A View From Campus

Dear Students,

I have traveled to China, Greece, Sweden, Ghana, Afghanistan, Johannesburg, South Korea, Germany, Italy, and Serbia without ever stepping on a plane. As international students, you have all taken me to these places, and through conversations as well as your writing, introduced me to not only your cultures, but also your ideas about concepts and classes at HWS Colleges. While you have all come to HWS to learn, you also have an incredible power to teach those around you.

Through Conversation Groups at Intercultural Affairs, I have learned about everything from fashion to teaching approaches, holiday traditions to traditional foods in other countries. The Writing Table has allowed me to see how, as international students, you communicate your ideas in various genres from lab reports to research essays; your writing has introduced me to a variety of topics from traditional Chinese folklores to ideas about what good writing means in Germany. Within my ESOL classes on campus, I have had the opportunity to learn about Chinese tea ceremonies, Sichuanese Opera, Buzkashi, Hasapiko dance, Bremen, and many other cultural traditions and countries through the cultural presentations students do each Fall. As the Writing Colleagues Program Coordinator, I am also regularly discovering the strategies to best assist international students in your writing and sharing those strategies with the Writing Colleagues who many of you encounter in First-Year Seminar classes. As much as I teach international students, you also teach me.

My work has allowed me to see how you are all insightful, engaging, and effective teachers, and I would encourage you to embrace that role. Do not hesitate to be a passport for those around you to the countries you call home.

Best,
Alex Janney
The Fulbright Corner

I’ve met 3 different persons with 3 different tempers that I have learned to love with time. The tensions at the beginning quickly disappeared because we knew that none of us were bad people. Embracing American culture was also a big deal for me with things like dinnertime being at 5pm, for instance haha! In my time here, I fell in love with the Geneva community and the HWS campus. They have always been so helpful and caring. There was always a talk, a concert, a show happening on campus or downtown. To teach students eager to learn French and to work with me was an infinite pleasure. If I have to sum up this year I would say: love and tolerance. To love one’s job, one’s studies, one’s housemates, one’s community is definitely the secret to happiness. — Zouhair Elaouni, Arabic FTA

The number one memory I will take with me after leaving HWS/the US will be the culture shock in a lot of ways. First, I came here with the cliché of Asian people being hard-working people and kind of boring, and the first Asian person that I have met is Grace Chang, the craziest person in the world! The McGuire House with the Moroccon, the Taiwanese and the German has taught me A LOT about other cultures but even more about myself and above all: tolerance. — Mandy Francis, French FTA

My number one memory will be working with my students in my own seminar, it was always a lot of fun for all of us and fun for me to see them make progress in learning German! The diversity of my seminar (I not only had American but also Chinese and Russian students), made it a place for cultural exchange and a great learning experience. All the memories from traveling the US and Canada and all the people I have met and the friends I have made will stay with me forever as well! — Leon Rothenbacher, German FTA

It is really hard, with merely words, to describe what I have learned from this year. To make it simple and explicit, I would like to summarize my past year into three points: Teaching, Geneva community and my dearest housemates. Before coming here, I had already been working as a language teacher, however, this past year’s experience of teaching in a college setting has totally changed my perspective in language teaching. The relationship between my students and I was extremely close, and that is why we had fun together in every single class. No matter how tiring it was, seeing their improvement always made me feel happy. Next, the Geneva community was way cooler than I expected before arriving. With events being held on every corner of the town, no matter what time or how busy people were, there was always a place to relax. This is Geneva, simple, lovely and extremely friendly. Last but not least, I learned the most from my amazing housemates. I cannot say that everything went smoothly during the past year, but what has happened during these nine months has totally changed us in many ways. We tried to care about each other by asking when to get lunch together everyday; we managed to forgive each other even though sometimes we could be really mean; we learned how to love one another although sometimes we were very unlovable. All the above created a strong bond between us which made us tightly connected. Although we have to say goodbye for now, I know this does not come to an end, it is just a whole new journey that is waiting for us to discover. With all the love I received during the past year, I believe I will be strong enough and ready to face the unknown future. — Wan Yi “Grace” Chang, Chinese Language Teaching Assistant

Multilingual Hour Program hosted by this year’s Fulbright and Language Teaching Fellows
From a Graduating Senior

Guanqun Li ’14

How did you feel when you first arrived?
I come from China, where the culture, the language, the time zone, the perspectives, and the food, of course, are different than here. The transition was not easy. HWS’s multicultural student body was exactly the environment I desired. Hobart was where I could learn about other cultures and expose Chinese culture to the community. Being a tutor and a program coordinator for 4 years in the Geneva Chinese for Kids Program, I taught Geneva kids Chinese language and cultures. I felt very satisfied when the kids fell in love with Chinese language and cultures.

