



Howdy!
SPRING 2016
WHAT WE'VE DONE...

Jordan Undergraduate Research Fellows Chooses Its First Participant

Gabrielle Lessen

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute is proud to announce the newest addition to our Jordan Fellows Program: MSC L.T. Jordan Undergraduate Research Fellows. This program is a co-program with the Undergraduate Research Scholars program, a branch of Honors and Undergraduate Research that provides students the opportunity for experience in thesis writing and distinction at graduation.

Our first Jordan Undergraduate Research Fellow is Taylor Nutt from Houston, Texas. Taylor is majoring in English with a minor in History and intends to graduate in 2017, after which she plans to attend graduate school and eventually teach at the university level. Nutt will be traveling to England to conduct research on World War I poetry, focusing on the element of silence—the inability to fully describe the experience of World War I. “When a writer writes something, that is the most intimate you are going to get with them. Those are their deepest thoughts. There are things that you put into your writing that you are not conscious of doing,” Taylor explained. Nutt plans to use her experience to obtain a firsthand look at the culture and geography that these poets were surrounded by in England, gaining insight on the message and feelings of these poets that are lost in the element of silence.

When asked about her expectations for the program, Nutt shared, “The opportunity to study over there and talk to people who are experts in my field and to see the culture really excites me! The experience will also build my communication skills and confidence to speak to professors and experts in my field, something that I will have to do in graduate school. It would help me gain a jumpstart on this and be an outstanding candidate



for graduate school in my field of study.” As part of this two-year program, Taylor will prepare this semester to travel abroad in the summer with the L.T. Jordan Fellows Program to conduct her research. Upon her return, Taylor will follow this experience with the Undergraduate Research Scholars program during the next academic year, continuing her research and writing a thesis with the help of her faculty mentor, Dr. Shawna Ross.

Taylor is incredibly excited for this opportunity and plans to share her experience throughout the duration of the trip. “I am planning on blogging about my journey while I’m on it, writing my discoveries & adventures daily or every other day,” Nutt shared, “I think an accessible journal will be helpful to those interested in this program or maybe just considering it. Maybe seeing the work I am doing (but also the fun I will be having) will inspire future generations to come.” She would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Duncan McKenzie, Cory Arcak, the L.T. Jordan Institute, and Dr. Ross for giving her this opportunity and providing her tools for success in her research. Good luck, Taylor!

ISP (International Service Program)

Last summer, ISP sent three students from the School of Public Health to Belize and one medical student to the Dominican Republic.

International Leadership Abroad Program (ILAP)

In the Summer of 2015, forty-six students traveled abroad through ILAP to China, Chile, England, Singapore and Spain. Participants included Texas A&M students from each classification, as well as six Corps members and several members of Jordan!

Fellows Program

Five Texas A&M students conducted international research through the Jordan Fellows Program. Participants consisted of both graduate and undergraduate students and traveled to China, Haiti, Peru and Puerto Rico.

A Letter From the Chair...

As the Memorial Student Center L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness celebrates its thirtieth birthday, I would like to take a moment to reflect — not only upon the monumental progress our student organization has made towards providing the Texas A&M community with unique experiences for cultural immersion — but also the remarkable impact the organization has provided for those of us within it. One year ago, within this column, I discussed a shared vision for the future of MSC L.T. Jordan. Under the guidance of our new advisor, Cory Arcak, and a remarkably talented and motivated team of student executives, this vision has developed far beyond our expectations. In partnership with Texas A&M University Undergraduate Research, our Fellows program has expanded to offer talented undergraduate researchers the opportunity to represent our University overseas and a venue to share those life-changing experiences with fellow Aggies upon their return. On campus, we have sought unique ways to call attention to accomplishments of global service and awareness through establishment of the MSC L.T. Jordan Global Citizen Award and have continued to develop powerful programs seeking to bridge the gap between a world-class University education and the concept of impact through leadership.

