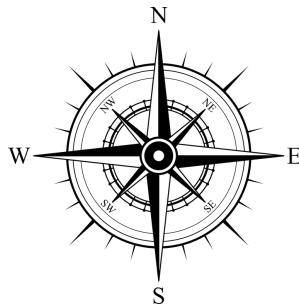


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# THE GLOBAL REVIEW



A STUDY ABROAD JOURNAL



# EDITOR'S NOTE

*The Global Review* is dedicated to chronicling and sharing the creative outcomes of student study abroad experiences through photography, creative nonfiction, poetry, and other artistic mediums. We believe that a creative lens encourages students to look more closely at the personal impacts of their studies abroad and helps them to discover new perspectives. *The Global Review* is meant to celebrate the ways that traveling fuels learning, empathy, cultural awareness, and creativity. We hope this publication encourages those who have studied abroad to further reflect on their experiences and inspires those who have not studied abroad to do so. Though the journal was founded by Southern Utah University's Office of Learning Abroad, the opportunity for publication is open to anyone who has taken part in a study abroad program outside of their home country.

The journal is published every March and September.

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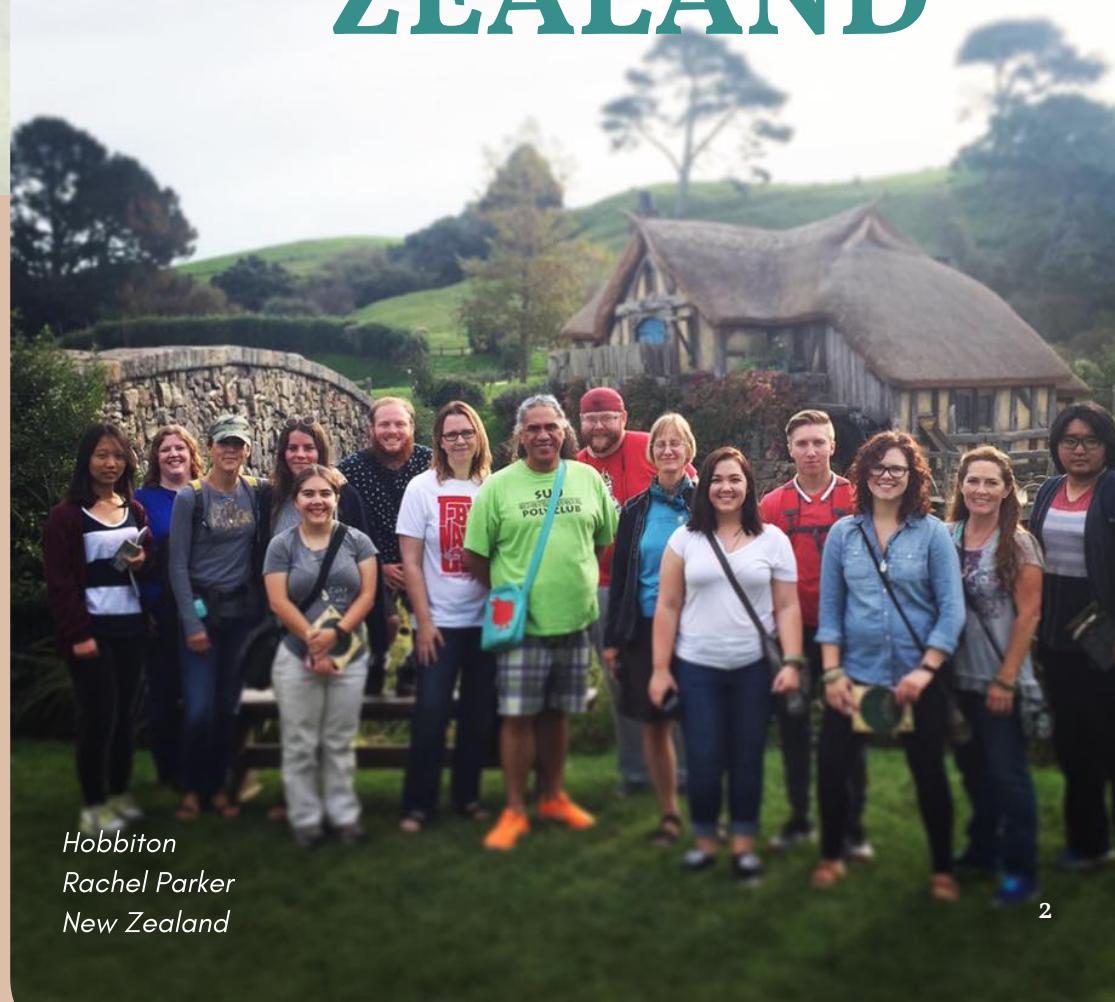
NEW

