



Indiana University Bloomington Wells Scholars Program

Summer 2019 Newsletter



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Photographs of Belize © Christoph Irmscher

Cover image: Caracol Maya ruins

Published July 2019

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Message from the Director



Dear friends,

Each year in the Wells Scholars Program brings new experiences, insights, and perspectives on the community we're building. Often the days seem to fly by. We had just said farewell to the 26th class of Scholars, sending them off to their various careers, graduate programs, and new study abroad experiences when we found ourselves on a plane to Belize, where last year's freshman class spent a week exploring the natural (and human) history of the rainforest before traveling south to help our partner high school in the Toledo District build a new playground. And we were hardly back from Belize, recovering from sunburns and so many exciting fresh memories that our heads kept spinning, when we had to get ready for our orientation with a new class of Wells freshmen, which, this year, for the first time, will also include two international Scholars from Israel and Turkey, recruited through our dedicated new international selection process.

Things are moving fast, and that's a good thing. As we near our 30th anniversary and look forward to another reunion with our cherished alumni, I think we can be proud of the fact that we've never rested on our laurels but have kept re-envisioning what it means to foster excellence at Indiana University, to "dream," as Herman B is supposed to have said, "no small dreams." (As a literary scholar, I am compelled to say that the traditional attribution of this phrase to our wonderful patron saint seems a little doubtful, but the writer in me also feels that this is something he could and should have said, so I will claim it for him).

This year's issue of our newsletter, expertly edited by Associate Director Elspeth Hayden, will give you a sense of the productive restlessness that, in my view, marks the Wells Scholars Program. Essays from freshman Scholars about our life-changing trip to Belize are complemented by reflections on participating in Little 500, another Wells tradition, as it were, and by rising Wells senior Tiffany Xie's thoughtful account of all the things she learned and discovered about herself during her semester abroad in London. Jenny Huang, WSP 2013, our second Rhodes Scholar in three years (let that sink in!), offers a useful antidote to that famous Wells restlessness by inviting us to take the time and look around, something that she plans to do when she arrives at Oxford University in the fall for her two years of graduate study.

I invite you, too, to spend some time with our newsletter, to sample the stories and look at our pictures, in the hope that you will stay in touch with us. Send me an email at cirmsche@indiana.edu with comments, questions, and suggestions; I promise I will get right back to you. We are always glad for your contributions—intellectual, personal, and, of course financial (see the form at the end of this newsletter). I wish you a wonderful rest of the year. If your travel plans bring you to Bloomington, please think of us and stop by Harlos House. We have a brand-new coffeemaker and love to host friends and alumni in our beautiful little enclave on this beautiful campus.

Yours, as always,

Christoph

Words of Advice from Jenny Huang

WSP Class of 2013, Rhodes Scholar 2019

Wells Scholars Program Director Christoph Irmischer caught up with recent alumna Jenny Huang to reminisce about her time at IU in the program and also pick her brain about the Rhodes Scholarship.

Jenny, first of all, huge congrats on winning the Rhodes Scholarship. If you had one piece of advice to give to current Scholars who are thinking about applying for a major scholarship, what would that be?

Be intentional about seeking out mentorship from older students, staff, and professors. The application process is long and challenging, and it requires you to undergo serious self-reflection about matters like: Why have you pursued the things that you've pursued over the last few years? What do you care about in the world? How do you want to center your values in your future career? It's helpful to be able to reflect on these questions with mentors who know you well and can offer additional perspectives or pushback.

Looking back on your time at Indiana University and as a Wells Scholar, can you identify one or two crucial, formative experiences that helped you get to the point where you are now?

Around my junior year, I started to take more ownership of my extracurricular engagements. I took a look at the activities in which I was involved, evaluated whether or not they felt truly meaningful to me, and tried to prioritize the opportunities that pushed me to grow (and de-prioritize the ones that didn't). This decision led me to pursue a number of independent research and creative projects under the mentorship of professors in SICE, the Department of Anthropology, and the English Department's Creative Writing Program. I became a better scholar and writer, and I was able to explore topics that deeply interested me.

Looking forward to your two years at Oxford University, what are you most excited about?

I'm excited that my primary job for the next two years will be to learn, both inside and outside the classroom. I'm hopeful that studying political theory will help me become a more just, thoughtful, and analytic public servant. I'm looking forward to making friends from around the world who will widen and challenge my views. It will be wonderful to take walks around Oxford University and be humbled by its history.



Jenny with her parents at IU's reception honoring her Rhodes Scholarship

Wells Takes on the Little 500

by Emma Hand, Class of 2018



The Little 500 comes to IU each April, bringing with it 25,000 visitors from across the country. For most of those visitors, it's a weekend of fanfare and partying. But for riders, it's much more. It's a chance to prove themselves and compete for victory. It's the culmination of an entire school year of intense preparation.

"Little 500 is so much more than one day in April," said sophomore Wells Scholar Rachel Kalbfell. "People can feel the magic of the event when they visit in April and watch the races, but it is a different feeling entirely to experience the day-in and day-out effort and struggle to arrive at that race and put your best foot forward as a team."

There are different levels of involvement, but most riders put in 10-20 hours of training a week. Though some might see it as sacrificing time in an extremely busy academic schedule, the focus and exertion in riding provide the perfect reprieve from school stresses. Thoughts of exams and daily responsibilities melt away for just a couple hours and are later revisited with a clear and calm mind following each workout. Fall training generally focuses on endurance and includes road rides around Bloomington from 15-90+ miles. Winter training takes place mostly on rollers, involving interval workouts and sprinting. The arrival of spring coincides with the opening of the track at Bill Armstrong Stadium, where teams can practice race day techniques. In addition to the main race, the IU Student Foundation also hosts Fall and Spring Series, which contain events like cyclocross, independent time trials (ITTs), and team pursuit. These give riders a chance to race throughout the year and develop a variety of skills.