There is no doubt that the various programs offered by MSC L.T. Jordan provide opportunities for astounding growth for the participants thereof. However, the personal and professional growth that I have been able to experience — and witness firsthand within our team of student executives — is absolutely and unequivocally beyond compare of any role or experience I have had. Throughout my term as Chair, it has proven clear that the set of core values we share

as Aggies — excellence, integrity, leadership, loyalty, respect, and selfless service — enable a mindset of meaningful interaction within and beyond our respective communities. The process of growth towards the embodiment of these values, unfortunately, is not comfortable nor easy. Only by pushing beyond the bounds of possibility are we able to experience development, and MSC L.T. Jordan has consistently provided me — and every other student within it — the opportunity to challenge ourselves and our concept of servant leadership.

I could not be more grateful to Texas A&M University and the staff and student leadership of the Memorial Student Center for contributing so strongly to the person that MSC L.T. Jordan has empowered me to become. Through organizing and participating in various MSC L.T. Jordan programs, it could not be more clear that the legacy of global citizenship embodied by Leland Thomas and Jessie Wright Jordan — and exemplified by our team of student leaders — is increasingly necessary in our interconnected world. I hope this newsletter provides a glimpse into the remarkable work that our team performs to promote international awareness throughout the Texas A&M community — made possible only through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Jordan, and all benefactors who have followed since.

Yours,
Christopher Oleska '18
2015 MSC L.T. Jordan Chair



2016 Jordan Fellows Participants

Gabrielle Lessen

Taylor Nutt

Taylor Nutt is a Junior English major and History minor who will be traveling to England to research World War I poetry. More specifically, she will be visiting leading archives, museums, monuments and memorials, and universities in order to do archival research and gain an understanding of the context and history of that era. Taylor would also like to use this opportunity to learn the fundamentals of thesis writing as a part of the Undergraduate Research Scholars program.

Timothy Campbell

Timothy Campbell — Tim, a PhD candidate in Anthropology, will be traveling to Laetoli, Tanzania to examine the proportional representation of vertebrate cranial and dental remains compared to postcranial remains in modern owl pellets. Through his findings, Tim would like to reconstruct the past environments in which the research was conducted and develop relationships which will benefit his future as a scholar. He will be engaging with local tribes in the area and will spend a majority of his time directly observing the wildlife.

Laura Oviedo

Laura is a History PhD candidate with a minor in Sociology. Laura will be travelling to Puerto Rico to study the impact of Puerto Rican women in the United States military during World War II. In order to gather her information, she will be interviewing Puerto Rican locals as well as browsing military archives at an American military base.

Explorations With ILAP

Christina Long

This coming summer, several students will get the once-in-a-lifetime experience of having an internship. The special element? All of these internships will be abroad in numerous countries, including Chile, Singapore, England, China, and Spain. One of these students, Arianne Couch, will be embarking on a journey to Singapore. I got a chance to sit down with Arianne and talk with her about her upcoming internship.

Going abroad will not be anything new for Arianne; she began traveling abroad her junior year in high school with her International Baccalaureate program and has not stopped ever since! In the past, she had the opportunity to experience several different cultures through her travels to England, Costa Rica, France, and Italy. Having already developed a familiarity with and appreciation for European culture, the prospect of going to a drastically different country in Southeast Asia has her a little nervous—but also ecstatic—as her past experience in traveling has led her to develop a passion and excitement for learning about other people and their cultures.

Traveling to Singapore will introduce Arianne to a variety of new experiences and encounters. Arianne mentioned the difference in language as one of the most prominent ones. She has learned a couple of the romance languages of Europe, which are a far cry from those of Asia, so she looks forward to the challenge of learning to communicate with citizens of Singapore. In addition, the contrast between Asian

landscape and that of the U.S. and the new cuisine palate that she will be presented with—one that centers greatly on seafood—are some other changes she anticipates. As it is for many full time students, this will also be her first time slipping into a nine-to-five work schedule. While she knows she will be busy, Arianne hopes to get a chance to visit Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam, and has also been looking into the possibility of getting to visit some World Heritage Foundation sites in the area.

