

HANNAH MENZIES headed to rural Ghana to teach kindergartners in the summer of 2014. She returned to Florida State University (FSU) nine weeks later with stacks of clothing to sell after launching a venture with two other students to help women in the village earn a sustainable income through their sewing skills.

“I didn’t want to leave (Ghana) without knowing I could help in some way,” recalls Menzies, who will graduate from FSU in May with a degree in family and child sciences and psychology.

That spirit of wanting to help and make a difference in the lives of others is what draws many university students to take part in international social entrepreneurship programs.

“There’s a very strong interest among students to in a way be creating their own program and have an out-of-the-classroom experience abroad,” says Mary Ryan Dando, director of study abroad at the University of Colorado-Boulder. “This is a very important demand we are seeing from the new generation of students. This is a generation that wants to make a difference.”

By taking part in international social entrepreneurship programs, students not only have an opportunity to give back to society, but “it gives them very interesting and relevant training to put on their resumes,” Dando says.

Menzies traveled to Tafi Atome, Ghana, as part of FSU’s Global Scholars program, which works with the nonprofit Omprakash EdGE. The organization assists students in lining up immersive summer internships with nonprofit organizations in developing nations.

Taking that time to assist those in need who live in developing countries “is an enormously powerful and transformative experience for students,” says Joe O’Shea, director of FSU’S Center for Undergraduate Research and Academic Engagement. O’Shea was instrumental in developing the Global Scholars program, which began in the fall of 2011.

O’Shea, who studied at Oxford University and researched the European practice of students taking a gap year in their education, says, “I was intrigued by how this attracts young people. I wanted to build a gap year–like experience in the United States.” Taking part in such an experience “challenges students’ assumptions about themselves and the world around them.”



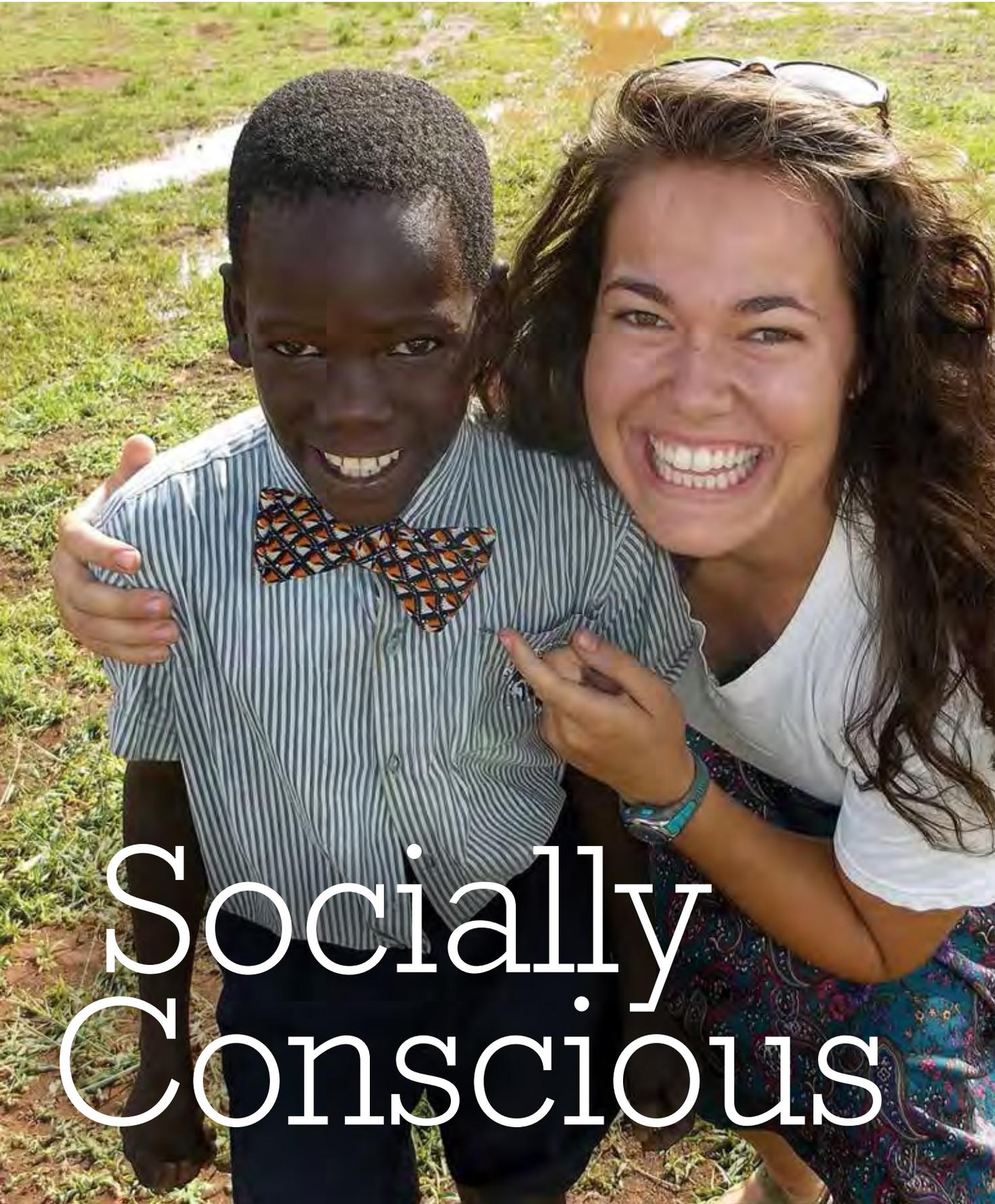
Florida State University student Hannah Menzies (left) traveled to Ghana last summer as part of a study abroad program. It inspired her to launch a venture with two other students to help women in the village earn a sustainable income through their sewing skills. Here is she with other students, Tatiana Loayza (left to right) with local women where some of the sewing began.

