

2006 Summer Travel Grants



[My trip] to Pagan and Mandalay [gave] me a glimpse of ancient Burma. What I saw was a tourist cliché. *The cities were breathtaking, filled with historical wonders. Yet, the thing that surprised me the most was the new culture that surrounded these cities. Mandalay was the Paris of Burma.*

—Ohmar Myint (Burma)



Visiting Sri Lanka has changed my life in an enormous way, challenged my preconceived notions of reality, political activism, and personal independence.

—Katy Griffin



During my two years of studying Bengali at Cornell, I learned to read, write, and speak Bengali. My professor's passion for Bengali language and culture sparked my own interest in experiencing life in a Bengali-speaking country. I was also inherently interested in visiting Bangladesh because my own family is from the small country in South Asia.

-Farzana Nuruzzaman

I was able to see so many enriching things and I was able to experience so many cultural aspects that I had previously only read about that I am smiling as I write this report. This trip has made me so happy and has only furthered my interest in Japan and Japanese society. I hope that this program continues and that many more people will be able to experience what I did over the summer. -Erik Jarva (Japan)

I am more excited about the prospect about studying abroad in Japan. I already feel relatively comfortable in Tokyo, where I hope to study, and I am confident that it is somewhere I want to be. Finally, this trip served to cement my FALCON Japanese in my head. I've proven to myself that I really can communicate, and while it takes a lot of effort, it will get easier with practice.

--Oliver Northrup



I experienced amazing natural wonders, bustling urban phenomenon, and thought provoking historical heritage. My travels were an investigation into what it means to be Japanese, what it means to be American, and what it means to be a human on this earth. *Studying the language of another country is like an insight into another world, but once you travel there you learn about yourself as well as about the people of the country.* This is not an experience that can be obtained in a classroom, but rather through a special trek like the one I underwent in the summer of 2006. This was indeed a life experience and I am exceedingly grateful for the generous help that has allowed me to make such profound discoveries for myself.

–Shaune Hall (Japan)

I will never forget my travels in China. *Perhaps the most unexpected truth I discovered was how similar human beings are on a fundamental level and that it is only language that separates us.*

I especially felt a sense of closeness to many people—in particular a friend from work, Li Duo. She told me of her hopes, dreams, and life. She shared what she found special about the city and Chinese culture with me. Thinking back I am filled with so much respect. I feel so much for my close friends and brief acquaintances in China and how every one of them touched my life.

–Luke Chernosky



China was everything I expected and more. After spending two weeks in Beijing, I fell in love. Using Mandarin to carry out my daily activities such as exchanging money at the bank or talking to a taxicab driver has augmented my colloquial Chinese skills. Within a two-week span, I encountered almost every situation that was studied in my Chinese classes at Cornell.

–Jeffrey Chau (China)

