

BADGERS BEYOND ABROAD

alumni interview series

Sarah Jerving

Belgium + Kenya

Life After Study Abroad

During college, I spent a semester in Brussels, Belgium where I interned at the Associated Press covering the European Union. The following spring, I studied in Nairobi, Kenya where I interned at a community radio station.

When I returned to Madison from study abroad I started interning at the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism on campus. My boss later told me that my study abroad experiences stood out to him on my resume because it showed that I was willing to put myself outside of my comfort zone. Following graduation from UW-Madison, I worked in Senegal for a development organization and then as a reporter for news organizations in the United States. I most recently was working as a correspondent for an American wire news service in East Africa. I am now a Lorana Sullivan fellow at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

Impact on Life, Goals & Career

My experiences during study abroad played an instrumental role in my career path following graduation. I felt confident in moving back to East Africa after graduation because I had already established many contacts in the region. The study abroad programs are formatted to make transitions into foreign countries smooth for students, but they also give a lasting sense of confidence in trying new places.

A Favorite Memory from Abroad

The moments I shared with my host family in Kenya are among my most valued memories. I stayed with a woman that owned a small restaurant, and her husband and their two children. The family took me in as their own daughter, which was instrumental in my understanding of Kenyan culture. I was able to help out at the restaurant, visit their extended family in the rural areas and go on random errands with my host mom. These opportunities really mark the difference between visiting the country as a tourist and living there. They are a family that I continue to visit and who will always play an important role in my life.

Advice for Returning Students

Your study abroad experience is an incredibly marketable experience, so make sure you frame it in this way in the future. Focus on the interesting projects and internships that were integrated into your experience so that you can show employers that you can thrive in a variety of circumstances.

Interview from October 2013



Sarah during travels in India.

**Keep in touch
with those you
meet while
studying abroad
because they will
serve as a great
network for you
in the future.**

**study
abroad**

INTERNATIONAL
ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS

University of Wisconsin-Madison