

ALEC SHORT, JORDAN, 2012

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Montana

BENJAMIN A.

GILMAN

INTERNATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIP



I spent a semester in Amman, Jordan. I was on an internship with Ruwwad: The Arab Foundation for Sustainable Development. Ruwwad's headquarters are in the disadvantaged community of Jabal Al Natheef. During my time there, I worked for Ruwwad's Safe Homes Campaign, which aims to prevent child abuse by educating parents, young and old, about childcare. My second project was designing a drama program that Ruwwad can implement during their summer programs. The final part of my internship was instruction and facilitation of English conversation classes. I had three classes of my own, which consisted of intermediate and advanced speakers.

Before coming to Ruwwad, I had set personal and professional goals for myself: task delegation, organization and developing leadership skills. I achieved these goals and have learned a great deal more. I believe that the

most important outcome of my experience is the relationship and connection that I have built with the people in the community of Jabal Al Natheef and in Ruwwad. They have provided me with a profound insight to their culture and lives.

Personally, I have grown tremendously because of where I worked and the people I worked with. The community of Jabal Natheef is the most disadvantaged community in Amman. Most of its inhabitants are Palestinian refugees and recently, there has been an influx of Syrians. My understanding of the Palestinian people has grown immensely since working here. My understanding of the Islamic culture has increased, as well as my cultural competence for this region. This internship has made me a more confident individual, and the work that Ruwwad accomplishes has highlighted important career goals for myself, primarily in the public service sector.

Professionally, my work ethic and independence has increased. The ability to delegate tasks, organize my work and execute goals has grown. I have been primarily in charge of myself for this internship and have shown pride in my work for Ruwwad. While working in Amman, I have come to find myself as a strong leader

and an important part of what Ruwwad sets out to accomplish on a daily basis.

The experience has sparked a strong academic interest to pursue graduate school. The impact that the members of Ruwwad have on the community of Jabal Al Natheef is monumental and life-changing, which has created this interest in getting into the public service sector. After working for this underdeveloped community, it's apparent that there are many more out in the world like it. I would like to use my skills, past experiences and education to serve disadvantaged communities of the global public.

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There are many government organizations and NGOs that serve communities across the world, which I would like to become involved with.

I would like to pursue opportunities with the State Department to become a Foreign Service Officer or apply for the Fulbright Scholarship to live and do research overseas.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I worked with the International Programs office at my home university to conduct outreach to students at the University of Montana. During international

education week, I spoke to possible study abroad participants about the resources available to them at the University of Montana. I hoped to eliminate financial fears about going

abroad while in school and increase awareness about obtaining academic credit in their program.