In preparation for her journey, Arianne has begun reading as much as she can on traveling in Southeast Asia, especially regarding the differences in travel in comparison to Europe. To her excitement, she has found Pinterest and travel blogs to be surprisingly helpful and accurate tools in her research. As for less logistical and more mental preparation, Arianne feels that most of that will come later, but the feeling of anticipation has begun to sink in! While she has been abroad numerous times, she realizes that nothing will quite prepare her for the length of a solid six weeks abroad in Singapore. Then again, it is a rare opportunity, as there are very few other times in life where one can travel for such an extended period, and she plans to make the most of it.

St. Augustine of Hippo insisted, “The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only one page.” Arianne will get to read yet another page in the book of the world’s wonders this summer. We wish her the best of luck in this endeavor and cannot wait to hear about her life-changing experience!

World-Fest

Samantha Phu

On November 20 and 21, 2015, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute participated in the annual Brazos Valley World-Fest, a festival held at Wolf Pen Creek in College Station to raise cultural awareness in the community in a fun and interactive environment. During this event, MSC L.T. Jordan sponsored a performance that was held on the first night of the event—La Orquesta Salmerum Salsa Concert and Dance. The next day, members and executives of Jordan braved the extremely strong winds to lead booth activities from 10AM to 5PM. We invited visitors to create flags of various countries and to guess the names of different highlighted countries on a world map created by our members. As they participated in the booth, visitors

had the opportunity to watch various cultural performances taking place on the venue’s stage and discuss Jordan and our mission at Texas A&M. Around 700 people visited our booth, including hundreds of parents with their children coming to tap into their creative outlet to make a flag. Many families expressed their enjoyment of our booth; one parent even stated that our booth made the festival a more enjoyable experience for their children. Everyone in our organization had a great time running the booth, meeting the families, and spreading our incredible mission statement. World-fest was a successful culmination of different cultures and fully embodied what it meant to be a global citizen, and we can’t wait to be a part of the next one!



The Collection Room: A Student's Adventure through the History of Jordan

Madison Nieto

After a week on campus, I knew my way around fairly well. With not much to do and a lot of spare time, I often found myself exploring the MSC. It didn't take me long to find what I know now as the Collection Room. Every time I walked past the room, the doors would be closed, only a soft glow illuminating the outline of the large, deep, rich wood of the display cases. My curiosity overcame me. I walked up to the glass of the doors and peered in. Elegance and magnificent don't do justice in describing the room. A tone rich as mahogany ran through the whole space, emulating an elegant British/Victorian style. When I stepped back, the door rattled.

Realizing it was open, I went in. Silently and briskly, I buffered the door to keep my presence from being known. The gravity of the room had pulled me in. The rows of trinkets, fans, fine pottery, and other glorious souvenirs lined the prestigious display cases. At the left corner of the room there was a shrinks chair, accompanied by a nightstand with a large leather-bound book on it. The front read "The Collection Room: The Stories of the Cases". Enticed, I opened the book and peered at the first page in the dim light. This is what I've learned so far:

The Collection Room was started in memory of Leland T. Jordan, a former Aggie who graduated as a Mechanical Engineer in the class of 1929. When he graduated from Texas A&M, he traveled often through his job in the Gulf Oil Company; each time, he brought back trinkets and souvenirs from the places he visited as mementos of his time there. Before LT Jordan died, he wanted to start an institution to bring awareness of different cultures to the students of A&M. Though he passed before he could personally pursue this aspirations himself, his significant other, Jessie Wright Jordan, took the reigns of what he started. The creation of the student organization known today as the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute of International Awareness—along with the Collection Room—was all due to Mrs. Jordan.

