

March 26, 2020

Dear Class of 1955,

I write this to express my thanks for providing me the opportunity to study in the Bahamas earlier this year. As a Sociology and Anthropology major, this class (ANT 222 - Applied Anthropology) allowed me to grow in many personal and academic ways. In particular, it allowed me to experience a glimpse into what qualitative research may be like in the anthropological field. More specifically, however, my two weeks spent in the Bahamas changed my perspective on tourism and the industry's impact on culture, the economy and the environment.

The Bahamas is heavily reliant on tourism for economic means as well as cultural identity. Throughout the course, we were able to learn from observation and conversation about the impacts that tourism has on the people and environment. We met with a variety of individuals all with unique perspectives. For example, one day we went to a farmer's market as well as a fish market in Nassau and talked with people about eco-tourism, agriculture and the impacts of overfishing and hurricanes on each respective area. We were also met with BREEF, an organization that focuses on education and research surrounding the environmental impacts that tourism and other practices have on the Bahamas. Additionally, our class traveled to Blue Lagoon Island where we learned about eco-tourism in action.

We also conducted various forms of observational research in different environments. One day, for example, we were able to spend the entire day observing visitors and workers at Atlantis – a large-scale enclave resorts located on Paradise Island. We also visited a yoga retreat on Paradise Island, as well as simply observing the masses of tourists that visit from the cruise ships that dock along Nassau. One of the most interesting aspects of these experiences was seeing the differences between how locals interact with tourists versus how they interact with

other locals. Similarly, we were able to observe how tourists interacted with the locals in such environments.

Among all of these things, I cherish the opportunity to experience working in an education-based environment within a different country. Such an experience allowed me to become familiar with the challenges and nuances that come with studying in a country unfamiliar to me. I will take my new knowledge with me wherever I may travel in the future and look upon tourist locations with a nuanced perspective.

Thank you once again for providing me with the ability to participate in such an amazing educational experience.

Sincerely,

Annabel Tagawa '22



Farmer's Market on Nassau



Local Restaurant at the Fish Market



Beautiful waters at Blue Lagoon Island