

# My CGS Story

## by Alanna Kaiser (Class of 2017)



It's been almost a full academic year since I applied for my internship at Penn State's Center for Global Studies. Over the past year, I've grown in my role as an intern, and have had a plethora of good experiences that I will take with me in the professional world.

At first glance, I am not the typical CGS intern. My major, Community, Environment, and Development, is not inherently global, and my minors, Economics, Natural Resource Economics, and Environmental Inquiry give no indication to my international tendencies. However, my passion lies in global environmental issues, and my specialization within my major is international development. I was initially attracted to the internship at CGS because I thought it would give me opportunities to explore international, human and environment interactions, and would also expose me to other relevant global issues that may lie outside my field. After a full academic year with CGS, I can say that my time spent as an intern has given me these things and more.

Throughout the past two semesters, I've learned the ins and outs of being an intern at CGS. I've become a master at responding to emails in 24 hours (usually... sorry Sarah!), and I've even had the chance to plan, organize, and host my own event for International Education Week in the fall. I was also given the opportunity to teach local elementary students in globally focused after school clubs, and to interview a documentary filmmaker who produced a short film dealing with human-environment interactions in India and subsequently develop a case study dealing with this topic. All of these things I did in addition to assisting with the day-to-day CGS events and programming.

While these things were productive in themselves, they also served the purpose of helping me to decide what I like, and what type of career I'd like to begin after college. Though I'm only halfway through my undergraduate degree, my interests right now are likely to lead me to work in international development. Specifically, I think I would like to work on sustainable development and conservation ventures in low-income countries.

One connection in particular that I made through my CGS event has helped to solidify this interest. I met Dr. Audrey Maretzki, director of the Interinstitutional Center for Indigenous Knowledge, when I invited her to be a guest at the International Education Week event I hosted first semester. Since then, I've worked with her and a team of other like-minded people to reinvigorate the student branch of ICIK, SSIK (Student Society for Indigenous Knowledge). The conversations that I've had surrounding SSIK and the importance of indigenous knowledge have made me even more stalwart in my desire to use community development as a way to preserve environment and culture for generations to come.

On that note, my CGS story comes to an end. It has been a wonderful two semesters, and I'm very grateful for all of the experiences and opportunities that this internship has given to me. It's truly been a pleasure to work with Sarah, Jon, Ben, Leah, and Bridget, and I wish them all the best in their global endeavors.