As a rookie, I realized that there was so much to learn along the way. From adjusting to riding a bike with the seat higher than the handle bars to learning how to jump on and off the bike and successfully perform exchanges, it can feel as if there is a new obstacle to overcome each week. Yet that makes each step more rewarding. Throughout college it's easy to get lost in prepping for the next exam or job interview. Little 500 training allows students to work towards different goals, whether improving their ITT times or winning Miss n' Out, two different spring series events.

Rookies learn from more experienced riders – one essential link in the incredibly inclusive and extensive Little 500 community. Though all riders will eventually compete with one another, the support and friendship between members of different teams is what makes Little 500 so enjoyable. During what can be a stressful and unpredictable race, it is helpful to know and be able to trust the other riders. Off the track, the interactions with those who have similar interests and goals create bonds unlike any other on campus. Individual teams become families. They are always there to celebrate each other's successes and offer support through struggles on and off the bike.



Céline (crimson jersey) and Reyan (blue jersey) getting the winter miles in with team RideOn



Emma during a race and covered in mud afterward



Among the Wells Scholars, Little 500 has created connections beyond those of the normal Scholar community. Senior Reyan Coskun joined the women's Little 500 team RideOn after seeing a message from fellow senior Céline Oberholzer in a Scholar group chat. Céline, the RideOn team captain, helped mentor Reyan and the other rookies to prepare them for race day. Reyan then became one of my Wells Mentors, assigned to answer questions and help me throughout freshman year. Though on separate teams, Reyan and I became closer because of Little 500, bonding over shared new experiences as we entered this unknown world. I, in turn, helped fellow freshman Scholar Charley Connon find a team to ride for. Through my connections, he ended up riding for Gray Goat Cycling, an independent men's team. Of the five Scholars participating in the Little 500 this past year, none raced in the main event. RideOn unfortunately did not race due to injured/sick riders. Rachel's team

Wells Takes on the Little 500



Charley (right) and team members
at the Little 500 awards

Ski placed 3rd in the women's race, and my team, Independent Council, placed 5th. Connon's Gray Goats placed 4th in the men's race. As young riders on strong teams, we have a lot of hope - and ambition - directed towards the years to come.

Céline was also instrumental in the movement to equalize the men's and women's races. Though the proposal to increase the women's race to 200 laps (50 miles) to match the men's was not passed, the Fall and Spring series events now include equal lap counts for male and female riders. The first step towards equalization is never easy. Thanks to Céline's actions, a precedent is set for future movements striving for change.

The Little 500, with its teams, its traditions, and its incredible community, offers something to the college experience that can be found only at IU. We not only learn about biking and teamwork but also about pushing ourselves past our limits, to be better for something bigger than ourselves. The lessons we have learned go far beyond the scope of the Little 500 or even Indiana University. We will leave changed, ready to take on the world with a wealth of experiences shaping how we will proceed with the rest of our lives. And we will always have the memories.

"The feeling of watching the balloons go up, hearing 'Back Home Again in Indiana,' and the command to mount your bicycles ... there is truly nothing like it," Rachel observed. "I wish I could describe it, but it's like flying and running and racing and euphoria and anxiety and total calm. I do not have the words for it. I guess it's the same feeling as riding your bike at 45mph down onto the Lake Monroe causeway and feeling the entire world open up into water around you. But people won't quite know that feeling either. But that's it."



The traditional pre-race balloon release



It's not all blue skies and sunshine!
Charley layers up against the winter chill
and Rachel sports a team Ski hat.



Emma (green jersey) and team Independent Council

Nice to Meet You: Studying Abroad in London

by Tiffany Xie, Class of 2016



"When I move to a new place, I meet people. That's what I did in London."

I've moved around more in college than during any other time in my life. From my hometown to Bloomington. To St. Louis for summer research. To London to study abroad. In some sense, I feel like a transient person. I'm not sure where to call "home" anymore.

My friend told me that when she goes to a new place, she takes long drives or walks. The feeling of moving along roads and sidewalks makes the space start to feel familiar. It seems tactile, the way a book's spine becomes softer after reading it or the way one might break in a pair of new shoes.

When I move to a new place, I meet people. That's what I did in London.

I met Ruth by volunteering with a program that connects refugees to mental health resources. We met in a coffee shop near Holborn, in central London. She fiddled with the lid on her coffee cup. Ruth was nervous because she was waiting for a decision on her latest application for asylum. She told me she had not eaten in days.

Although Ruth had been living in London for at least a decade, she was still a refugee. The constant rejections for asylum made her depressed. Her closest friend in the UK passed away recently after a hospitalization and medical mismanagement. She had heart problems and an endless string of doctor's appointments. She lived alone and missed her family.

I am not a psychiatrist, or a therapist, or in any meaningful way prepared to address issues of mental health. I had only arrived in London the week before. I could only listen to Ruth's stories and offer to be her friend.

"But I thank God every day that I am alive," Ruth said. She showed me photos from a recent wedding at her church.

After our second meeting, Ruth invited me to church. She lived in West London, far from the crush of the city and the polished coffee shops in which we met.

The Jesus Restoration Centre was a single room with no more than ten rows of chairs. When Ruth held the door open for me to come inside, everyone was already singing. A projector displayed the lyrics on the walls in white letters. The band onstage—and it was a stage, in a way—matched the volume of the singing. I felt the kick drum through the floor.

When the song ended, a man walked up to the podium that I had not noticed before. I don't remember, exactly, what the pastor said, but in my journal I wrote down the Bible verses he quoted: Isaiah 54:13. Numbers 13:33. Ecclesiastes 7:21. I do remember that the sermon was more of a call-and-response than a lecture. The murmurs of "amen" seemed to create waves upon which the pastor preached.

After each piece of his sermon, someone led a song based on a verse. The songs were cumulative, with the energy of the last song bleeding into the next. Some people stood up, arms raised toward the ceiling.

"They are praying," Ruth told me.