COURTESY OF HANNAH MENZIES

Well-run social entrepreneurship programs abroad are expanding students’ worldviews while providing useful assistance for local communities.

BY SUSAN LADIKA





COURTESY OF THE AFRICAN SOUP/BRIN ENTERKIN

Socially Conscious

Brin Enterkin, a recent graduate of Berry College, founded a nongovernmental organization and a social enterprise in Nabikabala, Uganda, called The African SOUP, or Sponsorship of Orphans in Uganda Project.

Different Structures and Goals

The structure of global social entrepreneurship programs varies from university to university. Many team up with nonprofit organizations that organize the internships; others are run by the university faculty. Some expect students to complete an entire project; others are set up so students perform certain steps in an ongoing project. Some projects offer all the training on the ground; others involve classes before departure and completion of a final project when the students return.

The University of Maryland has linked up with the Social Entrepreneur Corps (SEC), which offers students the experience of working on social entrepreneurship projects in Latin America. The SEC leads international internships in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador, and has a year-round presence in those locations.

Before the students depart for Latin America, it's important for them to have appropriate expectations, says Jennifer Precht, associate director for education abroad at the University of Maryland-College Park. "This is really not about them. This program is about making an impact. They facilitate that," she says. "Your development is secondary to making an impact on your community."

During their summer in Latin America, students work with community members on solving real-life problems. "You can't just go overseas and impose your ideas on another



A student greets local children during his experience with Entrepreneurship and Empowerment in South Africa (EESA).

er community, another culture," Precht says. "They actually interact on the issues the community is facing and work together with the community on shared problem solving."

While many universities have launched global social entrepreneurship programs in recent years, the Entrepreneurship and Empowerment in South Africa (EESA) program was founded in 1997 by Michael Morris while he was a professor at Syracuse University. He now is program director at the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Florida.

EESA brings students from a handful of U.S. universities together with students from the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, where they work with local entrepreneurs in the city's mixed-race townships to further their businesses.

The students "are not there for a travelogue or for the beauty of South Africa. They are there to serve the clients we serve," Morris says. And the students work incredibly hard, putting in seven-day weeks for six intense weeks. "They're thrown in the deep end," he says. "They really have a deer-in-the-headlights look for the first 10 days to two weeks."

By being immersed in the project, "No matter what you're doing, the clients never leave your mind," Morris says.