What lessons have you learned since being at HWS?
The biggest lesson I learned in HWS is that one should pursue one’s dreams no matter what. I first came here knowing I want to become a doctor. I know exactly how difficult it is for international students. A lot of people reminded me of the difficulty and suggested that I consider a backup plan. However, I was determined. Thanks to my advisors and my professors, I constantly got help and support from them. I got into SUNY Upstate Medical University through Early Assurance Program. In addition, I actively participated in the HWS Health Professions Club and became the treasurer in my junior year and the co-president in my senior year. Through these leadership positions, I spread the knowledge I attained to more pre-health students on campus by holding various events and tutoring MCAT Study Session.

What are your plans after HWS?
After graduation, I will attend SUNY Upstate Medical School and continue to pursue my dream of being a doctor.

As an International student, what has HWS given you?
HWS provided me a lot of academic opportunities to help me be well-rounded. I have been conducting one chemistry and two biology research projects throughout my college career. These research projects not only enhanced my knowledge in the natural sciences, but also created strong bonds with my professors. I did an internship in the Finger Lakes Health Urgent Care Center, which exposed me to the field of medicine. I also did several volunteer works, such as Geneva Chinese for Kids and Day of Service.

What advice do you have for the incoming class?
One has to sacrifice. Nothing is free. I, as an example, have made a lot of sacrifices in order to make my dream come true. I never went back to China for the whole period of summer breaks. I volunteered in Geneva General Hospital Child Care Center during my first summer, conducted summer research during my second summer, and prepared MCAT during my third summer. Life is not easy. So be prepared to sacrifice.

A Note from the President of the HWS United Nations
International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Welcome on behalf of UNICEF at HWS!
I would like to cordially invite you to join UNICEF at HWS in our stride in believing in zero preventable child deaths worldwide. UNICEF @ HWS invites students from all academic departments to benefit children in underdeveloped countries. Our newly formed club, works closely with the UNICEF U.S. fund and hopes to offer an opportunity to bring knowledge of global issues from the classroom into practice. Throughout the semester, UNICEF at HWS has organized events which raise awareness of children in need worldwide. This semester is our first semester on campus, and we’re off to an excellent start. Our first event of the semester was a screening of the UNICEF-produced documentary titled, Not My Life, which shed light on the atrocities of child slavery. After the showing, we had a de-briefing session, as the material was heavy. We were pleased with the turn out of this event, and hope to show more documentaries to raise awareness of international child-related issues throughout the community in semesters to come. A few weeks later, our club was invited to collaborate with another campus club, Project Nur, for their event, Arabian Nights. Not only was the event full of delicious Middle Eastern food and stellar entertainment, the turnout was better than we could have hoped for. This was a great opportunity for UNICEF @ HWS to raise awareness of UNICEF’s endeavors in aiding Syrian refugees. We are thrilled to announce that we raised enough money to vaccinate over 800 Syrian child refugees against polio! To celebrate our success we are planning a dance marathon at the Bristol field house on April 11th. UNICEF @ HWS invites all members of the HWS community come together and “believe in zero.”

With best wishes,
Molly Ramage ‘15
President of UNICEF @ HWS
Programs for International Students

The Writing Table

OPT/CPT Workshop for International Students

Trips to museums, malls and parks

International Monthly Dinner

International Game Night

INTERCULTURAL AFFAIRS CENTER
HOURS

Monday 8:30am-12am
Tuesday 8:30am-12am
Wednesday 8:30am-12am
Thursday 8:30am-12am
Friday 8:30am-12am
Saturday 11am-12am
Sunday 11am-12am

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