It's not the kind of praying I knew. My family in Indiana aren't churchgoers, unless you count the one year during which I went to Bible study with my neighbor at the Chinese church. The Chinese church was a huge building, with a stained-glass window and a cross atop the roof like a crown. The Jesus Restoration Centre, in contrast, was a small room on a crowded street with a peri peri chicken joint across the road.

Everyone here was Kenyan. After church, Ruth introduced me to a young woman in a yellow shirt. "She is going back to Kenya," Ruth told me, smiling. I started to understand her homesickness now, what she can't get across over hot chocolate in a coffee shop. It was not only about her family or her son, but about a community that spoke to her, that sang with her.



At the White Cliffs of Dover

Nice to Meet You: Studying Abroad in London

There was tea afterward, and cake—three layers of Victoria sponge—which seemed almost laughably British in this Kenyan church. Where was home for Ruth, and could she find something of it in this London church?

I only met with Ruth for a few months. I exchanged a few pleasantries on WhatsApp afterward: Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, but sometimes I wonder if we are more strangers than friends. Of course, Ruth is not really her name, either, but one she assumed when she arrived in London.

If studying abroad had an unintended purpose, then it was this—meeting people outside of the vibrant but sometimes insular world I built around myself at IU. Back in Bloomington, I spent most days walking within the square mile of campus, shuttling back and forth between my favorite study spots and weekend dinners at Thai restaurants. For me, there was always a sense that the campus was not enough. I went hiking on weekends at Monroe Lake, or played in the community orchestra, tried to see the outside world. Perhaps going to London was an extension of this impulse.

In London, I could shrug off the Bloomington responsibilities of clubs, research, and meetings. There was room for self-questioning and reinvention.

As someone interested in medicine, I was keen on hearing more about Ruth's experiences with her cardiologist, her general practitioner, and the National Health Service. What was it like under a nationalized health care system? Ruth seemed to have mixed feelings about the NHS. So did my flatmate, who told me that her experience with mental health services was minimal at best.

I had some exposure to public health while working with the Indian Health Service and doing epidemiological research. It so happened that I was in the right place at the right time to learn more about health. The NHS was celebrating its 70th anniversary and The King's Fund hosted a lecture on the program's history. University College London, where I was studying, was just down the street from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, one of the best schools for global and public health in the world. The public lectures at LSHTM were phenomenal—from global perspectives on vaccination to the effect of the Rohingya crisis on health. UCL was phenomenal in its own right. I was lucky enough to audit a master's course on epidemiology and start a research project on the effect of childhood foster care on adult health outcomes. Public health quickly shifted from a peripheral to a central passion.



Tiffany visiting Buckingham Palace with fellow Scholar Athena Nagel

There is a concept known as the social determinants of health, or the factors that determine our health that may not be obvious in the clinic, encompassing education, food security, employment, housing, and culture. Through lectures, classes, and research, I was able to view these determinants from a broad perspective. Speaking with Ruth reminded me that public health begins also at the level of the individual. Going to London made me realize that I want to work in a field of medicine that addresses health at both the individual and the population level.

Studying abroad was not life-affirming the way I may make it out to be. I don't believe for a moment that I made a great impact in the things I did. I'm not convinced that I left Ruth in a better place, or that I'll finish my research project, or that I'll remember everything from class. But it was, to be sure, transformative in its own right.

Books That Changed the World

The Power of “If”: Reinventing the Freshman Seminar

by Christoph Irmscher, WSP Director



Photo credit: recent WSP grad Lucy Battersby

As our alums will remember, our year-long Wells freshman seminar is perhaps the most important way in which we create community in the Wells Scholars Program. There's nothing quite like it: meeting twice a week, in the special setting of Harlos House, surrounded by Herman B Wells' personal library, we learn so many things about one another—the way we think, the things we care and get passionate about, and whether or not the differences between our various disciplines really matter.

For the first few years, I taught my half of the class (the fall semester) on a topic near and dear to me, environmental literature. Reading writers from John James Audubon to Rachel Carson, we reflected on how the sense of urgency about our environment we feel today was in fact present from the beginnings of our republic, how Carson's insistence on the fragility and resilience of the web of nature (which doesn't need us to exist, though we are in a more powerful position than any species on the planet to do damage to it) is a concern that existed well before her. Why didn't anyone pay attention, then? I thought the topic worked great for the purpose I wanted to accomplish in the seminar, though I will readily admit that Thoreau's *Walden*, with its lists of recommendations on how we ought to live our lives, turned out to be a bit of a drag for at least half of the class.

When they heard that I was contemplating a new topic for Freshman seminar, current Scholars kept coming back to the same idea—that there were so many important books that one feels one should have read but actually had never gotten around to reading. So why not teach a class on, put simply, important books? Every year, you see these articles in *The New York Times* or *The Guardian* and other places about “Ten Powerful Books that Changed the World” or “The Fifty Most Influential Books Ever Written.” Two years ago, in fact, I reviewed a book by Randall Fuller for *The American Scholar* that proudly bore the title *The Book that Changed America: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Ignited a Nation*. In my review I offered a mild demurrer, pointing out how many Americans—if polls and the current political climate are to be believed—still seem to have trouble believing that humans didn't emerge from the primordial slime the way we look now. But as I began to compile a list of books that could reasonably be said to have had a bit of an impact, from the poems of the medieval Persian mystic Rumi, one of the most widely read poets anywhere today, to Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*, I began to realize that the very idea of “change” puts impossible pressure on both authors and readers. Do books really matter, especially today when most of us spend more time online than in libraries? We could, of course, come up with some objective criteria for the changes books have wrought: some have inspired new laws (Carson's *Silent Spring*), new ideas about government (Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto*), or new ways of doing science (Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*). Some have added new words to the language (“Kafkaesque”) or they have helped people lead better and more conscious lives (Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*). But have they changed the world?