Mornings are spent in the classroom, where they learn the skills they need to be business consultants, and during the afternoons the American and African students work together on teams to assist their businesses, says Erick Mueller, adjunct professor in the Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado-Boulder. He leads the Colorado students' trip to South Africa as part of EESA and teaches entrepreneurship and empowerment in South Africa.

Every team of students is assigned to work with two entrepreneurs, and the businesses run the gamut from operating a bakery to running a local-language newspaper. The teams must identify the top challenges that their

Business students from the University of Colorado-Boulder with a deliverable for a client in South Africa.





COURTESY OF ERICK MUELLER

business must overcome, and then propose and complete deliverables to help them succeed, Mueller says. This could involve everything from setting up a website to developing an inventory management system.

The businesses typically lack the resources needed to get credit from the bank and struggle to find ways to differentiate themselves from their competitors, Morris says.

Efforts to aid the businesses can have a major impact on the entrepreneurs. Morris cites one South African businessman whom students have assisted three times over the years. Luvuyo Rani started out offering computer literacy classes to impoverished residents of the township. He had an Internet café and also sold rebuilt computers. He now has operations at dozens of locations, and with the help of EESA students recently won a grant so he could begin franchising and may eventually expand his business to a couple of hundred locations. The students helped Rani craft his pitch for the grant and develop the franchising model.

Varied Backgrounds and Roles

Because the students come from a wide range of majors, they bring very different perspectives on how to help their entrepreneurs, Morris says.

Kaelyn Purfurst graduated from the University of Colorado-Boulder in December 2014 from a joint undergraduate and master's program with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in finance. She traveled to South Africa with the EESA program in the summer of 2014, where her team worked with a disc jockey who also owns a bar and trains other DJs. They helped him develop a plan to market his business and create events at local venues, and Purfurst set up a book-keeping system for him.

The team also worked on imaging for an apparel company and helped it go through the steps to register with the South African government.

"It was the most hands-on, real-life experience I've had," says Purfurst.

Erick Mueller, adjunct professor and director of the Cross Campus Entrepreneurship Program the University of Colorado's Leeds School of Business, in South Africa visiting an EESA client, the Monwood Play Group.



Students from the Entrepreneurship and Empowerment in South Africa (EESA) program

She was drawn to the EESA program after taking part in Semester at Sea in 2012. One of the stops was Cape Town, and she fell in love with the city.

Along with students from the United States, Purfurst's EESA team included students from Kenya and Zimbabwe. She says the students initially were intimidated because they didn't know one another and were put together to complete the six-week project.

But through that experience, Purfurst learned to deal effectively with team members who came from varied backgrounds, and brought different expectations and processes they followed to reach goals. "Teams can function even if there are different methods of accomplishing things," she says

The African students had a key role to play in helping overcome cultural barriers with the entrepreneurs. "Trust and community are huge to South Africans," she says.

Purfurst's experiences abroad may influence her career path. In the fall she'll start working with a major auditing firm, but she would eventually like to work with a nonprofit.

She has kept in touch with her African teammates, as well as the entrepreneurs with whom she worked. "It's cool to see them grow and progress as a business," Purfurst says.

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While students see the businesses develop, faculty members see the students' own growth and progress during their time working in South Africa.

Mueller says students demonstrate a major increase in confidence through their experience with the entrepreneurs, and jam-packed workweeks. "When they think they can't go any further, they do. They're capable of doing a lot more in life than they thought they could."

The students are also learning in unexpected ways, Morris says. "They're actually going to learn much more from the entrepreneur than the entrepreneur from them."

That learning from others has been vital to Menzies, who has gone to Africa every summer during her undergraduate education at FSU. Her introduction to the continent came after her freshman year in college, when she spent two months in Tanzania teaching English and Bible study classes. "I gain so much more (than I give), so selfishly I go."

During her time in the Global Scholars program, she worked with the nonprofit Compassionate Journeys, teaching kindergarten and developing an afterschool program for the children of Tafi Atome, Ghana.

She stayed with a host family and noticed the need for village women to have an income of their own. "You never want to just give money."

Working through Compassionate Journeys, Menzies launched Compassionate Women and raised money to purchase sewing machines and material so the women could start making a wide variety of clothing, including dresses, skirts, purses, and men's pants, as well as jewelry made from coconut. The clothing and jewelry is now sold at house parties in the United States and on Etsy. What each woman has sewed is tracked so "the women are getting (earning) what they deserve," Menzies says.

