

My CGS Story

by Kelly Diaz (Class of 2015)



My two semesters at the Center for Global Studies have been an amazing experience. I learned many lessons—extra Excel boxes do not erase easily, children do not always want to do the activity you carefully planned, fliers will get posted over—and I grew from every instance where I needed to adjust my mindset and be patient with computer programs, young

children, or my peers. This internship fit perfectly in with my fields of study, especially my Global Studies major, and I highly recommend all Liberal Arts students to check out the Center for Global Studies. Our lectures, movie screenings, and other programming were all great opportunities to improve my understanding of a wide range of global issues. I studied abroad in London, UK and those credits were a large chunk of my GLOBE major requirements. My internship with CGS gave me the opportunity to teach UK Culture to elementary school students at the Young Scholars of Central PA school (YSCP) and expand my own learning of this particular international region. All of the lectures that I attended, hosted by CGS and the School of International Affairs (SIA) helped enhance my understanding of a different global issue, from US's relations with Iran to hunger among small share farmers in Africa to the CIA's role in international relations.

Without CGS I would not have been exposed to these awesome programs, and my understanding of Global Studies would have been limited to the classroom.

FAVORITE EVENTS



My favorite event was working at the henna booth at the State College Fall Festival in October 2013. We got to see all of the beautiful designs that the artists could make, and got to laugh at the funny designs that kids created themselves. My co-interns and I even got our own henna tattoos. That experience was so memorable because we got to promote two of the goals of the Center for Global Studies (learn something about

another culture and promote this learning within the State College community) and we got to have fun doing it. This event was also memorable because it was the first time I talked to my co-intern, Annie, who is now one of my good friends.

I also loved participating in the *World Stories Alive!* program at Schlow Library downtown. It was great to learn about a different language every week (sometimes I even kept the handouts to make sure I remembered the words we learned) and getting to talk to the readers and learn about their culture and language was an amazing opportunity. The crafts we made were also fun, and I have a number of them hung up on the walls in my apartment. These events were another place where I got to know the other interns, which is a really important part of my CGS story.



IMPORTANT PEOPLE

As I mentioned before, my co-workers and supervisors really shaped my time at CGS.

Our director, Dr. Sophia McClennen, has been an academic idol of mine for several years, and getting the opportunity to work under her was fantastic. I am impressed every day by her countless roles on campus and her dedication to so many worthy causes.

CGS's Associate Director, and my direct supervisor, Sarah Lyall-Combs, played a critical role in my time at CGS. She really helped me to grow in my position throughout my two semesters, and she always offered help when I needed it. She was extremely approachable and ensured that interns could come to her with any problem. My favorite memory is when she came to visit me and co-intern Katie Black at our after school club at Young Scholars of Central PA school. We were teaching UK/French culture and letting the students do karaoke of French and British songs. Sarah gave us useful feedback on how to get all of the students engaged, keep them focused, and make sure that they were having fun. She also took off her "boss" hat and had fun with us, laughing the whole time that Katie and I did a sample karaoke round singing Spice Girls.

When I met Cortnie Showers last fall, she was new to the job at CGS (just like me) and we embarked on a learning process together. We would sit in the old office and ask each other computer questions, or questions about CGS traditions, and we would (usually) answer "Sorry, I'm new, too" and have to go ask Sarah. As the months went on, we found ourselves knowing more and more about CGS processes, about Excel, and about poster formatting. She was always willing to lend a hand with a task of mine, even when she had a huge pile of work to do herself.

I will miss the time I spent in the office with Cortnie, and I am so glad that I had her as a resource and a friend this past year.

Molly Appel is one of the only people I knew before CGS. She was my TA for a comparative literature class fall 2012. It was amazing to see her transform from being my TA to being my grad intern to being my friend. She played the “grown up” role when we needed her to—getting craft supplies for World Stories Alive crafts, checking over our newsletter to catch errors, and working with difficult technology at the library—but she was also a great friend. Knowing few people in Comparative Literature (my major), I am really thankful to have found such a strong connection with Molly and I hope to keep in touch for a long time.

Fellow interns Katie Black, Annie Goodrich, and Ali Gatlin – If there is one thing I would never change about my time with CGS, it would be the people. These ladies never hesitated to help me when I struggled to get a newsletter done, or when I could not understand why my Excel sheet lost half of my data, or when I needed someone else to drive to YSCP because I had a concussion. They always went above and beyond in their own assignments and roles and to help a friend in need. I certainly could not have managed our YSCP students without Katie in the fall or without all three of them in the spring. Katie was our lead intern in the fall. She did an amazing job at making sure all of the interns were taking on the right amount of work, were happy with their clubs, and were on top of the monthly newsletter. Annie similarly did a fantastic job as our lead intern in the spring. She took advice from what worked or didn't work for Katie in the fall and created a role for herself that benefitted the other interns and Sarah as much as possible. Her job was made significantly more difficult by the Burrowes construction that forced us into a smaller, less efficient office. She had to rely on email contact more than Katie had, which is always hard. Ali was an amazing addition to our team this semester, and I applaud her for her ability to come in and seamlessly become a part of our tight knit group.

Thank you to everyone who helped make my two semesters with the Center for Global Studies so wonderful! I will miss CGS lots next year!