Rereading Freud in that light was a particularly powerful experience in the class. Although many of last year's freshmen, influenced by decades of skepticism about psychoanalysis, were wary of Freud's portrayal especially of his female patients, we did get a powerful sense of the role antisemitism and the professional setbacks he experienced might have played in the theories he developed. And while we vigorously debated the effectiveness of psychotherapy, we all agreed that Freud had somehow infiltrated the way we think today, modeling a practice we use every day when we look for the hidden significance behind the things we read or behind the actions of the people we meet. When we read Kafka, we had the added pleasure of welcoming Breon Mitchell, the founding director of the Wells Program and the distinguished American translator of *The Trial*, to our class, who patiently took us through different English versions of the first sentence of Kafka's “*Metamorphosis*.” It became clear to us right then and there that this class wasn't really about books but about the words they contain—and about writers being aware, as Freud certainly was, in ways most of us are not, of the awesome power and the awesome burdens their words carry. There is a passage in Heinrich Heine's remarkable poem *Germany: A Winter's Tale* (1844), where the poet, wandering at night through the streets of Cologne, feels that he is being followed by a mysterious stranger. When he turns around and asks him who he is, the stranger, revealing the axe he has hidden in his cloak, responds: “I am / the deed that follows your thought.”

Our first big idea last semester, then, was that words do have consequences and not always good ones. Last year's Wells freshmen were pretty clear in their reaction to Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto*. Although they admired Marx's effectiveness in condensing hundreds of years of world history into a simple story that, as he presented it, could only have one outcome, they worried about the way in which one word especially, the “proletariat,” emerges as a character in its own right, giving it a legitimacy and reality that the political

Books That Changed the World

The Power of “If”: Reinventing the Freshman Seminar

situation at the time did not sustain. A more complicated case was *The Diary of Anne Frank*, a text that had an undeniable impact on readers the world over, but, in the eyes of some Scholars, had—by invoking the author’s belief that people, all people, are “really good at heart”—sanitized our view of the Holocaust, giving it, with that one phrase, the shape of a graspable, shareable story, one that allows for empathy rather than confronting us with something that is so horrible that it simply cannot be imagined.

The second big takeaway from our discussions this semester was, perhaps, not to hold the books we read (or, for that matter, their writers, whether they are Persian mystics or teenage Jewish girls) to impossible standards. Change is not a fact but a process, an ongoing event, which involves setbacks as much as it means moving forward. We are the products of what we read and whom we read or, as Simone de Beauvoir would insist, of the words to which he have been allowed access: “If the little girl,” she wrote in 1949, “were raised, from the earliest age, with the same demands and honors, the same severity and freedom, as her brothers, taking part in the same studies and games, promised the same future, surrounded by women and men who are unambiguously equal to her ... the child would feel an androgynous world around her and not a masculine world.”

If books have changed or will change the world, their secret lies in their power to imagine for us, stubbornly, incompletely, defectively, and perhaps wrongheadedly, precisely that “if” de Beauvoir talks about, an “if” which haunts that controversial entry in Anne’s diary. “If I look up at the heavens,” she had written, “I think it will all come right.” But only “if.” We know that there would be little or no heaven for Anne to look up to.

I can’t wait for the next iteration of our freshman seminar.



Freshman Scholars examine primary documents at the Lilly Library

Reading List

Rumi, *Selected Poems* (Dover)

Voltaire, *Candide* (Penguin)

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass (Penguin)

Marx/Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Verso)

Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* (Penguin)

Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Basic)

Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. Breon Mitchell (Schocken)

The Diary of Anne Frank (Bantam)

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (Vintage)

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Dover)

Un-Belize-able

Class of 2018 Freshman International Trip, Spring 2019

Student Voices

Under the guidance of WSP Director Christoph Irmscher and Professor Anne Pyburn, the Class of 2018 enjoyed 10 days of hard work and intellectual insights in Belize. They drove across the flat scrublands of the north, up into the lush rainforests of the Maya Mountain range, and from there further south to the Maya villages of Laguna and Blue Creek. Along the way they learned scientific research methods, observed a contentious political poll, sampled fresh tropical juices, and made fast friends with local students just like themselves.

Here we present three unique student perspectives ranging from observations on the melting pot of cultures and languages to a technical catalog of skills acquired to a summary of the final service-learning project.

“These experiences made me - and I’m sure other Scholars - appreciate our opportunities and the relationships we’ve formed with each other even more than before.”

-Alicia Harmon

Native Tongue

by Alicia Harmon, Class of 2018



It seemed to me that, in each conversation I was near enough to hear, the Belizean people commonly spoke two or three languages, switching back and forth seamlessly even within sentences. Belize is a nation abundant with languages, including English, Spanish, Kriol, Mopan, Q'eqchi, and Garifuna, the latter being the only one we didn't get to hear. For me, coming from a country where most people are monolingual and often harshly critical and even punitive when it comes to the speaking of any language but English, and proper English at that, this proud multilingualism was striking. By contrast, our narrow conception of what language and linguistic culture must be misses the deeper significance of language. Language maintains the roots to one's people and influences how one is treated in society as well as what one is given in society, pushing it beyond the simply linguistic and into the political and

cultural. This holds especially true for indigenous peoples, immigrants, and other groups including the Creole peoples of Belize and the United States. Even American "ebonics" (an odd term to me as I've never conceptualized the way I speak in comfortable settings as "ebonics") holds great cultural and political impact.

Not having a language barrier made communicating on personal levels accessible, opening avenues for cultural understanding and the exchange of views rather than limiting us to basic communication. Hearing personal perspectives from Jorge, Ronel, Boris, and others on various Wells seminar topics, from the incorporation of Kriol and Maya languages into education and culture, the territorial dispute between Belize and Guatemala, the Maya struggle for land rights, Belizean history, and so much more, nuanced our views on those issues and allowed us to relearn subjects we had studied in books and articles from the perspective of those impacted by them.



