

Emily Vincent

Graduation Year: Junior

College: Arts & Letters

Major(s): Anthropology and Chinese

Minors(s): Business Economics

Scholar Group Membership: Glynn, Hesburgh-Yusko

Did you received other funding for this project?: HYSP

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance? Without funding from CUSE, I would not have been able to complete my project with the depth and duration that it required. CUSE was literally the wind beneath my wings, as my grant allowed me to fund my round trip airfare! With this expense covered, I was able to pursue more opportunities within my research.

Project Title: Foreign NGO Research in China

Project Location: Beijing, China

ND Faculty Mentor: Weibing Ye

Project Type: Research

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]: 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.

I spent eight weeks in Beijing, China visiting foreign NGOs that work with abandoned children with disabilities. I interviewed the founders and head administrative staff of these organizations in order to learn more about how their projects functioned in Chinese society and the changes they are anticipating in light of China's new legislation aimed at regulating foreign NGO operations. I gained new insight into the intricacies of the Chinese government and how it interacts with organizations as well as the benefits and drawbacks of choosing to operate under different legal registrations. My research also taught me a lot about the human person in addition to giving me a better grasp of China's method of legal operations. The Chinese way of life can seem bizarre at times, and it requires a great deal of flexibility and creativity (rooted in unspoken social law) for an individual, especially a foreigner, to work in any organization that is not in the business sector. I was given a new appreciation for the individuals connected to these types of organizations, and the determination that they exhibit on a daily basis to keep their oftentimes quasi-legal operations up and running. Pursuing my own research was much more

difficult than I anticipated, but overall I think it was important for my personal growth to prove to myself that I could conceive of an idea, see it through, and come out with a greater understanding of an issue that I'm passionate about.

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

While my interviews were conducted in English, the rest of my time in China was almost total language immersion. I lived in a Chinese apartment complex a couple hours from the center of Beijing, which removed the temptation to rely on English-speaking neighbors and forced me to use Chinese in my daily interactions. In addition to confirming that I want to work in China in the future, this project showed me the flexibility and persistence that are necessary for success while working abroad. It reinforced the strong interest I have in both cultural anthropology and Chinese

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

My extended time in China was invaluable step towards achieving fluency before graduation. My long-term goal is to become a Schwarzman Scholar, and my research experience has given me an opportunity to demonstrate how my interest in China can be used in a real-world application. I also plan to draw on components of my research to write my senior thesis.

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

I would advise students planning to pursue similar projects to choose a topic that they are truly passionate about. Individual research is a true challenge, particularly in a country that has vast cultural differences from America. Oftentimes when I struggled or felt discouraged, it was my love of Chinese language and culture that I relied on for continuous motivation.

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.

undefined
