

Pete Freeman

**Graduation Year:** Sophomore

**College:** Arts & Letters

**Major(s):** Poverty, Education, & Social Welfare, Gender Studies, and Peace Studies

**Minors(s):** N/A

**Scholar Group Membership:** Sorin Scholars

**Did you received other funding for this project?:** No

**Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding?** No

**More details on CUSE funding assistance?** I would not have been able to research the feminization of poverty, intern with the NGO Global Mamas, or travel to Ghana in the first place without the generous support of CUSE and the Eagan Family.

**Project Title:** Internship with Global Mamas//The Effects of Fair Trade Training on Female Ghanaians' Commitment to Economic Independence

**Project Location:** Elmina, Ghana

**ND Faculty Mentor:** N/A//Mary Kearney

**Project Type:** Research, Internship

**Why did you undertake this project/experience?** Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Prepare for national fellowships, Career discernment and/or preparation, Internationalize your Notre Dame experience

**Did your funded experience help you:**

**[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]:** Very Much

**[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]:** Very Much

**[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]:** Yes

**[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]:** Very Much

**[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:**Yes

**Tell us about your experience.**

During my ten weeks in Ghana, I interned for the NGO Global Mamas and conducted research. Global Mamas' mission is to build a community that works together to create a life of prosperity for African women and their families. Global Mamas achieves prosperity for African women by creating and selling handmade products of the highest quality. My role with Global Mamas was two-fold. I served as the head of Global Mamas' Women's Empowerment Project. In this role, I consulted one-on-one with many of the 600 Mamas in the areas of microfinance loans, marketing, IT training, media, videography, and English. When not working one-on-one with the Mamas, I created infographics, shot and edited video, and produced microcontent for the Global Mamas corporation.

When not working with or for Global Mamas, I was conducting research on the effects of fair trade training on the commitment of Ghanaian women to economic independence. I conducted structured interviews with nearly 20 Ghanaian fair trade entrepreneurs. My findings will be

published in a research paper in the Sagamore Institute's journal. Sagamore Institute is an Indianapolis think tank.

**Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.**

Four Ghana communities -- Cape Coast, Elmina, Krobo, & Accra -- were impacted by my work with Global Mamas.

Almost 600 mothers were impacted by my work with Global Mamas. I marketed these 600 Mamas products, consulted with them one-on-one in the area of microfinance and loans, and provided IT training to many of these women.

My ten weeks in Ghana reaffirmed my conviction that the oppression of women worldwide is the seminal moral issue in the 21st century. I will dedicate the next three years at Notre Dame and the many decades after to fighting the fight for gender equality.

**Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.**

My north star academic goal is to apply for and receive the Rhodes Scholarship. My work in Ghana this past summer will go strengthen my argument for why I should receive the Rhodes Scholarship and study at Oxford. Because the Rhodes Trust places an emphasis on research that helps fight the world's fight, the research I conducted in Ghana will certainly strengthen my case for the Rhodes.

**What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?**

To all students who plan to pursue research or internships of interest, I advise meeting with Josh Newton or Dr. Jeff Thibert. At this meeting, I would advise the student to liberally discuss all of his or her academic and creative interests. Josh and Jeff have been so encouraging of my own academic interests, they will surely encourage you an interested student to pursue her or his interests.

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