

May 10, 2019

Dear Class of '55,

Words cannot describe how big of an impact your generosity has had on my education. I am so thankful for my opportunity to study abroad, and that truthfully may not have been an opportunity for me if it weren't for the financial aid I received.



Traveling abroad hadn't even been a consideration for me, or at least not a serious one, until a year before we left for Nepal. I was walking out of lunch one day, when my friend dragged me down to see the off-campus studies fair happening in the Commons. We were walking around and visiting the tables, listening to all of the amazing stories from students who had taken trips before. While my friend was talking to the geology professor about his trip to New Zealand, I found myself wandering over to the Anthropology table. I hadn't even taken any classes in the department before, but while talking to the professors about the trip to Nepal, I became fascinated, and decided that maybe studying off-campus could be fun. I took one of their flyers with information on the trip, walked back to my room, taped it on the wall above my desk, and went online to register for Anthropology 101. 365 days later, I would be in Kathmandu.

Neither of my parents had ever traveled abroad before, so I was diving right into this experience blind. I read dozens of articles online about what to expect, packed my bag, and set off for the opposite end of the world. I learned to navigate strange places and learned an overload of information about a new culture. Our first day in Nepal, we celebrated a festival called Holi, which is the Hindu celebration to begin spring by throwing and spreading colored powder on everyone





around you. We went out into the city that day, and walked around the streets hypnotized by the rainbows being created around us. Each of us ended the day infinitely more colorful than we started. The rest of our time in Kathmandu, we spent visiting religious sites, ancient palaces, and learning the practices of Ayurvedic medicine, a centuries-old medical system native to India and Nepal. After our time in

Kathmandu, our class traveled north, taking a scenic flight through the Himalayas before reaching Pokhara where we started a trek along the Annapurna circuit. The word breathtaking doesn't encompass the sights and experiences our class had.

This opportunity has sparked my love for traveling, and given me the experience to confidently do so. I hadn't been an experienced traveler before then, but now I have stories to spare. I am now planning on studying abroad again next year, and eventually even getting a job abroad. No matter what, though, I am planning on going back to Nepal, and visiting the places I fell in love with.

Thank you, again, so much. Your support made it possible for me to have this experience, and for that I am extremely grateful.



Namaste and dhan'yavāda,
Paxton Andrada '21