Left to right: Joye Tracey, Erina Buchholz, Eli Goldstein, Clate Winters, Ava Taylor, and Alicia Harmon



The Class of 2018 with expert guides Jorge DeLeon and Boris Arevalo

Native Tongue

These conversations also allowed us to form brief but personal relationships, especially with our guides Jorge and Ronel. Our interactions with the students and those around our age were unique and a great addition to our concentrated exchanges with those in professional settings such as our guides and hosts. The casualness and more flexible social norms in Belize helped make these exchanges extremely valuable and honest.

Many Wells Scholars are on their way to learning a second or even third language (a shout-out to our soon-to-be-trilingual Raul Moreno!) The intensity of my desire to travel and learn other languages has been reinvigorated since I finally had a taste of travel and spent time around Scholars with firm plans for similar goals. Now, I am reconsidering my own plans. Fresh thoughts filled my head as we left Belize. Having spent ten days gaining amazing experiences and adapting to a new environment, I would've loved to take the opportunity to stay and delve deeper into the culture and interact with more people, making the departure a little bittersweet. Additionally, I felt so much closer to the other Scholars and opened up in a way I hadn't before. These experiences made me - and I'm sure other Scholars - appreciate our opportunities and the relationships we've formed with each other even more than before. Words can't express how appreciative I am for everything and everyone and how amazing every part of this trip was.



Top: a camera trap captures Director Christoph Irmscher (left) in the wild
Bottom: a jaguar prowls past another of our camera traps



Students relished any chance to cool off in the tropical heat
Top: above-ground pool at Trek Stop in San Ignacio
Bottom: Rio On Pools on the way to Las Cuevas



Welcome to the Jungle: An Excursion to Belize's Chiquibul Forest

by Kali Konstantinopoulos, Class of 2018



Following the last weeks of the spring semester, which were marked by late night studying in the library and finishing essays in the glow of blue light, the freshman Wells Scholars spent their first days of summer braving the heat of the Belizean sun as part of the program's third international trip for first-year Scholars. Our spring semester course (taught by the brilliant Dr. Anne Pyburn) was dedicated to learning about activism and how it can be applied to social and environmental topics in Belize. After a semester of preparation and a year's worth of anticipation of the trip, the Class of 2018 finally landed in Belize on May 6. We spent some time growing accustomed to the tropical climate and the hum of mosquitos before trading our running shorts and sandals for long pants and hiking boots in preparation for the next three days at Las Cuevas Research Station in the Chiquibul Forest.

The Chiquibul Forest covers around eight percent of Belize and is a key protected area due to its high biodiversity. On the first night, we listened to a talk on conservation challenges in the forest by researcher and University of Florida PhD candidate Boris Arevalo, who would be our guide during our stay. We learned about the conflicting natures of conservation and development and how elements of each can be combined to manage the forest sustainably. Of course, we also had plenty of time in the forest when we could admire its beauty for ourselves. Our days at Las Cuevas consisted of morning and afternoon excursions into the Chiquibul along with evening lectures. Our first hike to the bird watchtower was rewarded with a stunning view of rolling hills covered by a layer of green trees; it was definitely worth the sore legs from the uphill climb! The daily hikes were not just for the views, though; we also learned various field techniques, such as setting up cameras and using compasses. One highlight was performing line transects, or marking a path through the forest. We had the opportunity to head off-trail, through xaté palm plants and thick vines, and mark 100-meter paths with flags and colored tape. Instead of taking the road less traveled, we walked the path not traveled at all.

Considering that "Las Cuevas" means "The Caves" in Spanish, our time at the research station would not have been complete without exploring a cave for ourselves! Flashlights in hand, we climbed over rocks and through tunnels while marveling at stalactites and other karst formations. The influence of the Maya could clearly be seen in the ceramic pieces and rooms for rituals they left behind. Our education on Ancient Maya civilization continued with presentations by Jorge DeLeon on Maya numbers, calendars, and artifacts. This new knowledge created more excitement for the upcoming visit to the ancient Maya city of Caracol!



Left to right: Hana Shafique, Emma Hand, Kali Konstantinopoulos, Joye Tracey, Walker Smith

With the second half of the trip still ahead of us, we already had acquired so much new knowledge especially in the areas of conservation and management of natural resources. We saw firsthand the work and dedication that goes into studying and managing a tropical forest, which we could never have experienced by reading theory alone. It's safe to say that we left Las Cuevas Research Station with a greater appreciation of global conservation and development efforts, a new perspective that we knew we would be taking back to the States with us.



Left: students disappear into the foliage to mark their transect lines
Right: returning to the research station for some grub



Top: Boris lectures on proper GPS navigation
Left: Jane Champion teaches primate behavior
Right: Jorge expounds on Caracol's culture



Playing Tetherball at Tumul K'in

by Sydney Adams, Class of 2018



Sydney (left) helps a Maya student drill drainage holes in their tetherball pole

After nearly a week of trekking through the lush Chiquibul rainforest, the freshman class of 2018 had the opportunity to continue a Wells Scholars Program legacy. Like the class of 2016 before us, we traveled to the Tumul K'in Center of Learning in Belize's Toledo district. Tumul K'in is a co-ed boarding school with around 100 Mopan, Q'eqchi, or Yucatec Maya high school students. The school was founded to offer its students a modern education without compromising their cultural identities as Mayas, and the faculty at Tumul K'in teach the students everything from Q'eqchi and Mopan to agribusiness, accounting, and English.

On this year's trip, we had the opportunity to work with Play360, an American nonprofit that cooperates with local organizations in developing countries to build sustainable playgrounds and learning tools. Jonathan Racek, the founder, designer, and director of Play360, is also a senior lecturer at Indiana University. We were fortunate enough to meet with him during our freshman seminar this spring, when he explained to us that Play360 focuses on playgrounds because they see them as a framework for community development. His hope for each Play360 project is that it will not only be well-used and well-maintained for the students' entertainment but that it will also facilitate

more community projects in the future.