# ZEALAND

*Whitewater Rafting*

*Rachel Parker*

*New Zealand*



*Hobbiton*

*Rachel Parker*

*New Zealand*

# LEARNING BY DOING

- Jaycee Carter  
Guatemala

## **The Start of the Journey**

In May 2019 I packed my suitcases, boarded a plane, and traveled to Guatemala. This was the very first time I had ever left the United States. I was so nervous! I was traveling with Southern Utah University and the St. George Rotary Club. I decided to go on this trip because I wanted to practice my Spanish and broaden my global perspective all while getting university credits. I was able to complete all of those goals by the end of my study abroad.

## **A New Perspective**

The main purpose of this study abroad was to provide community aid for some villages in Guatemala. The professor leading our trip taught anthropology at our university. She provided a lot of insights for us. We had a lot of conversations about what it meant to provide community aid. She explained that we were not there to take care of these people by changing the way they live. They didn't need the same luxuries that we have in the United States. There's a common mentality when groups from more developed countries come to provide aid in less developed countries. That mentality is often described as being "white saviors." Our professor defined this as groups coming and treating the people they're helping like they are small, weak, and miserable. They believe because of the work they're going to do, these people will finally be happy. But the truth is simple--they already are happy! We were not there to pity and look down on these people. We were not there to try to Americanize them. All we were there to do is help them live their lives in a healthier way.



Skyline in Tikal

## **Palama**

With this fresh mentality, we ventured out to start our first day of service in the village of Palama. I was placed in a group that went to build a stove in a family's home. A common health issue facing the people in this village was smoke inhalation from cooking on open fires inside their homes. The stoves we built were made of concrete and steel. Their purpose was to funnel the smoke out of their home, providing a healthier cooking environment. We mixed all the concrete by hand and sawed each piece of steel. It was a lot of work. The family stayed close and helped where they could. There was a very sweet young boy that was around two years old. He was shy and didn't talk to us, but he was very curious and wanted to watch everything that we were doing. It was so fun to be able to talk to the family that was being directly impacted by our help. It was such a special experience.

The next day we returned to the village early in the morning. This day, I was able to help distribute eyeglasses. There weren't any affordable optometrists close by so a lot of the people who

needed glasses just lived with poor eyesight. We had them try on so many different pairs of glasses to try to find a prescription that worked. They'd laugh and shake their heads. When they finally found a pair that was what they needed, their faces would light up and they'd look wide-eyed all around. It was magical. So many of these people had gone years looking at the world through blurry eyes. Seeing their joy as they found this clarity was something I'll never forget.

On our final day working in the village, I was able to help in the pharmacy. I packaged medications and helped to translate. Most of the medications we administered were vitamins and ibuprofen. This experience really made me appreciate all the times I had a slight headache and could go to my cabinet and for a pain reliever. Getting to use my Spanish in this regard was terrifying. I already wasn't completely fluent but I definitely did not know any medical terms. I learned a lot about myself that day. The people in the village all came to bid us off. It was so hard to say goodbye. After just three days working with these people, I had made many friendships and felt so much love. It was a life-changing experience.

### A Test of Strength

There was a very pivotal moment in my study abroad. I learned that I am stronger than I believe. We were going to hike one of the many volcanoes in Guatemala. We chose to hike Pacaya, a complex volcano. The trail was entirely made of lava rock. To me, it seemed like we were at a 90-degree incline the entire time. There was a company with tacked-up horses walking close behind us so if we wanted to ride them instead of walking we could. I love horses and really wanted to be able to say I rode a horse up a volcano. But I also had a burning desire to push my limits and hike



Antigua and Agua Volcano



Pacaya Volcano

the entire way. There were times that my lungs felt like they were on fire. My legs felt like they could snap with just one wrong step. When we finally made it to the top, the views made all of it worth it. I could see for miles and miles. We climbed up to where you could feel the heat from inside the rocks. We dug down to a hot spot and roasted marshmallows. The best way to enjoy marshmallows is to roast them over lava rock! I was so proud of myself for pushing on and not giving up. Those marshmallows and that view made it all worth it.

