

## Global Engagement: Student Testimonial

**Name:** Gaya W.

**Study Abroad Program:** 2023 Rwanda Guided Study Tour

### **Why did you choose this study abroad program?**

The faculty in charge is someone with a great reputation, that of trust and the idea of travelling and creating bonds with students in Rwanda while making music seemed incredible.

### **Did you receive academic credit for this program?**

Yes. We received 1.5 credits.

### **What was your favorite part about studying abroad?**

Immersing myself in the culture by eating local cuisine, hearing customary music and appreciating Rwandan fashion.

### **What was the most challenging part and how did you overcome it?**

Mosquitos, the threat of Malaria was (in my opinion overexaggerated by the travel clinic) always on my mind. Taking the anti-malarial pills and being diligent with long-sleeve clothing let me overcome that fear.

### **What surprising or fun fact did you learn about your host country?**

The music industry is alive and thriving but Rwandans do not dance very easily. Also, the monthly country-wide cleanups were inspired by the tragic cleanup the Rwandans had to do after the devastation of the genocide.

### **What did you gain from this experience?**

I gained a new perspective on how I can be valuable in a group setting musically. It gave me confidence that will fuel my passions for many years to come.

**What did you learn about intercultural communication during your study abroad?**

Complex opinions were difficult to explain and/or understand but we communicated well with facial expressions and music pathing the way for ever-lasting bonds.

**What does being a global citizen mean to you?**

It means the privilege of including diversity in my perspective especially when considering politics and societal norms.

**How did Global Engagement support you during your planning?**

Help with filling out forms as well as providing a general idea of what to expect overall was very beneficial.

**Would you do it again?**

I would 100% do this experience again.