kumasi, Ghana

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Program: Global Public Health in Ghana, Summer 2019

Major: Audiology & Social Work



Earning the Community Engagement Badge:



Earning the Community Engagement badge helped me to visualize and implement sustainable, community-based goals. Intentions and implications of the research we were conducting were decided by local community leaders, rather than by us Americans.

Humanitarian work or research without sustainability and local community in mind is ineffective and potentially detrimental to developing communities. The leaders of this Learning Abroad trip have been visiting the same area of rural Ghana for 12 years, and ask the Barakese District Health Director what community needs are, prior to starting any research. This is a beautiful example of forming those deeply-rooted bonds with a community, and asking before doing when it comes to research.



Earning the Research Experience Badge:



Though time-consuming and difficult, the process of earning the research badge was one of the highlights of my Learning Abroad trip to Ghana. Most days were spent out in the field conducting interviews on family planning and safe abortion practices. Most afternoons were spent translating interviews from the local language, Twi, to English, with the help of Ghanaian medical students. There's a lot of work that goes into fitting an entire data-collection process in three weeks. That being said, I had the privilege of working on a research project from start to finish, including developing a questionnaire, using a data collection software, conducting interviews, translating

interviews, coding for qualitative research, and now turning results into presentations and a paper. To be part of that whole process in such a short amount of time was truly incredible.

Transferable Skills:



I have an eclectic range of academic interests, including audiology, social work, and global public health. This trip was fundamental in developing a vision on how to merge all of those passions. I will approach my goals from a community-driven lens, meaning that any community I currently work in or will work in will be the forefront of action, with their voices being primary throughout it all. In my personal life, I will never take running water, electricity, Wi-Fi, or air conditioning for granted ever again! Despite not having access to many of the things on that list, the Ghanaian people approached life with a happiness that I admire, but I sure love a warm shower with good water pressure!

“Change is slow. So slow, that you might not ever see it implemented. But it must always be pursued because one day it will happen, and your efforts are part of that.”