Menzies plans to earn a PhD in social work so she can use her education to help others. She believes she can do more to assist those living in developing countries by tapping into the resources that are available in the United States. And she doesn't want to take a job from anyone living in a developing country. "I'd rather provide a job."

FSU is now tweaking its Global Scholars program to encourage more ventures such as Menzies' work with



Compassionate Women. Prior to departure, students in the Global Scholars program take a class preparing them for their time abroad, and complete a capstone research project when they return. They earn six credits for their study and work.

Now the university has created Launch FSU, a social enterprise accelerator for FSU students. Although it isn't geared exclusively to Global Scholars, they will now have the option of working on a project with Launch FSU or completing the traditional capstone project, says Christopher Markl, social entrepreneur in residence at FSU.

Students who have an idea and passion for a project will work on teams to bring a product or service to market within a semester through Launch FSU. It's designed to "empower any student to become a social entrepreneur," Markl says.

SOUP's On in Africa

One recent Berry College graduate who has embraced social entrepreneurship is Brin Enterkin, who has founded a nongovernmental organization and a social enterprise in Uganda.

Enterkin, who graduated from the Georgia college in 2012, originally went to Uganda in 2009 to intern at a microfinance group. Her host took her to his remote home village of Nabikabala, ultimately transforming her life. The village had no formal education system, and no running water, electricity, or nutritious food. Yet Enterkin was captivated by Nabikabala and the children who lived there.

The experience prompted her to launch The African SOUP, or Sponsorship of Orphans in Uganda Project, initially raising funds to aid the youngsters.

Hannah Menzies, a Florida State University student, shown in the center with Melissa Magalhaes (to the right) and Kiki Ljubica (to the left), the other founders of Compassionate Women. The three of them worked together and lived in Tafi Atome, Ghana. Here they are with women from Tafi Atome.

Brin Enterkin, founder of The African SOUP, or Sponsorship of Orphans in Uganda Project

Since that time the project has boomed and now serves more than 350 children. About one-third are orphans whose parents died of disease, including HIV/AIDS, or who were killed in war. The others come from families who live on less than \$2 a day.

There's a primary school, two boarding homes for children, and housing for teachers and volunteers. The school provides each student with two hot meals a day and health care, and there's access to clean water for both the school and the village. The African SOUP also offers workshops to neighboring villages on topics such as hygiene, health care, and nutrition.

The project has relied on donations, but in the summer of 2014 it started a chicken coop. "This not only provides us with income, but also provides the community with access to healthy dietary options," Enterkin says. There are now 600 chickens, with plans to double the number this year.



Brin Enterkin teaches at The African SOUP school.



Enterkin also has started the company Lion's Thread, through which women in rural Uganda make bow ties, which are sold in the United States. Part of the proceeds provides income for the women who make the ties, and part goes to support The African SOUP. Her organization also provides financial education and training to the women who make the bow ties.

The ties are sold on the Lion's Thread website and via social media, and Enterkin and her team are now trying to introduce them to retail locations. The Berry College alum lives in rural Uganda, and The African SOUP and Lion's Thread are run from headquarters in Atlanta. "I just do what I can to try to make the world a little brighter," Enterkin says. "I understand that my life is pretty unconventional at this point, but I love it!"

THE AFRICAN SOUP/BRIN ENTERKIN



Carving Out a Niche

Management students at Purdue University also are devoting their time to provide assistance to villagers in need. The students are immersed in a project designed to help preserve the cultural heritage of woodcarvers and other artisans in the village of Baan Tawai, Thailand.

The project grew out of a trip by Chad Allred, a continuous term lecturer in the Krannert School of Management at Purdue. Allred spent 10 weeks exploring Southeast Asia with his wife and children in the summer of 2012. They spent the first six weeks visiting various countries in the region, such as Malaysia and Singapore, while the final month was spent in the Chiang Mai Valley in Thailand, where he connected with leaders of the private North-Chiang Mai University.

