

Dear Class of '55,

I knew it would be quite some time before I would be able to meaningfully thank you for your generous gift. Not because I was ungrateful at the time of becoming a recipient, or because I was not satisfied with the award, but because I have done a lot of growing and learning in the time between my departure with and return from the ACM Tanzania program. Only at this current juncture have I begun to understand the opportunities you have helped make a reality.

In Tanzania, I learned to speak some Swahili; I undertook an ethnographic research project – a rare opportunity and invaluable privilege for anthropology undergraduates – and I was able to experience the environmental features and cultural heritage of a beautiful country. I talked with people in their native language, was invited into the most welcoming of households, and was able to understand firsthand the lives of people living in and experiencing the world in a totally different way. What I will never forget is what it feels like to be a guest: to never feel more loved, but at the same time, to remember my position as a visitor of immense privilege.

Global citizenship, as I have begun to understand it, benefits from an acute awareness of America's relationship with the rest of the world. One of my most powerful, enduring experiences abroad was sensing the dynamic between my status as a novice student of language and culture in Tanzania – in the weeks after arriving, I felt like an infant – and being a visitor with privilege and resources unavailable to most Tanzanians. Perhaps the greatest thing I have learned is how to put human faces on some of the various economic, political, and social forces that have been grouped together and dubbed globalization.

Doing ethnography has completely reshaped my perspective on being an anthropology student, and studying abroad has quietly reorganized my priorities as a Cornellian. As I look ahead to graduation, reflections on my Tanzania experience have me rethinking the impact I want to have in my future employment and civic involvement. Thank you for your help in allowing me to embark on this incredible adventure, and subsequently the knowledge and inspiration that will help me proceed not only as a student, but also as a future professional and civic participant.

Sincerely

Ian Watt, Class of 2011

