



Jordan Journeys

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MSC L.T. JORDAN INSTITUTE

Spring 2019

SOUL OF AN ISLAND: PUERTO RICO'S RESPONSE TO HURRICANE MARIA

2 Letter from the
Chair
ISP Spotlight

3 2018-2019
Fellows
ILAP Spotlight

4 What is IEO?
Brazos Valley
Worldfest

5 Member Spotlight
Interview with
Dr. Musoma

6 Bee the Change
Russian Film
Festival

7 ISP Expands to
Puerto Rico

On March 1st, 2019, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness partnered with the Puerto Rican Student Association and LAUNCH to bring **Christine Nieves and Luis Rodriguez** to campus to speak about their response to Hurricane Maria's destruction in Puerto Rico. Both speakers are community leaders in the Puerto Rican town of Mariana and have spearheaded recovery efforts there since the storm's devastation. MSC L.T. Jordan first interacted with Christine and Luis when a team of Texas A&M students had the opportunity to serve alongside them in Mariana.

Christine and Luis shared their experiences in Rudder Theatre, detailing how they overcame the adversities brought on by Hurricane Maria and how their community initiative, *Proyecto de Apoyo Mutuo Mariana*, has brought their community together. *Proyecto De Apoyo Mutuo Mariana*, or the Mariana Mutual Support Project, has served the physical needs of the residents of Mariana in the time since Maria. The soup kitchen, which is run by volunteer cooks, is able to



serve 300+ people a day. More than just that, however, it has also supported the emotional and cultural needs of the people. Luis's musical background was of particular importance, as he routinely plays his music for his hometown. MSC L.T. Jordan was lucky enough to have him share that very same music on stage while accompanied by some of Texas A&M's own talented students, several of whom were Jordan members.

Nieves received a Master of Science in Evidence-Based Social Intervention from Oxford and is a TEDMed speaker. Rodriguez received a Master of Music in Classical Music Composition from the University of Massachusetts. He also released a 13-song album, *Amor(es)*, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.



By: Cole Heath '20

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR...

Throughout my experiences with the Memorial Student Center L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness, I have come to see this organization as a leader in international exposure and service to Texas A&M. It has been incredible to see how this organization impacts our campus and community and I am so proud of all it has accomplished.

Our team is grateful for the support and guidance we have received from so many of our friends this year. For the third year, our executive team participated in a mentorship program with Texas A&M's International Advisory Board, a relationship which has allowed each of us to explore our professional goals and learn from some of the most accomplished

individuals we have ever known. With the help of L.A.U.N.C.H., the Corps of Cadets, and the Puerto Rican Student Association, our team was able to organize our first International Service Program in Puerto Rico; there we built the relationships that made our March program, Soul of an Island, a possibility. This summer, participants in our Internship and Living Abroad Program will be supported by the generous donations of Dr. Sue and Mr. Patrick Mahoney, and our incoming participants will be presented with the same opportunity. Finally, we will partner with MSC OPAS in the coming fall semester for our program 7 Voices.

As I reflect upon my time with the MSC Leland T. and Jessie W. Jordan Institute for International



Awareness, I am humbled and honored by the opportunity to serve as its chair. The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute impacts lives in many different ways, and my experiences with this committee of the Memorial Student Center have taught me so much about cultural awareness, personal growth, and leadership. I am pleased to share with you the work our committee has done this year on the Texas A&M campus, in the Bryan/College Station community, and around the world.

Yours,

Janie Davis '19

2018-2019 MSC L.T. Jordan Chair

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAM

By: Suliya Balogun '20

The **International Service Program** is geared toward students that are interested in medicine, public health, and environmental sciences, and/or marine conservation. This program gives students the opportunity to serve communities in Belize and Costa Rica while fully immersing themselves in a different culture.

In the previous year, participants traveled to Punta Gorda, Belize, where they worked with the community on improving physical and nutritional health. **Samantha Tachibana** worked with the children and taught them the importance of the water cycle, while **Chauncey LaBoo** worked with the local park

rangers and developed a cookbook with local cuisine and healthy food options for the community.

This year, MSC L.T. Jordan will be sending **Ava Kowalski**, a sophomore Kinesiology major, to Costa Rica. Ava will be teaching the women of the community the importance of maintaining proper physical health while working within the household. **"I hope to leave a positive impact in the community I find myself a part of while abroad. I am most excited to learn from my experiences in hopes to become a better health care provider in the future."**

FELLOWS CLASS OF 2018-19 SPOTLIGHT

By: *Artisia Susanto '19*

The MSC L.T. Jordan Fellows Program provides highly qualified Texas A&M University students with the opportunity for personal enrichment and education through an international research project. Participants design a specific independent research project that will enhance their education or professional goals. The program annually selects up to ten qualified graduate or undergraduate students to conduct their research abroad.

