

Dear Summer Experience Donor,

Hello! This is Paul Blasenheim, Wesleyan Class of '12. I was the recipient of a Summer Experience Grant through the CRC at Wes, which your organization graciously funded for me this year. Thank you so much for providing this funding! I wanted to write to tell you a bit more about what I was able to do with the money this summer.

The grant allowed me to have a fulfilling experience at my internship with A Better Way Foundation (ABWF), an organization in Hartford, CT that works to improve the human rights of formerly incarcerated people, and shift drug policy in a more compassionate direction. With ABWF, I was afforded the opportunity to gain invaluable skills in community organizing and meet and learn from many inspirational people, many of whom were formerly incarcerated themselves. I gained many useful skills in coalition building, facilitation, and grassroots administrative work, which will surely come in handy in the future.

I also got to work on some of AMA/Fs campaigns which achieved success over the course of the summer, such as the "Ban the Box" campaign. This was an effort to remove the box on employment applications asking if an applicant has ever been convicted of a felony. The removal of this box promises to aid many people in rebuilding their lives after being released from prison, and I am thankful to have played a part in making this victory happen. Additionally, I researched mandatory minimum sentencing laws, and worked with a partner group to help abolish them in CT. I co-founded an organization called the Connecticut Citizens for Marijuana Reform, which seeks to shift marijuana policy in a more cost-effective way. We advocate for the full legalization of marijuana and hemp for a multitude of reasons, including racial justice and environmental protection.

Once again, thank you for funding this grant. I worked on things this summer which I am very passionate about, and hope to do more of in the future. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to work a full-time, unpaid internship without having to worry about money. I wish you good luck with your future works, and in finding your next grant recipients!

Sincerely,

Paul Blasenheim

Wesleyan Class of 2012

Environmental Studies and American Studies



Dear Esse Quam Videre,

I write to extend my sincerest appreciation for the scholarship you so generously gave me this past summer. I spent my summer living in New York City and working for a non-profit called the Urban Justice Center, within their Mental Health Project. I was heavily involved in legal and social advocacy processes for the severely mentally ill population of New York City. The experience was invaluable, yet very expensive, and would not have been possible without your generous funds. Yet again, thank you so much for your financial help this summer, and for allowing students to pursue their professional dreams with less of a financial burden.

Sincerely,

Emily Brackman Class of 2011



45 Wyllys Avenue

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October 27, 2010

Dear EQV:

I am writing to thank you for giving me the scholarship that funded my internship at Basic Needs Uganda, a non profit organization that is committed to improve the lives of persons with mental disabilities in Uganda. My summer internship was an enlightening experience. I visited health centers and the mental health institute in Uganda so as to fully understand the provision of mental health services and led advocacy-training workshops for persons with mental disabilities. While the situation is still dire, it is great to see the progress the organization

has made, particularly in raising consciousness about the human rights of persons with mental disabilities and how it has bolstered the advocacy efforts of persons with mental disabilities.

I had the opportunity to interact with key persons within the arena of mental health and human rights and to gain an in-depth understanding of the human rights approach to mental health and disorders. One of my first tasks was to read existing international and national legislation and policies pertaining to mental health in Uganda. When I went to the field and spoke to persons with mental disabilities, many of the people I spoke to did not understand the concept of human rights and how it pertains to them as persons with mental disabilities. This particularly bothered me because they would not be able to effectively advocate for better treatment if they had no idea they have the right to the highest attainable standard of health or to humane treatment. After going to the field and seeing what is actually on the ground. I designed a human rights training manual which is still in its draft phase. It translates the international treaties and shows how persons with mental disabilities can use them to effectively advocate for their rights. I also had the opportunity to attend a meeting on the African court on human rights and to network with key human right lawyers in Uganda. I learnt so much from them and the knowledge I have received will be not only be useful in my advocacy efforts but as I pursue a career in human rights law.

Going to the field and reading the legislation also made me aware of the disparity between what the law said and what is done in practice particularly concerning the financing of health care. The Uganda Mental Health Act states health care should be provided by the government for free but in effect, many nurses sell medicines or medicines are conveniently finished if the patient has no money and mysteriously appear if they are willing to pay. This is particularly disadvantageous since many patients walk long distances or borrow money for transport to the health enter only to be denied medicines that are their basic right. I therefore wrote a draft proposal on how to finance health care for persons with mental disabilities in the rural areas using community based health insurance that has been successfully used in countries like Kenya. This would ensure access to nearer and better health services and cut down on the corruption in the health sector.

Overall this summer exceeded my expectations and enabled me to be a part of conscious raising and making a difference in the lives of persons with mental disabilities in my country. This is one of my passions and something I will continue to do. I would like to thank you again for making this possible.

Best,

Allana Kembabazi 2011



October 23rd, 2010

Dear EQV,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for providing me with the Summer Experience Grant this summer to work in Kenya through the CRC. This financial support made this possible, changing both my own life and the lives of many others. This past summer I used my time to set-up a health center in Kibera slums Africa. This clinic will save the lives of many. Furthermore, this experience reaffirmed my own commitment to a career in international development.

I was touched by the generosity of EQV, as their money allowed me to be in Kenya and at the same time I did not worry about being able to pay my tuition as this the money covered my expenses and part of my school fees. It was amazing to be back in the slum that I grew-up in and to be there making a difference. EQV gave hope to thousands of residents who die every day for the lack of primary health care.

I want to say. that I'm touched by the generosity of EQV members and how they are giving back to the society. The EQV has encouraged me that we all can make a difference in the world. Now my dream is to give back as EQV are doing.

The summer experience grant showed me that with high standards and opportunities, I can make a big difference.

I would love to thank every member of EQV. As I write this letter. I write this letter the health center that I helped start is going on and making a difference.

Thank you so much

Kennedy Odede –“12”