

Andrea Vale

Graduation Year: Senior

College: Arts & Letters

Major(s): English, Creative Writing concentration

Minors(s): Journalism, Ethics, and Democracy

Scholar Group Membership: N/A

Did you received other funding for this project?: N/A

Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding? No

More details on CUSE funding assistance? My project involved flying to a remote city in India. The airfare was extremely expensive, and I would not have been able to pay for it myself.

Project Title: Slow Journalism: Out of Eden and On the Ground with Paul Salopek

Project Location: Amritsar, India

ND Faculty Mentor: Jason Kelly

Project Type: Creative Endeavor

Why did you undertake this project/experience? Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, 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.

I flew to Amritsar, India and met with National Geographic fellow Paul Salopek to walk with him along the Out of Eden trail. While walking with him, I was able to shadow Paul as he interviewed a community of Sikh women and children inside a gurdwara and experientially observe his interview, research and writing process of Slow Journalism. Later, when we entered a village through which a large river ran, I was able to interview and photograph local farmers to explore the dynamic between the river and the surrounding community it affected, under Paul's guidance and supervision. I am currently continuing my research and writing to complete an article on the river-farmer relationship in the village.

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

Beyond getting to experientially learn and practice Slow Journalism under the guidance of a two-time Pulitzer winner, I truly believe that this project made me more culturally open minded. The people that we lived, ate, and conversed with wore turbans, carried daggers, and spoke Punjabi and Hindi - in other words, they are a community that, at face value, is often

misunderstood and vilified by Westerners. I found that they were an incredibly kind, open and hospitable community of people, and I was humbled to be so welcomed by them. Interviewing farmers on-the-ground, rather than government officials or environmental specialists, about how the Sutlage River was affecting the surrounding village, gave me an extremely raw and human-based experience of approaching broad topics through journalism, and I believe gave at least a small voice to an often-overlooked group of individuals.

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

I am currently working on an article, with accompanying photos, for publication that illustrates the relationship between the farmers and river in the village. Having experiential knowledge of Slow Journalism, as well as on-the-ground reporting experience in India, will be invaluable as I pursue a career as a foreign correspondent focusing on global migration.

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

I would encourage them to pursue projects that involve confronting their personal fears, prejudices, and cultural misconceptions. Though it can be scary, intimidating and overwhelming, traveling to undercovered and/or misunderstood areas of the world and engaging face-to-face with the humans that inhabit them is eye-opening and perspective-changing.

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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