Sarah Brinkley is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Horticultural Sciences. Brinkley will be conducting her research in Copán, Honduras with the Capucas Coffee Producers Cooperative. She will evaluate how soil health impacts coffee quality, in an effort to directly support agricultural management practices for smallholder coffee farmers. Brinkley is excited to work alongside the agronomists in the field and be surrounded by nature in the Tropics.

Manuel Flores is a junior in Ecological Restoration of the Ecosystem Science & Management Department and is supported in partnership with LAUNCH: Undergraduate Research. He will be conducting research at the Texas A&M Soltis Center in Costa Rica for Research & Education and will study differences in physiological function of shade-tolerant plants across an elevation gradient. He is looking forward to being immersed in a culture that has a great sense of pride and respect for the environment.

Taryn Johnson is a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology. Johnson will be performing genomic analyses of bacteria found in Paleoamerican coprolites with the Warinner Lab Group at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Human History in Jena, Germany to study prehistoric gut microbiomes. Johnson is looking forward to earning new methodologies, forging research connections, and engaging with German culture.

Simon Kiacz is a Ph.D. candidate in Ecology & Evolutionary Biology. Kiacz is traveling to the Madre de Dios region of Southeastern Peru to study family group ecology of parrots in the genus *Amazona*. Kiacz is looking forward to being fully immersed in a research setting deep within the Peruvian Amazon.

Mackenzie Pryor is a graduate student in the Department of Anthropology. Over the summer, Pryor will be traveling to Bolivia and will conduct pilot research which looks at the interactions between frugivorous bats and owl monkeys. Pryor will be obtaining data through various methods while practicing identification, tracking, and trapping, and is most looking forward to seeing the animals in their natural environments.



INTERNSHIP AND LIVING ABROAD PROGRAM

By: *Kalista Jordan-DeBruin '21*

The MSC L.T. Jordan Institute's Internship and Living Abroad Program (ILAP) allows students to spend at least 6 weeks interning abroad in companies related to their majors or career interests while gaining valuable professional skills and cultural experiences. ILAP has programs in **China, England, Spain, Chile, and Singapore**. One of the highlights of the internship program are the cultural excursions, which allow participants to see and experience other cultural aspects of the country or region in which they are interning. For example, students who intern in Singapore travel to Malaysia due to Malaysia's geographical proximity and important cultural

influence on Singapore.

Makenzie Kookan '20 is traveling to Chile this summer and tells us, **"I am most looking forward to being completely out of my element. Someone once told me that you know you're making progress when you do things that make you uncomfortable. Working in a different country, learning about a new culture, and speaking a language that is not my first all make me little uncomfortable in the best way possible."** In 2019, the L.T. Jordan Institute will be sending 4 students to China, 6 students to Chile, 6 students to Spain, 11 students to England, and 8 students to Singapore.

ONE MEMBER'S EXPERIENCE WITH IEO

By: Cullen Miller '22

This past semester, I had the privilege of serving as a member of the On-Campus Programming subcommittee in the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute. As part of this subcommittee, I assisted in spreading international awareness to the community outside of Texas A&M through various outreach programs and on-campus events.

The project that had the greatest impact on me was our research and presentation of information about various Latin American countries to schools through our International Education Outreach program. I had the opportunity to research Argentina and Peru, and I grew immensely in my knowledge and understanding of the culture and history of these countries. However, it was not the research that was truly impactful; rather, it was the presentation of this information to schools that left the most profound impression on me. I helped present information about the geography, culture, and history of Peru to sixth graders at Jane Long Intermediate School in Bryan. This was the first time that I actually went off campus to spread international awareness. I really felt like I was fulfilling the Jordan Institute's mission statement through "providing Texas A&M University and the surrounding community with

international exposure." It was extremely rewarding to listen to some of the students' comments on their own experiences with Peruvian food or geography or the fact that they had visited Peru. I believe that through our presentation, we opened the students' eyes to the uniqueness and cultural diversity of the world around them.

My experiences as a part of the On-Campus Programming subcommittee have allowed me to grow in my understanding and appreciation of international cultures and have instilled in me a desire to spread my passion for international cultures to those around me. The world is a fascinating place, yet there are so many people who have had very little international exposure. For those of us in the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness, it is our responsibility to share what we know about the world with the rest of our community.