I can speak for all my classmates when I say that after learning about the missions of Tumul K'in and Play360, we were thrilled finally to arrive at the high school's remote and rural campus. Soon after our arrival, the representatives from Play360 split us into groups to work on multiple smaller scale projects: two tetherball sets, a basketball hoop, a marimba, a math balance beam, a tire calculator, as well as four benches.

Each group of workers consisted of a mix of Tumul K'in students and faculty and IU students. We quickly learned each other's names and then spent the next two and a half days sawing, drilling, and painting together in the 100-plus degree sun. Each of us helped cut wood, hammer nails, and pour concrete, regardless of our varied levels of experience. On Wednesday afternoon, we got to see everything come together and put some finishing touches on our work. We added extra layers of paint to seal and decorate each of the projects, and we used handmade stencils to paint "Tumul K'in" in Maya glyphs on the backboard of the basketball hoop.



Kali, Alicia, Caroline Santiago Turner, and Jorge put the finishing touches on the basketball hoop's new glyphs

The most memorable moment of our time at Tumul K'in came for me on the last day, when I played tetherball with the same group of Maya girls who had built the tetherball sets with me. They had never played before, so I gave a brief explanation of the rules and then we all took a break from our final touches of painting and cleaning to play. Later, when I was helping with another project, I saw the same girls teaching a group of boys to play. Watching each of the projects come together and the students starting to use them was one of my favorite parts of the trip.



That same day, some of the boys at the school climbed trees and picked coconuts so we could drink fresh coconut water with our lunch of homemade rice, beans, and stewed chicken. While we were eating, a group of the students played marimba and performed cultural dances in the traditional dress of the Mopan and Q'eqchi Maya. They also passed out colorful woven bracelets, one for each of us. I still have mine tied around my ankle today.

We came to Tumul K'in expecting to put in some work and hoping to do something good for the community. After seeing the students interact with the finished playground on the last day, I have high hopes that we did that. But my biggest takeaway from this part of the Belize trip has a lot less to do with the good that we may have done at Tumul K'in and a lot more to do with the good that Tumul K'in is already doing in Belize. While we were in Toledo district, we learned so many things

about what it means to be Maya in Belize today: the adversity that the Maya people experience, and the ways they are working to stand up against it. It was humbling for us to work alongside an education center that is currently empowering the next generation of Maya to join in that same struggle—and thanks to the nature of our work, we had a lot of fun doing it too.

Un-Belize-able

Class of 2018 Freshman International Trip, Spring 2019



Above: Play360 staff orients Wells Scholars and Tumul K'in students and faculty
Below: (left) Walker Smith and Eli Goldstein calculate precise pipe lengths for the marimba



Above: (right) Erina Buchholz and Tumul K'in students saw through a marimba pipe
Below: Jessica Morris, Hana Shafique, Morgan Jankowski, Amna Ahmed, and Raul Moreno paint balance beams in the shade



The first and last things you see when entering or leaving Belize



Part of the Tumul K'in campus



Left: a fresh tapir footprint, deep in the Chiquibul Forest
Right: Director Christoph and Associate Director Elspeth smile despite melting temperatures on top of Caracol ruins

Class Notes

Class of 1990



Jay Krutulis successfully completed the transition to his second career with the official opening of a winery, Prospice Wines, in Walla Walla, Washington! After two years of vineyard and cellar work with friend and business partner, Matt Reilly (also a career changer moving from architecture to wine and, regrettably, a University of Kentucky alumnus), their first wines were released for sale, and a tasting room was opened in early May. Jay says his winemaking career indeed connects all the dots of the winding path his life has taken. His biology and biochemistry studies at IU equipped him to better understand the science of grape growing, the intricate microbiological processes involved in fermentation, and the organic chemistry inherent to the maturation of wine. His graduate studies in neuroscience are put to new use on a daily basis as he evaluates the sight, smell, taste, and even the feel of wine. And years practicing as a corporate lawyer prepared him for the business and compliance complexities associated with launching and running his own venture. When not at the winery, Jay generally spends as much time as possible with his wonderful wife Christy (without whom the winery would absolutely never have happened: so for that and much, much more he is eternally grateful). They love their life in beautiful and bucolic Walla Walla.

Class of 1992



Karl Torke lives in Berkeley, California with his wife Rochelle Frey Torke and sons Jonas and Abram. He works as a consultant in the legal technology and operations industry. Most years he makes it back to Bloomington for the holidays, and often for a few days in the summer as well. He welcomes a hello and visit from anyone visiting the SF Bay Area.

Class of 1993



Seth Gillihan has continued with his clinical psychology practice, though he's scaled it back in exchange for more writing. Seth has two publications coming out in 2019, *A Mindful Year*, co-written with Dr. Aria Campbell-Danesh, and *The CBT Deck*, which offers daily practices in mindfulness and cognitive behavioral therapy. He also continues to host the weekly Think Act Be podcast, which features a wide range of conversations about living more fully. Plans are in the works to have a couple of Wells Scholars on the podcast later this year! Seth looks forward to more gardening with his kids in their recently expanded backyard garden.



Kevin Seal is celebrating his 14th year working in the Music Ops department at Pandora, where he gets to geek out about independent music and hear a wide swath of international sounds. He also heads up the music program at Raskob Day School, a division of Holy Names University in Oakland. Kevin wrote a chapter in the book, *Frank Zappa and the And* (Routledge), and later this year, his essay about Etta James will appear in a collaborative book with painter James Gayles (Pochino Press). When his headphones are off, he enjoys traveling overseas with his son and volunteering for Elizabeth Warren's campaign. He appreciates how much he owes to the tutelage and mentorship of an IU musicology professor, the late, great Austin Caswell.