Allred went with university leaders to the nearby village of Baan Tawai, which has a long history as a village filled with woodcarvers and other artisans. But economic pressures and globalization have put those traditions in peril. The number of master artisans has dwindled as many have taken other jobs in order to feed their families, and their children aren't interested in pursuing the craft because it's not profitable, Allred says.

Together, Allred and North-Chiang Mai University leaders want to try to change that. "We're taking it on as a joint project indefinitely to try to help them revive the economy, and part of it is because we want to save the heritage," Allred says.

The village "has a brand that was truly remarkable, but it was fragmented," he says, and much of the world is unaware of the village and its artist traditions.

In the summer of 2014, Allred took 15 Purdue students to Thailand for six weeks to conduct a business analysis. They broke into three teams, with an MBA student serving as a project manager for each team, and undergraduates serving as team members.

The teams did such things as interview the artisans and the local shop owners on how they conduct business, visit the Buddhist temple to learn the history of the village, and spend time in tourist areas surveying visitors and the travel industry about their knowledge of the Baan Tawai. Their goal is to help build a cohesive brand for the village and share it with the world.

Back on campus, about 70 students in Allred's experiential marketing initiative are working to make that happen. They're doing marketing research, developing a web magazine, using social media, and engaging in a host of other projects to help spread the word about Baan Tawai.

Their efforts are being recorded through a wiki system so future students can build on their knowledge, and



another group of students is heading to Thailand in the summer to work on the project.

One student who traveled to Thailand to serve as a project manager was Hery Sofiaji, an MBA student from Jakarta, Indonesia, who will graduate in May. He was drawn to the project because the culture of Baan Tawai is similar to that of his home country.

His team members interviewed tourists, those in the tourist trade, as well as local government and business leaders about the village. His work is continuing in Indiana, where he's heading up a social media team to promote Baan Tawai and its artisans through sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Sofiaji says his personal goal has always been to continue his education so he can use those skills to assist others.

At home in Indonesia he works in retail banking at Bank Mandiri, that country's largest bank. His experience with the artisans in Baan Tawai will help him both with his day-to-day job, as well as with the bank's corporate social responsibility initiative, through which the bank provides assistance to cultural and community projects. The work at Baan Tawai "really aligns with that point," Sofiaji says.

Nophelo Pumeza Poitou runs a preschool in Philippi Township outside of Cape Town, South Africa. She has collaborated with business professors and students from the University of Florida's Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (including George Hou, a former master of science in entrepreneurship student who has now graduated). George is showing Pumeza the brochure, poster, and business card that his EESA student team created for her to help promote the preschool in local communities.

Working Within the Milieu

Singapore native Mika Tan, who attends Middlebury College, also believes her time working on international social entrepreneurship projects will help her future career. She'll graduate in May with a degree in environmental studies and conservation biology and "understands the value of embracing the market economy in trying to do social good."

Tan received her introduction to social entrepreneurship while at Middlebury, and was one of the college's first fellows with the college's Center for Social Entrepreneurship, traveling to Ghana in the summer of 2013 to work with the ThinkImpact Institute. There, a team of students and villagers were assigned to develop a product or service that would ease a problem the villagers had to cope with in their everyday lives. The goal was to "use assets from within the community, not get help from elsewhere," she says.

"It's not just about helicoptering down with some pre-fixed notion that this is what should be done," Tan says.

Her group devised a better wooden washboard, which would alleviate the need to wash clothes by hand. The washboards were crafted by village carpenters and sold at the local store, with plans to expand their sales to neighboring villages.

Tan lived in Asakraka, Ghana, for seven weeks. "It was very, very humbling. It also gave me a very different perspective on how things work."

The following summer she returned to Singapore to intern with HUB Singapore, the first incubator in Southeast Asia for social entrepreneurs.

After graduation, Tan wants to work

on ecotourism in Southeast Asia, which she says can easily be misused, but can also be used to help with rural development and conservation.

Like Tan, Chelsea Jones hadn't thought about social entrepreneurship until she started studying at the University of Texas at Austin. The first-generation college student

got her introduction in 2013 through the class History of Social Entrepreneurship in China and the United States, taught by history professor Leonard Moore, senior associate vice president in the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. She admits "I was more excited about the professor than I was about China."