BRAZOS VALLEY WORLDVEST

By: Alex Williams '21

On October 27th, 2018, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute participated in the **2018 Brazos Valley Worldfest**, where members hosted a variety of activities that taught participants about different aspects of world cultures. This year's Worldfest hosted a record number of attendees, many of whom participated in one or more of the three activities that Jordan prepared for the event. There was a game show-style wheel with trivia questions escalating in

difficulty about different areas and cultures of the world. At the second booth, the flag creation station, participants could replicate an existing flag design or create their own. Younger children loved coloring their own flags, but the most popular event was a puzzle depicting different world cultures that attracted younger and older participants alike.

The Brazos Valley Worldfest provides a wonderful opportunity for general

committee members to experience community outreach in a unique way. Those who participate teach others about the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute while spreading international awareness to the surrounding Bryan/College Station communities. Through participation in this annual event, members of MSC L.T. Jordan are able to connect with other student groups, children, and entire families and spread international awareness in an entirely different group of people.

GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

By: Gabriel Nambila '19



Elsbeth Chow '22 is a freshman biology major who joined the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute because she saw a lot of importance in our mission of international awareness. As a general member of the Support Subcommittee, she has had the opportunity to be a part of panels to interview applicants for international programs, which has taught her a lot about how to carry herself in future interviews. She has also gotten to work on marketing the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute's on-campus programs and has been learning how to use different computer programs to market to specific audiences. Elsbeth is excited to continue her involvement in Jordan this year and cannot wait to see what the new year brings.



Juan Diego Prado '20 is a junior political science major and a member of the support subcommittee. He has been able to work closely with the week to week planning and coordination of activities for members. Juan Diego decided to join the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute because he believes that it is a fantastic opportunity for him to be involved in spreading international awareness, which he considers crucial for anyone interested in global politics and culture. He stated that he is proud to see how the organization gives students at Texas A&M various opportunities to learn, connect, and even visit different countries around the world while simultaneously helping to increase understanding of other nations and peoples around the world to residents right here in Texas.

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. MUSOMA

By: Gabriel Nambila '19 and Angelica Evans '21

Dr. Henry Musoma received both his Master's and Undergraduate degrees from Texas A&M University with a concentration in International Agricultural Development. He completed his Doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Administration at Texas Christian University. As a student, he was involved with the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness. While a member of the Jordan Institute, he remembers interacting with a very diverse group, including a significant number of international students.

Years later, as an instructor for the Academy for Future International Leaders (AFIL) in 2007, he worked on projects that had global significance. Dr. Musoma remarked that meeting people from all over the world through these experiences opened his eyes.

Dr. Musoma believes Texas A&M is a place where we all come to tell our stories and to hear others; it is through this that we leave Texas A&M a better place. He said that it is important to him that we are developing on issues of global understanding, as he believes that Texas A&M is at its best when its

students understand their place in the greater global society.



BEE THE CHANGE

By: Cole Heath '20

On October 19th, 2018, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute partnered with the MSC Visual Arts Committee to bring **Bee the Change** to Texas A&M. Beekeepers Ashley Ralph and Justin Russell, from College Station's very own **Prime Bee Farm**, discussed how the Texas A&M community as a whole could promote local bee health and sustainability. They also demonstrated why these sustainability efforts are important across the globe.

Attendees were greeted with informational displays and handouts describing the science of bee sustainability and best practices to promote healthy local bee populations. The speakers from Prime Bee Farm began by giving a brief description of their own efforts to develop strong, diverse colonies of bees that can be sent out to support agricultural initiatives across the globe. They also provided information on the various kinds of bees that are found around the world.

Ms. Ralph and Mr. Russell then went on to describe how bees and honey have shaped and continue to shape cultures around the world. The beekeepers illustrated that bees are found nearly anywhere that people are and have served as a commonality among people from different

corners of the world. **"My perspective really changed on how bees have played a role in cultures across the world," said L.T. Jordan member Joseph Muir.** Bee the Change closed with an engaging question and answer session where students and community members learned more about the work that the two speakers do to develop strong bee colonies. Before leaving, each attendee received a vibrant T-shirt bearing the program's name so that they may encourage those around them to Bee the Change.



