

Bridget Rickard

Graduation Year: Junior

College: Arts & Letters

Major(s): Philosophy and Peace Studies

Minors(s): Catholic Social Tradition

Scholar Group Membership: no

Did you received other funding for this project?: The Career Center

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance? I am forever indebted to CUSE for their financial support of my intellectual and professional interests in New York City this summers, as without their monetary back I would not have been able to afford housing.

Project Title: Unpaid Summer Internship - Caritas Internationalis/United Nations NY

Project Location: United Nations Church Center - NYC

ND Faculty Mentor: Atalia Omer

Project Type: Internship

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Research/experience necessary for senior thesis or capstone project, Prepare for national fellowships, Career discernment and/or preparation

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]: Very Much

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

[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:Very Much

Tell us about your experience.

My experience was truly formative! Each day I was exposed to the workings of the international community by way of attending inter-governmental and inter-ministerial meetings on global issues of import. For example, I was privy to a legal consultation process that resulted in a 'semi-solution' to both the migrant and refugee crises (this will be announced to the world at large on September 19).

In sum, this experience equipped me with the necessary context by which I am now better able to discern my future academic and professional goals.

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

In drafting a multitude of policy briefings on issues such as human trafficking or the effects of explosive remnants of war on children, I was able to refine my research and writing skills, as well as broaden my intellectual horizons.

Furthermore, I was able to get accustomed to both the rigor and rapidity of the 'political world' at the most meta of levels.

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

The variety and richness of my experiences this summer led me to discover my passion for local initiatives, as well as the importance of applied studies and practitioner research. I am confident that as a collective, these experiences will serve as the foundation upon which I will discern my next steps.

In speaking with a multitude of individuals who work primarily in conflict affected areas, I realized how important field work and field informed policy advocacy is to global humanitarian efforts - if field experience does not guide our efforts, we are sure to miscalibrate the extent to which we and our resources are needed.

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

I firmly believe in the validity of Wayne Gretzky's famous line: "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take." In all honesty, I think the hardest part of the application process is actually committing to finishing the application - so often self doubt dampens our ability to dream big. After you have committed to 'shooting for the stars', be open and honest with your peers, upperclassmen and faculty mentors about your level of comfort with the tasks you need to complete in order to put together a well researched, articulate and goal-oriented proposal. In a word, do not be afraid to ask questions. And finally, remember to approach the whole process with a 'growth mindset': even if you do not receive the grant, you've completed a grant proposal and are a better student for it!

I acknowledge that this form has been filled out truthfully and to the best of my ability. I understand that this information will be shared with many different CUSE constituencies. As such, I have provided as much useful information as I was able. I understand that CUSE will not complete my award disbursement until this form is successfully completed. If I have any questions or concerns, I will contact CUSE before submitting this form. To illustrate that you understand all of these points, please enter your Notre Dame email in the box below.

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