The book in my hands was a compilation of the origins of the souvenirs in the cases, all from the perspective of Mrs. Jordan. Amazed, I turned the page to the first entry, "Case 1", only to see a light flicker on in the office conjoined to the Collection Room. Hearing footsteps, I bolted out of the door.

That was 6 hours ago. It's 9:53 pm, and the words "Case 1" still dance in my head.

I'm going back tomorrow.



To whom it may concern...

In 2015 I had the honor to travel to the town of Punta Gorda, Belize to work with the Toledo Institute of Development and Environment (TIDE) via the LT Jordan Institute's International Service Program. In my last moments in Belize – a sticky night in late June – I titled my journal entry “My Belize is not for Tourists”. The Belize I had come to love was peppered with wild mango, cashew, guava, and coconut trees. Chickens, turkeys, and geese dotted the streets and gardens, their populations involuntarily controlled by the large numbers of stray dogs and cats. Occasional passing conversations - spoken with a distinctly musical cadence and accent that can sound slightly Jamaican – would drift in on the heavy wet air through screened windows. These six weeks were my first in a tropical habitat and, though the heat was oppressive, I was heartsick to leave.

Early on, it was clear to me that education was a different beast in Belize than in the US. No rack to be found, bikes littered the ground outside of every classroom with no helmets in sight. Clearly, there were no grounds keepers as the open spaces were overgrown and scattered with litter. One classroom I came upon had no teacher; she had called in sick and there is no means of providing a substitute. The library had no librarian and was woefully short on books. Having a Bachelor's Degree, let alone pursuing my Master's, marked me out as different. In Belize, a college degree was still a rare and prized thing. My level of education meant I am treated as an expert in all things, which turned out to be equal parts both daunting and invigorating. It became abundantly clear how small communities of British and American expatriates took over important leadership positions with little resistance from the local population.

TIDE hosts a constant stream of interns from all over the world. I had the privilege to work with individuals from Ireland, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States in addition to local Belizeans. I got to know these remarkable people my first weekend, when Punta Gorda played host to the Chocolate Festival of Belize. From then on these were the names and faces that would litter my photographs and journal entries. We pooled our communal expertise to tackle the various projects we were assigned. Together we explored the waterfalls at Rio Blanco National Park and the Placencia Lobster Festival. These relationships lead me to

further contacts - the US Foreign Service Officers to Belize, the Principals of St Peter Claver Primary School, and the two British General Practitioners and an American Nurse Practitioner working in the Hillside Clinic - that served me both in Belize and after returning home.

One of my favorite memories from Belize rose unexpectedly as the workday wrapped up on an unremarkable Wednesday. A large number of TIDE employees set up a volleyball game out front of the building. It soon became apparent that this was a common occurrence. To me, the most invigorating bit happened when both the Development and Executive Directors came out of their offices to play. Nobody was much good but that was irrelevant; it was fun. I was struck by the comradery not horizontally – between the interns or employees – but vertically – between the interns, employees, and directors – demonstrated in this simple game. This short, messy game resonated with me as one of the healthiest means to insure a healthy work environment I had ever experienced.

My time in Belize was a whirlwind of activity; I found myself nearly overwhelmed with new and different perspectives, otherwise unconsidered career options, and creating valuable contacts in country. Flexibility was important, especially as practicum projects evolved and changed with the needs of the organization. My life immediately after leaving the host country and returning to the US was riddled with subtle adjustments; I found myself overwhelmed by the luxuries, diversions, and superfluity in my day-to-day life. There was a responsibility to accurately represent my Belize – a Caribbean, English-speaking, developing country in Central America – at home to audiences, at best, acquainted with Belizean tourist traps or, at worst, unaware of magnificent country altogether.

Through the International Service Program, the LT Jordan Institute gave me the opportunity to explore my personal and professional strengths while working to overcome my weaknesses. I learned a great deal about what I can do, what I want to do, and strategies for how to get there. It is my hope to use the skills I honed during my time in Belize to develop a career in international public health policy.