Class of 1994

Class Notes



Will Stephens and his wife Trina Dutta are still living in Washington, DC. They recently welcomed baby boy Ayaan into their new home in the Mount Pleasant neighborhood! The jazz jam session Will organizes on the historic U Street jazz corridor will be turning 10 years old in August 2019. He was the fortunate recipient of an arts grant from DC to create a jazz exchange project with DC's "Sister City" of Bangkok, Thailand—taking a jazz combo of DC-based musicians to Bangkok in January 2019 to participate in the Thailand International Jazz Conference—and then hosting a quartet of jazz faculty from the renowned Mahidol University College of Music for performances in DC, including at the Smithsonian and the Kennedy Center.

Class of 1995

John Krug lives with his wife and two teenage children in Indianapolis. He has worked for Roche Diagnostics since completing his PhD and post-doctoral fellowship in chemistry and is currently the Senior Director of Quality for Roche Diabetes Care. When he has free time, John enjoys running and reading.

Michael Pacold is an Assistant Professor of Radiation Oncology at NYU Langone Medical Center, where he runs a lab studying cancer metabolism (with an emphasis on the chemical biology of metabolism and the improved methods of identifying and measuring metabolites) and cares for patients with brain tumors. He lives in Manhattan and is happily married to Dorothy, an endocrinologist.

Class of 1997

Robert Tayon continues to live in Bangkok, Thailand with his family. He recently started leading the Economics group at Agoda, a technology company focused on travel. Rob enjoys escaping the Bangkok heat whenever possible.



Class of 1999

Sarah Jenkins has been enjoying life as a partner at Faegre Baker Daniels in the Business Litigation Group. More importantly, she's been loving every minute of being a mom to a beautiful three-year-old daughter, Elinor. Sarah primarily litigates trust, estate, and fiduciary-related disputes. Although she thrives on the thrill of litigation, she really relishes counseling clients on mitigating the risk that their legacies will be overturned. Sarah worked closely with the Indiana State Bar Association in drafting and lobbying for legislation that would permit clients to add no-contest clauses to their wills and trusts. The General Assembly passed the legislation, and it became effective July of last year. Now Sarah gives presentations on how best to leverage no-contest clauses to prevent disgruntled beneficiaries from bringing costly litigation to invalidate wills and trusts. She also dedicates significant time to pro bono work for people with disabilities; one of her recent cases was featured on the front page of the Indiana Lawyer.



Brianne (Williams) Kirkpatrick and her family had a busy year in 2018! Brianne and husband Michael welcomed their third child, Henry, in February. Brianne was a guest on the Today Show in September 2018 to talk about the work she does with people who get shocking results after at-home DNA testing. Her first book, *The DNA Guide for Adoptees*, written with her friend

Class Notes



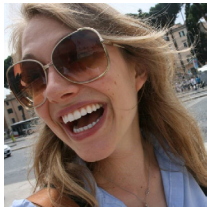
Shannon Combs-Bennett, was published in May 2019. Future years won't have so many announcements, but she's happy to update the Wells community with these professional achievements that have their roots in her time as an IU student, and she's thankful for the ongoing Wells communication because she always looks forward to hearing where in the world former classmates have gone and what they are doing!

Class of 2002

Brian Matzke and his wife Paula welcomed their son Samuel in March of 2018. After spending the past 12 years in Ann Arbor, where he earned a PhD in English and a Master's in Library and Information Science at the University of Michigan, Brian and his family moved to New Britain, Connecticut in the summer of 2018. There he works as the Digital Humanities Librarian for Central Connecticut State University. He hopes to connect with other Wells alumni in the area!

Class of 2007

Laura (Goins) Callahan has been at Rutgers finishing her PhD for the past few years. She will be moving back to Indiana this summer to start teaching as an assistant professor of philosophy at Notre Dame. Laura hopes she'll get the chance to visit Bloomington more frequently now that she'll be within a reasonable driving distance.



CJ Lotz was promoted to senior editor at Garden & Gun, a national magazine covering the Deep South from its base in Charleston, SC. Formerly the magazine's research editor, CJ coordinates travel coverages and writes and edits articles on food, books, gardens, and culture for print and digital media. She is also a frequent contributing writer to the IUAA magazine – check out their spring 2019 issue for her piece about Jenny Huang.



Class of 2008

Eric Anderson has been pursuing the opening of a float tank and infrared sauna for the last 3+ years. The sauna is finally ready to open in Austin.

Class of 2009

After graduation, Adam Friedman lived in New York and worked in investment banking before moving to Chicago to work in healthcare private equity. In August 2018, he married fellow Hoosier Amanda Hammerman, a casual acquaintance from IU Hillel with whom he reconnected in New York, and the rest is history! He is now pursuing an MBA at Harvard Business School, while Amanda is a Community Connector at Combined Jewish Philanthropies in Boston. Their family also includes a corgi mix named Kirkwood Skywalker Friedman (after Kirkwood Avenue, but Kirk for short)! In their free time, they love Settlers of Catan, escape rooms, and going on weekend trips around New England.



Class of 2010

Michael Auslen completed a Master's in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University this spring. There, he also served as Editor-in-Chief of the 19th volume of the Kennedy School Review, a journal of policy and politics. Beginning

Class Notes



this fall, Michael will move to New York City to pursue a PhD in Political Science from Columbia University.

Class of 2011

Sarah TeKolste teaches International Baccalaureate Spanish at Shortridge High School in Indianapolis. This year she was honored to be recognized with the Teach For America Alumni Award for Excellence in Teaching. Sarah is a senior alumni fellow for Teach Plus, an adjunct methods instructor at the University of Indianapolis, and a linguistics instructor for the Indiana University Honors Program in Foreign Languages. Outside of work, Sarah enjoys traveling, running half-marathons, reading, and learning to cook.



Allison Winstel has been with Deloitte Consulting just over 3 years and will now be heading to the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business in the fall to pursue her MBA on a full-tuition scholarship. While at Ross, Allison plans to focus her studies on leadership development and the intersection of business and social impact, exploring how driving collaboration across the public, private and nonprofit sectors can lead to more sustainable social change. In the time between leaving Deloitte and heading to Ann Arbor, Allison is interning for Feeding America in Chicago on their Strategic Planning team, helping the organization implement an outcomes measurement framework.