Students learned about the history and governance of China, and then spent Maymester in Beijing. Before heading to China, Jones' only other trip out of the country had been on a mission trip across the border to Mexico.

Things changed when Jones arrived in Beijing and interned at the Dandelion School, which teaches migrant middle-school students. Their parents travel from rural China to Beijing to work. While there, Jones identified race and class differences in the educational system in China that are similar to what she had seen in Texas.

The experience prompted her to switch her major from journalism to social work, and in the summer of 2014 she traveled to Ghana with the School of Social Work. There she worked on the Almond Tree project, which helps those with HIV/AIDS who have lost their means of income to create products to sell, such as clothing and key chains.

Jones is slated to graduate in December 2015 and wants to use her skills and experience to become a policy analyst for local government working on civil rights, race, and class issues.

Setting Things in Motion

Leslie Joy, a sophomore at the University of Maryland, also has been profoundly impacted by her experience in a global entrepreneurship program. The government and politics major traveled to the Dominican Republic for eight weeks in the summer of 2014 to work with the Social Entrepreneur Corps (SEC). "It had more of an impact on me than I expected."

The SEC works to provide access to essential products and services that will improve the lives of people in Latin America. During her time in the Dominican Republic, Joy was part of a team that worked to sell microfiber water filters to schools to provide access to clean water. When the students departed, a local entrepreneur took over the business.

This system follows a microconsignment model, so the products are loaned to the entrepreneurs, and they're paid for out of the profits. "It's a no-risk product for entrepreneurs," says Precht, the University of Maryland's associate director for education abroad.

Precht said the student teams have to meet certain deliverables. "It's really practical, hands-on problem solving." Because the students come from a wide range of majors, "they all come at the problem from a different perspective."

Purdue University management students are immersed in a project designed to help preserve the cultural heritage of woodcarvers and other artisans in the village of Baan Tawai, Thailand. Here is a local artisan.





Students from Purdue University participating in woodcarving instruction provided by village artisans in Baan Tawai, Thailand.

really can't unless you're living it." There the families live with limited clean water and electricity supply, and no air conditioning.

"Living in such an environment was really eye opening," she says. From the experience she's learned "we sometimes don't need all the things we think we need here."

She now is considering going to law school after graduation and studying constitutional law after seeing the impact of the Dominican court ruling on the children born to Haitian parents. Or she is considering working for the SEC.

Joy has seen that doing development work takes time to come to fruition. "It's not about what you do, it's about what you set it motion."

Having an Impact

University faculty and staff

have found that international social entrepreneurship programs draw students from extremely diverse backgrounds. Some have already served in the Peace Corps; others have never been on an airplane before.

Because programs such as the one at FSU offer students credit for taking part in the program, they can receive need-based scholarships, O'Shea says. That opens the opportunity to travel overseas to students who wouldn't be able to afford to take part in traditional study abroad programs.

And a growing segment of students isn't interested in traditional study abroad programs, with the limited number of campuses available where they can study, O'Shea says. Instead they want to go to countries where the need for assistance is greatest.

"Every student wants their lives to matter," O'Shea says. "They want financial security, but they want to have an impact on others." **IE**

SUSAN LADIKA is a freelance writer in Tampa, Florida. Her last article for *IE* was "Collaboration/Zusammenarbeit," which appeared in the supplement on German higher education with the September/October 2014 issue.

Joy also spent her time in the Dominican Republic working with the Peace Corps on human rights issues. Tensions were high because children born in the Dominican Republic to Haitians who had come to work in the sugar cane fields had been stripped of their Dominican citizenship by the courts in the Dominican Republic and became stateless. The government then approved a pathway to citizenship, but confusion and criticism remain. Joy's group worked on developing information on the citizenship issue that the Peace Corps could hand out.

During her time in the Dominican Republic, Joy became friends with a young man whose parents were from Haiti. He was slated to head to Cuba to attend university, but when he was stripped of his citizenship he was unable to go abroad. He took over selling the water filters after Joy's group had finished. "His commitment to changing the community and making an impact is extremely inspiring," Joy says. "If they can do this, I can do so much more."

During her eight weeks in the Dominican Republic she lived with host families. Joy says that before she went abroad she thought she knew something about the lives of those in developing countries. But she found "you