Gratefully-
Abigail Mulcahy

The L.T. Jordan Overseas Loan Program provides a \$500-\$1500 zero interest loan for students to use as a supplement to their travel abroad budget. The loan is open to any Texas A&M, Texas A&M Galveston, or Texas A&M Health Science Center student. Preference shall be given to first-time overseas travelers and those traveling for the purpose of cultural enrichment. Students can access the loan application on the MSC LT Jordan Institute for International Awareness website: ljordan.tamu.edu/apply. Applications will remain open until April 15, 2016.

The Overseas Loan Program relies on the generosity of donations to provide funds for its applicants. For Spring 2016, we aim to expand the program so that more students have the opportunity to use this amazing resource to travel the world. If you are interested in supporting this program, please see page 8.

The Water Crisis

Ashley Naveira

On November 17th, 2015, the MSC LT Jordan Institute hosted the “Fighting Our Water Crisis” event. This event included a discussion about the global water crisis and the fascinating ways in which creative minds have decided to tackle this issue. Two of these innovators served as our speakers for this program, each capturing a unique perspective of this international plight. Oscar Muñoz, the Current Director of the Texas Colonias Project, and Dr. Bran Boulanger, a Civil Engineering Professor, each demonstrated the applications of their respective fields to creating accessible water filters. As the Director of the Texas Colonias Project, Dr. Muñoz assists in the development, evaluations, and implementation of ways to improve the quality of life of residents in impoverished rural and urban Hispanic communities. During the event, Dr. Muñoz enlightened our audience about the little-known details of the water crisis both here in the United States and in other international/rural communities like Ecuador, Bolivia, and Guatemala. Dr. Boulanger is a Civil Engineering professor at

Ohio Northern University. He published “Re/searching for clean water: Artists, community workers, and engineers in partnership for positive community change”, amongst other related works. After the guests’ presentation, Texas A&M students had the opportunity to ask the speakers questions about their experiences and opinion on this important issue. The night concluded with the honoring of Dr. Muñoz with the MSC L.T. Jordan Global Citizen Award for his extensive work in this matter.

About 70 TAMU students and faculty attended this event, and the audience was captivated by the program. They asked our speakers incredible questions and stayed well after the event to engage with our guests further. There were also several students who wanted to know how they could get involved with Dr. Muñoz’s work, especially for graduate studies. We were very excited by the positive response to such an important global issue grateful to those who made this wonderful program possible!

Russian Film Festival

Samantha Phu

In collaboration with the Texas A&M Russian Language Department, the MSC Aggie Cinema, and the Texas A&M Department of International Studies, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute participated in Russian Film Festival – an annual event designed to showcase a Russian film or documentary related to current events in the world. This year we presented a documentary called Revolution Museum, produced by the KinoKi Studio in Moscow and directed by Nataliya Babintseva. The film explores the preservation of art in conjunction with the spirit of the people around the Maidan during the famous 2014 Ukraine revolt. The film showed a gritty and widely undocumented side of the Ukrainian Revolution and sparked critical thinking about the connection of art and human emotion in regards to a social movement.

We were honored that one of the producers of the film – a man named Anatoly B. Golubovskiv – was able to attend

that night, and he offered a more in-depth explanation of the meaning of the documentary, its mission, and behind-the-scene secrets and trivia about its filming. Compared to last year’s statistics, the attendance of this year’s film festival almost doubled. In the post-film question and answer session, majority of the students and faculty who attended were very receptive and responsive to the film, asking Mr. Golubovskiv many questions about the film’s production and message. Many of the students, including myself, were not aware of the effects of the Ukrainian Revolution on its people, and this film successfully spread awareness to the issue. In feedback from students about their experience and thoughts on the film and the festival, many students greatly enjoyed the film, and even requested for more international film nights in the future. Overall, the Russian Film Night was a fun and informative event that helped spread cultural awareness on campus.