### **Swinging Chandelier**

One morning of this trip stood out more than the others. We knew that the next day we'd have to get up bright and early to start our road trip from Antigua to Tikal. Around three in the morning, I woke up to a weird noise. To me, it sounded like a big train passing right outside of my window, but we were in the middle of the city. There weren't any trains here. I opened my eyes and saw the chandelier of our old Spanish hostel swinging violently from the ceiling. There was just one word repeating itself in my mind, "terremoto." It was an earthquake! After 15-20 seconds that felt like a lifetime, the shaking stopped. By this point everyone was awake. Our adrenaline was pumping so high that there was no way we were going back to sleep. Our van would pick us up at four a.m. anyways so we decided to stay up and talk about how crazy that experience was.

### **Mayan Ruins**

The rest of our trip was spent in Tikal exploring countless Mayan ruins. Walking through the rainforest under a thick cloud of humidity, listening to the howler monkeys, and seeing these incredible innovations was unforgettable. The amazing temples, stellas, and buildings conveyed a very special history. Learning about the Mayan culture in a classroom never really had quite as strong an impact as walking inside their history. I was able to see just how they lived and interacted with their environment. I wouldn't trade this walk in the park for any time spent at a desk.

### **I Am Not The Same**

Having the opportunity to participate in this study abroad was an experience that I will never forget. My perspective of community aid and global travel changed dramatically. This trip gave me the confidence to use my Spanish and resources to help others. There's an old saying that explains it like this: "I am not the same, having seen the sun shine on the other side of the world." I believe that everyone should have the opportunity to expand their understanding and learn about another corner of the world. I am eternally grateful for the chance I had to go to Guatemala.



*Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque*  
*Tayah Nelson*  
*United Arab Emirates*



# WALKING HOME

There is religion in these footsteps  
between their home and mine.  
Domes and spires in the distance  
brush the moon with geometric reverence  
as the call to prayer paints the air  
with melodic calligraphy.  
Street lights stretch my silhouette  
across the concrete to the trees,  
shadows blurred and twining  
while the distant cacophony of crows  
is softened by date palms swaying  
beneath their wings.

Perpetual motion pauses in place,  
invites me to witness the waltzing  
of music and math, singing and silence,  
the echo of some cosmic truth humming  
beneath the concrete and my skin,  
burrowing in the spaces between seconds,  
making a home in this empty street,  
and in me, forgetting  
I am a stranger here.

I accompany my shadow down the sidewalk,  
walking softly to my dorm and life,  
careful not to startle this  
haven in a world gone crazy,  
heaven in the rests between measures.  
Each star seems a familiar friend.  
Each step is a thankful benediction:  
amen,  
amen,  
amen.

- Tayah Nelson  
United Arab Emirates



# TRAVELLING TO KENYA DURING COVID-19

I am an adventurer at heart until it is time to actually go and then I would prefer to just stay home. This trip to Kenya was no exception. While international travel is not new to me, traveling during a pandemic is. We hit many bumps along the way with ever-adjusting testing requirements, country regulations, testing for transit airports, and quarantine rules, but overall, we had a successful and safe trip.

Before this trip, the only assumption I had was that there would be loads of mosquitos. While that wasn't necessarily the case, I was marinating in DEET just to be safe. Aside from that assumption, I really didn't know what to expect which turned out in my favor. The best things in life are unexpected because there are no expectations to compare them to. While preparing for class presentations prior to leaving, I delved into the primary, secondary, and higher education systems in Kenya and was surprised to learn that public education has only been free for primary and secondary schools since 2008. As I continued to dig deeper, I learned that the current education structure was recently changed for primary and secondary schools and looked forward to sharing this with my classmates as we learned more about the beautiful country of Kenya. On the day of my presentation in Kenya, I was very nervous when Kenyan students, faculty, and staff entered the room to participate in the student presentations that were taking place.

As nerve-wracking as it was presenting about the Kenyan education system to actual Kenyan students and parents who were experiencing the system unfold in real-time, it was very validating to learn that most of my research was accurate and then to have my knowledge augmented by our visitors' actual experiences in the new education system. The comments provided by our

Kenyan presentation visitors were not belittling but rather thought-provoking and encouraging of discussion. I was put at ease as the presentation turned into a lively discussion about the new and old Kenyan education systems as well as how the systems compared and contrasted to the American education system.

It was through this presentation, and a multitude of additional interactions, that I learned that while our countries are not the same in terms of age, infrastructure, and resources, we still face many of the same problems and concerns in education and government. Both institutions have drastically different funding and infrastructure in place, but both institutions have been creative and innovative in forming solutions to fit their needs.