Class of 2013

Morgan Mohr just finished her second Master's at Oxford under the Rhodes scholarship, a Master's of Public Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government. She's returning to Indiana to work for Mayor Pete Buttigieg's presidential campaign.



Class of 2014

Naomi Kellogg will be completing her time as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Trondheim, Norway this June. This fall she will begin pursuing a Master's of Science in Global Development at the University of Copenhagen.



Richard Solomon has spent the past academic year as a Boren Scholar on the Arabic Flagship Program in Meknes, Morocco. He's excited to continue his Arabic studies on the CASA Fellowship Program in Cairo, Egypt '19-'20 and welcomes any Wells Scholars who are visiting!



Class of 2016

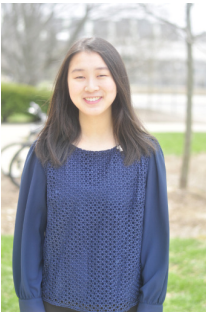
Neil Shah just wrapped up a semester abroad in London, where he studied international finance, and enjoyed trips to the Canary Islands, Barcelona, Amsterdam, and Mallorca. This summer, he also

Class Notes



traveled to India for two weeks with family and then explored North Carolina, Utah, and Arizona to hike with his brother (and fellow Wells Scholar) Kushal. Neil started an internship at Bain & Company in June and will spend 10 weeks in Chicago before returning to IU for his final year of undergrad. He will serve as the Director of Client Development for 180 Degrees Consulting, the Vice-President of the Kelley Dean's Insight Board, take part in his final IU Dance Marathon, and graduate next spring with degrees in finance, economic consulting, and business analytics.

Class of 2017



Yiling Dong spent last summer conducting chemical engineering research at Zhejiang University in her hometown of Hangzhou, China. She came back to Bloomington ready to fully immerse herself in her heritage and the Asian American community. To that end, Yiling joined the Asian American Association, which has helped her stay updated on Asian Pacific American issues and find a new family at IU. This year she continued volunteering as an English tutor at the Asian Culture Center. She also decided to start volunteering as a Mandarin tutor after serving as the primary interpreter at an international symposium and doing a variety of English-Chinese translation tasks last summer. Yiling has fostered her love of languages and science by conducting research in a psycholinguistics lab under Dr. Laurent Dekydtspotter, which studies the variations in sentence interpretation between native and non-native speakers. This summer, she'll be conducting research on the neurobiology of functional neurological disorders at the NIH as part of the Amgen Scholars Program. Until Yiling leaves for Washington, DC she'll be busy catching up with friends and exploring a newfound love of painting.

Class of 2018



Raul Moreno is a rising sophomore studying international law, atmospheric sciences, and Chinese. He is part of the IU Chinese Flagship and is a member of the International Law Association American Branch. Raul volunteers with IU Bridges teaching elementary Chinese to children in grade K-6. In his free time, he enjoys running, hiking, playing guitar, or just spending time with his friends. On any given weekend you can find him at Bloomington Bagel Company or doing homework at Soma Coffeehouse. He is excited to study abroad in China or Taiwan and work in international environmental and immigration law.

Commitment to the Future: Supporting the Program Beyond Your Time on Campus

IU Day

In recent years, Wells Scholars have made strong efforts to support the Program with annual contributions, investing in current young leaders and the communities they enrich and improve.



Thanks to IU Day, we've seen a significant number of Scholars giving back to the Program and encouraging classmates to join them with gifts to the Class Campaign. Class of 2008 was the 2018 Class Campaign Winner, with 95% of classmates making a gift to WSP, followed by the Classes of 2002 (81%) and 2004 (71%), and the current student Class of 2015 (65%). 39% of all Scholars, past and present, made a gift to the Program in 2018.

In June, just halfway through 2019 and including another successful IU Day in April, 38% of Scholars have already made a gift to the Program! The Class of 2008 leads the campaign once again, with 90% of peers making a gift to the Program, followed closely by the current student Classes of 2015 (graduating seniors) and 2018 (freshman) as well as the alumni Class of 2010, all with 75% of Scholars participating.

The Class Campaign runs throughout the calendar year. Please make your gift today!

Herman B Wells Giving Society



The Herman B Wells Giving Society is a new tribute to honor the loyal commitment and spirit of philanthropy of our alumni contributing at or above \$1,000 in a calendar year, and our young alums (WSP graduates in the past five years) at or above \$500 in a calendar year.

The HBW Giving Society acknowledges the unbelievable opportunities alums received as Scholars and recognizes the role one can play in facilitating these opportunities for current and future Scholars.

One-time donations, monthly recurring gifts, pledge contributions, and employee matching gifts are all acknowledged. HBW Giving Society members will be acknowledged annually on the WSP website

and in the summer newsletter. Supporting the Wells Scholars Program has an immediate impact: the 78 current Scholars, and their families, are the direct beneficiaries of annual giving.

Summer Grant Giving Opportunity

Structured summer activities, whether academic or creative, are a typical part of most students' college experience. The Wells Scholars Program offers grant funding for students to pursue these experiences off campus. Annual gifts to the Program help support this funding.

Scholars can apply for a grant to fund a summer internship, research or volunteer project, creative activity, or other enriching experience. The current grant amount is \$1,750 per student.

In 2019 the following experiences were supported thanks to the gifts of many generous donors:

- * a museum curation internship at the Metropolitan Museum of Art
- * alphavirus strike assembly research on the IU Bloomington campus
- * a language intensive for opera singers at the Goethe-Institut in Germany
- * medieval bio-archaeology field research in Pozzeveri, Italy
- * and more!



Rising senior Scholar Lauren Ehrmann in front of a 14th century Iranian mihrab at the Met

Give to the Wells Scholars Program

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Designate Your Gift

Designation:	Gift amount:
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Please contact Kristin Varela, Director of Development, with any questions.
kjvarela@indiana.edu or (812) 855-9065





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