

Dear Class of 55',

I wanted to thank you for the money you funded me with to participate in ANT 222: Applied Anthropology in the Bahamas, February 2012. That trip was a big step in understanding more about my anthropological interests and opened my future to various career options that I hope to pursue. Not only was I able to gain insight into how anthropologists do fieldwork which is a valuable skill for someone that wants to go to graduate school in the discipline, but I was exposed to aspects of anthropology that I would never have considered before. The main focus of the class was looking at how tourism can affect the environment and people of a society. We discussed topics such as human impact on the environment and how those changes to the environment cycle back to affect us. Through this, we also discussed in length indigenous land rights. The class made me more aware of my own impact on not only the society I live in but the societies of other people too. As a result, I am interested in going to grad school with a possible focus in environmental anthropology and studying responsible tourism and those land right issues that often take a central role to how indigenous groups are affected by outside interests in their environment.

Having the opportunity to go on the trip with both the biology and geology class added to my perspectives on the topic since I had the easy access of asking questions about the environment from one of those students I was living with at the research center. Learning how the life forms there were being affected as presented to us by the other classes helped my anthropology class understand how the people were being affected as a result.

Finally, going on this trip was a wonderful in-person experience to support the material I learned in previous anthropology classes about West Indian culture. There is a difference between just learning in the classroom and actually being able to observe what we read about, and developing keen observational skills is vital to being a successful anthropologist. The highlight of my trip was when my class met a local on the island that was knowledgeable in traditional plant medicines and was able to take us around the island and tells us the medicinal and practical uses of every plant that we saw. It definitely had a greater impact on me to actually witness that personally than to read about it in a text book. Once again, I appreciate the monetary assistance that you provided me which allowed me the ability to take part in such a significant experience of my college career here at Cornell.

Thank you,

Sarah Haughenbury



ANT 222: Applied Anthropology Class at Watling's Castle
Cornell College, February 2012 in
San Salvador, Bahamas