While we do face many similar concerns in regards to education and funding, it was interesting to see the stark contrast of our group on campus. As a predominantly white group in the middle of KU's campus, we definitely stuck out like a sore thumb. This gave me just a small glimpse of what it must be like to be an international student or minority at SUU. Knowing the kind of amenities I was used to at home and the cleanliness expectation I have for my living spaces, it was a bit uprooting to see what my new home-away-from-home was like. Short term, I was able to cope, but if this had been a long-term place for me to stay, I would have felt some incredible homesickness not just from my family, but from my usual living. Amenities differ around the world and I cannot imagine the amount of overwhelming change international and minority students face when they arrive in a new country where they may not speak the language, at a new place to live, with new roommates, and new foods.



Administration Group Photo

Again, while I got just a glimpse of this through my experience, it does help me feel more empathetic towards our international students and some of the incredible mountains they faced just to get here, and that they still face to move forward and try to understand the new culture and community that they are going to call home for the next few years.

Though I felt overwhelmed by the amount of change I was experiencing during this trip, I was also overwhelmed by the amount of kindness and help I received. So many students, faculty, staff, and even strangers sometimes, helped us along the way, gave directions, or even just a friendly hello. We were different, we knew it, they knew it, but it didn't matter. Students reached out to us, surprised us with visits, even joined in some games, and welcomed us instead of leaving us isolated. I think that is the key to feeling welcomed and acclimated in a new place. It isn't easy. Many times it would be easier to be in solitude, make no effort to connect, and reap the results of isolation and possibly the harmful effects that accompany that.

I learned that no matter how different the place is, how uncomfortable I may feel, there are always people reaching out to help and it is important for me to reach out and try as well. It was humbling to see miles of slums, people living in poverty, or those wearing their best clothes that still have visible tears in them, but it did help me be more grateful. I have so many amenities and things that make my life easier and I take them for granted. I live in an insulated home, I have a reliable car to drive to work, I have a fair paying job, I have clean water to drink from the tap, a clean home, and I live in a safe city. The world is so much bigger than my home. With Kenya being such a young country, gaining independence in 1963, they have come such a long way and I can't help but

be in awe of how much they have accomplished in such a short amount of time.

My perspective of Kenya and Africa has shifted from viewing these places as third-world countries, which many of them are, to admiration and respect towards the people's resilience to grow and thrive even amidst poverty, injustice, and circumstances that are beyond their control. Instead of feeling pity for the people or arrogance in my own country's system, I see a quiet strength in their steady growth, diligence, and determination to be involved and shape their country, and I see their character outshine their circumstances. I see what I want to be in the people of Kenya. Despite all the challenges they face, they have a drive to keep going, to do more, and to be more.

