

Dear Class of 1955,

I am writing to thank you for the \$500 award that I received to defray the costs of my volunteer experience in Cusco, Peru last summer. In Peru, I spent one month volunteering at a health clinic for low income families. I helped physicians and nurses record information, restock medical supplies, and talk with patients. Each day I met patients of all ages seeking medical care. I learned about their individual struggles and situations and watched as they were treated kindly and carefully by the health care providers at the clinic. I also conversed with Peruvian medical students and learned about the Peruvian education system, the personal interests of the students, and I also shared information about my aspirations.

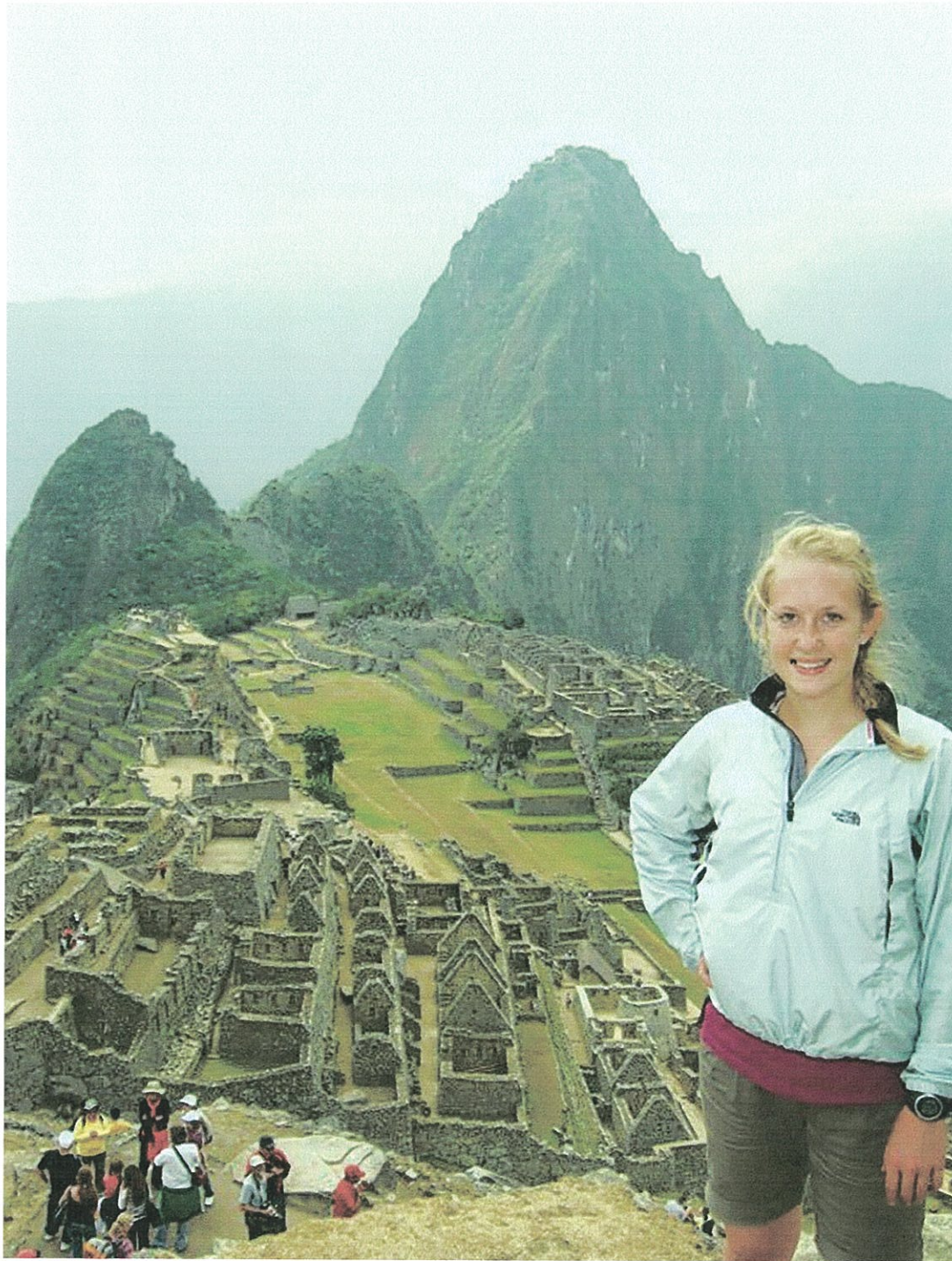
In my spare time, I was also able to travel throughout Peru and experience the culture. The most memorable travel experience I had was climbing to the entrance of Machu Picchu and touring the ancient Incan ruins with several other volunteers from International Volunteer Headquarters. I also traveled by bus to Lake Titicaca, located in Puno, Peru. While at the lake I was able to immerse myself in another culture and learn about different traditions and mannerisms on Taquile Island and the Floating Islands of Uros.

After arriving home from Peru, I was more motivated to continue volunteering in a health care setting in hopes of returning to Latin America in the future. I plan to continue on my path towards becoming a physician and clinical researcher. As a biochemistry and molecular biology major, I will continue to develop my knowledge in science. As a Spanish minor, I am dedicated to maintaining my ability to speak Spanish fluently.

After I graduate from Cornell this year, I plan to spend one year conducting scientific research at the National Institute of Health, or at an academic institution. Following this experience, I will enroll in medical school, where I hope to specialize in neurology. After receiving this degree I plan to return to Latin America in order to continue to learn about the health care systems in these regions and to provide assistance as a medical volunteer. The experience I had in Peru was pivotal in fueling my desire to continue on my career path and I greatly appreciate your help in making the experience happen.

Sincerely,

Vicki Levasseur
Class of 2011



Here is a photo from my weekend trip to Macchu Picchu