International Education Outreach

International Education Outreach (IEO) is a program with the mission to educate the Bryan/College Station community about other cultures and international awareness. This goal is achieved by presenting in College Station ISD and Bryan ISD schools, as well to other community groups and organizations, in order to help Bryan/College Station residents grow as global citizens. Last semester, the members of Jordan's IEO subcommittee created and showcased a presentation about Argentina to Mr. Morales's Spanish class at Bryan High School. They also gathered information from an international student about South Africa to be put into a presentation. This semester, the IEO program prepared

an informational slideshow about Brazil to present to a local senior organization which they called the Senior Passport Presentation.

In addition to organizing presentations, IEO has the goal to make a unique trunk for every country that has previously been the subject of a presentation. The trunk will contain the note cards needed for the presentation, as well as donated souvenirs or cultural items relevant to that particular country to use as tools to help educate our audience. The goal is to have two countries done per semester. If you are interested in donating an item to be used in an IEO presentation, please contact our IEO Director Jennifer Hopkins at jenniferhopkins18@gmail.com.

Preparing Leaders to Sit at the World's Tables

Warren Chalklen Ph.D.

As a visiting scholar from South Africa who is passionate about equity and the development of young people, I am constantly looking for opportunities to learn about leadership, build my knowledge base, and grow in my understanding of the world around me. I was drawn to the L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness because our mission, vision, and values align. My background in international urban education and the development of student-centered leadership programs made me particularly interested in how I could enhance their work in purposefully cultivating globalized thinkers, developing culturally responsive leaders, and nurturing professionals ready to take on the challenges of the future. Seeing this synergy, Cory Arcak—the Director of L.T. Jordan—approached me with the offer to collaborate with Jordan as a visiting scholar, working with the students while crafting their story through a redesigned build website. I jumped at the opportunity, ready to make a difference in these students' experiences through Jordan. What I did not expect was my total transformation in turn.

Wi-Fi, the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and the massive displacement of people around the globe remind us that we live in an interconnected world. No longer are we limited by the boundaries of our towns, our cities, or our countries. We are global citizens. As such, what we do—or do not do—as individuals bears consequences further than we often comprehend. In this context, the essential role of leadership emerges as a vital social good.

Understanding this, I spent considerable time with the students of L.T. Jordan and, as a result, feel inspired by the caliber of our future leadership. The committee members who make up the executive board are influential as individuals

but even more powerful as a team. I see this exemplified in their powerful programming. The L.T. Jordan students are engaging global experts on the water crisis facing the Texas Colonias, designing programs to create awareness about refugees, and visiting local schools to inform students about other countries. To execute these programs, they applied evidence-based decision-making, developed personnel evaluation tools, and executed professional development programs. I joined the organization ready to impart my own knowledge, but I found so much more waiting for me. In my interactions with them and their committee members, I quickly learned a valuable lesson: what I could learn from them was more than I could ever “teach”. Once I realized this truth, I never stopped feeling that I was witnessing the growth of true global leadership giants. The culture of the organization mixed with the depth of their leadership results in multi-faceted problem solving, mutual collaboration, and passion to make a difference in the world around them.

The students of L.T. Jordan are truly bringing the world to Aggie Land and taking Aggie Land to the world. These skills will serve them well as they tackle the future challenges of political, economic, environmental, and social inequities. As my time with LT Jordan nears its formal conclusion I am reminded of the African proverb: If a child washes their hands, they can eat with queens and kings. L.T. Jordan has provided the washbowl, the water, and the soap. The students of this organization are preparing themselves to sit at the most influential tables on this planet. And when they do, their voice will carry the hopes and dreams of Leland T., Jessie W., Texas A&M University, and people everywhere committed to a better world. How could we expect otherwise?

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We are looking forward to a successful
year! Thanks and Gig 'Em!

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Visit our Website:
<http://ltjordan.tamu.edu>

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