- Meagan Beesley  
Kenya



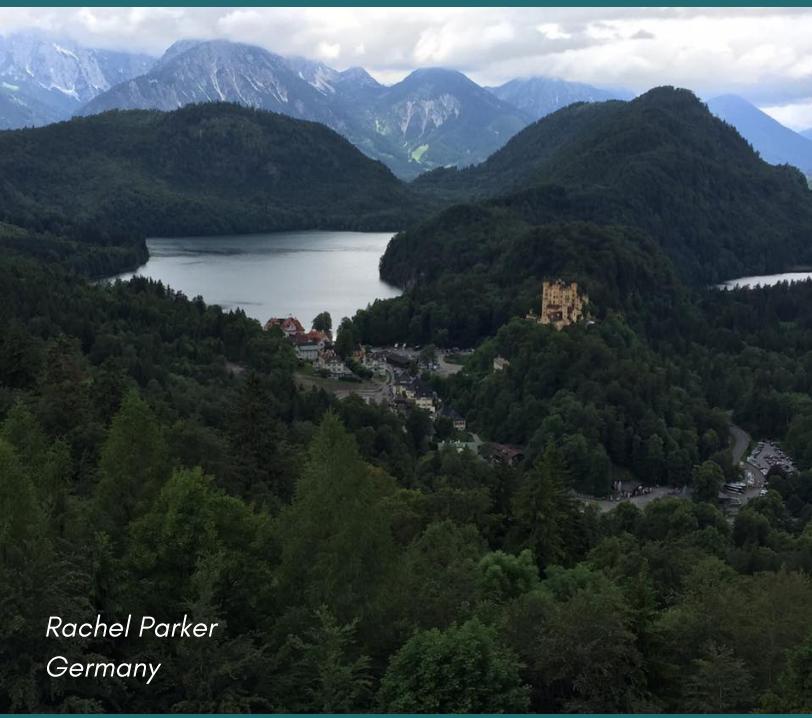
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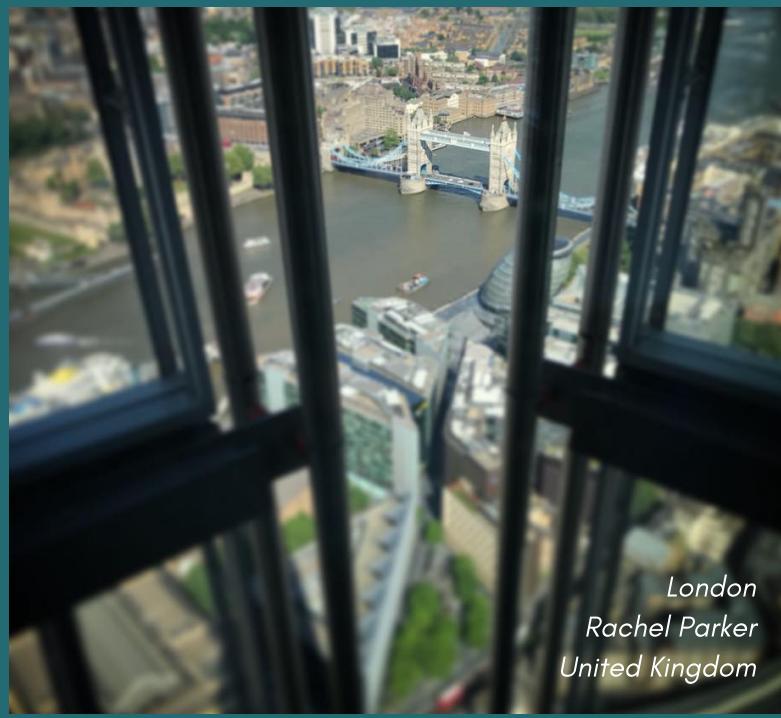
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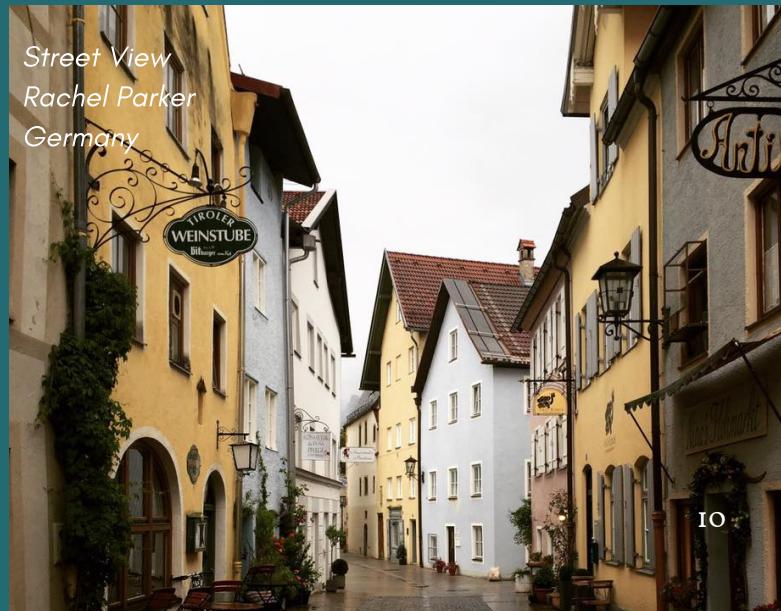
Rachel Parker  
Germany



London  
Rachel Parker  
United Kingdom



London  
Rachel Parker  
United Kingdom



Street View  
Rachel Parker  
Germany

# BIRTHDAY IN VENICE



During my study abroad experience, my friends and I took advantage of the convenient travel in Europe. Never did I think I would spend my 21st birthday in Venice, Italy! It was foodie heaven. I had the best pasta, lasagna, and pizza known to man.

Our gondola rower was texting and rowing! Is that the Venice version of texting and driving? Hands-free please! Pro tip: to get the best price on gondola rides, buy it on the spot from the vendor.

Travel abroad, study abroad, and explore the world. You will learn so much, especially about yourself. I know I did!

- Erica Hanserd

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