RUSSIAN FILM FESTIVAL

By: Brady Allen '21

On October 24th, 2018, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness and the Texas A&M Russian Language Department presented **Pussy Riot: The Movement**, hosted by the film's producer/writer Carole Keeney. The film describes the band members' journey to prison and back on their mission to protest the harsh limitations imposed upon Russian citizens by their government. This film illuminates the Russian government's efforts to suppress

divisive speech through interviews with the Pussy Riot members, the lawyers they worked with, and the citizens impacted by their efforts.

Two professors in the Texas A&M Russian department, **Drs. Olga and Brett Cooke**, invited their students to attend the film screening. Freshman international studies majors were also invited to attend and share their experience as part of a class report. Working with these departments and inviting

their students allowed us to reach a greater portion of the student body and have a greater impact on the university as a whole.

One general committee member said that this film opened his eyes to how the Russian government stifles the freedoms of its citizens but also to how that could spread to other countries. This sentiment was shared by many of the students who attended and were able to ask questions.

ISP EXPANDS TO PUERTO RICO

By: Janie Davis '19

In the spring of 2018, the MSC L.T. Jordan Institute was presented with the opportunity to expand its International Service Program to a new location: Puerto Rico. Less than a year had passed since the devastating events of Hurricane Maria, and we were put in contact with Christine Nieves Rodriguez and Luis Rodriguez Sanchez, professors and community leaders from the town of Mariana. In June, in partnership with LAUNCH, the Corps of Cadets, the Puerto Rican Student Association, and other committees and departments of the Memorial Student Center, MSC L.T. Jordan sent a team of students and staff to work alongside the community of Mariana.

When we arrived in Mariana, we were prepared to work and learn plenty about the culture we were immersed in. During our time there, we cleaned and painted kitchens and offices, sorted hundreds of donated books, and painted a classroom that would later become a children's library. What we could not have anticipated was how much we would learn about strength and service from our friends in Mariana. They exemplified the importance of relying on hope and community as you heal from a disaster like a hurricane, and they taught us how to love and serve your neighbors even in the most difficult of circumstances. We had come to Mariana with the goal of serving the community in whatever capacity we could; we left feeling as though we were the ones who had been loved, taught, and cared for.

The relationships we established this summer have grown into partnerships. Our hope is that this program will continue to grow as an extension of ISP, allowing Texas A&M students to work and learn in the beautiful community of Mariana and to come home as changed as we were last summer.





Jordan Journeys

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MSC L.T. JORDAN INSTITUTE

Memorial Student Center | Texas A&M University
Student Programs Office Suite 2240 | 1237 TAMU | College Station, TX 77843-1237

TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY®



On behalf of the L.T. Jordan Institute, the Jordan Journeys staff would like to thank you for your contributions. We are looking forward to another successful year! Thanks & Gig 'Em!

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Email: coryarcak@tamu.edu

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

ltjordan.tamu.edu

JORDAN JOURNEYS STAFF:

Abbey Penton '21 - Marketing Executive
Angelica Evans '21 - Development Executive
Artisia Susanto '19 - Vice-Chair and Fellows Executive
Cole Heath '20 - On-Campus Programming Executive
Gabriel Nambila '19 - Student Development Executive
Gregory Wong '21 - On-Campus Programming Executive
Janie Davis '19 - Chair
Kallista Jordan-DeBruin '21 - ILAP Executive
Suliat Balogun '20 - ISP Executive
Alex Williams '21
Brady Allen '21
Cullen Miller '22

**THE MSC L.T. JORDAN INSTITUTE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND
A SPECIAL THANKS TO
Dr. Sue and Mr. Patrick Mahoney**

MSC LELAND T. AND JESSIE W.
JORDAN
INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Enclosed is my contribution for the amount of ____\$500 ____\$250 ____\$100 ____Other

Please make your check payable to Texas A&M Foundation and indicate below how you would like your contribution to support the L.T. Jordan Institute for International Awareness.

Return to:

Memorial Student Center
1237 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-1237
979.845.1914

____ **MSC Jordan Institute Annual Programs** (05-53059) – Support the Jordan Institute's on-campus and abroad programs such as International Educational Outreach, Internships and Living Abroad Programs (ILAP), and Jordan Fellows. *To give by credit card, go to give.am/SupportJordanInstitute.*

____ **MSC Jordan International Awareness Endowment** (04-53059) – Help build the endowment to support the Jordan Institute's mission of providing Texas A&M and the community with international exposure through on-campus programming and travel abroad opportunities.

All contributions are tax deductible as defined by law. Please include company gift matching information if applicable. Thanks & Gig 'Em!