"This journey was made possible with the Loh Boon Chye & Family SEP Awards..."
A Note From IRO

In this issue, we feature students who have benefitted from the numerous awards, scholarships, grants and loans which NUS offers. IRO is committed to providing you financial aid for a wide range of global programmes so that you can now go on the Student Exchange Programme (SEP) and other opportunities, such as international summer programmes (i-SP), international internships (i-Intern), international research attachment programmes (i-RAP) and Study Trips for Engagement and EnRichment (STEER). As you read on, we encourage you to apply for these various awards or grants to achieve your goals and dreams during your study in NUS!

INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIPS (i-Intern)

Champions with a Cause

Sri Lanka

Geography major, Liu Jinming interned at CandleAid Lanka, an NGO running programmes that seek to support financially needy families with their health, food and education needs. Jinming’s initial task was to document work processes to ensure business continuity. She also initiated a donation drive on Facebook where she raised $2,384 within 26 days. Funds raised were distributed to several areas including the coverage of education for students and provision of food for families and the homeless. Funds also went into purchasing schoolbooks for underprivileged children and a Self-Empowerment Programme initiated to train enterprising single mothers.

Timor-Leste

Tan Hui Zhen, an Environmental Studies student, completed her i-Intern at Conservation International. They aim to empower societies to responsibly and sustainably care for nature, global biodiversity and the well-being of humanity. The organisation builds upon a foundation of science, partnerships and field work to generate global solutions to conservation issues. She was tasked with drafting an Environmental Policy Roadmap to address gaps in environmental legislation. She also analysed reports and policy documents from NGOs. Hui Zhen eventually generated a report with suggestions on how policy gaps could be addressed.

Cover photo: Chong Wen Feng, recipient of the Loh Boon Chye & Family SEP Awards, admiring the breathtaking sunset view at Desert View, Grand Canyon National Park

Jinming with colleagues Cyril and Irene, who have both been working for CandleAid since its establishment in 1995

Hui Zhen with colleagues on a boat off Atauro Island
The NUS International Internship (i-Intern) Award provides financial assistance to all NUS undergraduates embarking on NUS-endorsed international internships, including IRO-administered internships, faculty-administered internships and self-sourced internships. For more information, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/others/nusinternship/index.html

### Uganda

Jessica Koh Huey Yee, a student from Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, was the first to intern at Ashinaga, a Japanese NGO providing educational support for orphans in Japan. In 2012, Ashinaga set up its first Kokoro Juku (The School of Hearts) residential facility for orphaned secondary school students in Uganda, with the vision to groom students into future leaders in their respective countries and to sponsor their studies at top universities in USA, UK and Japan.

She tutored these African students from over 15 different sub-Saharan countries in Scholastic Aptitude Test and/or International English Language Testing System topics, global awareness and public speaking to help them enter these universities.

The scholars’ optimism, ambition and astounding confidence, despite their harsh living circumstances, have been utterly moving and inspiring. My humbling experience with Ashinaga Uganda has drastically altered my outlook towards life.
Exploring boundaries in the UK & USA

Peh Wen Yan, a Life Science major student, went on the Student Exchange Programme (SEP) to the University of Glasgow in the UK and Chong Wen Feng, Geography major student, went to the University of Washington in the USA. Both were awardees of the Loh Boon Chye & Family SEP Awards. Find out more about their experiences and how you can apply for these awards!

“Regardless of destination, SEP provides a platform for you to step out of your comfort zone and takes you on an experience you cannot gain locally. Don’t be hindered by financial constraints – plan ahead, save up and look for external avenues of funding. This once-in-a-lifetime experience is worth the investment!

Wen Yan

Share your experiences and takeaways with us!

WEN YAN My most interesting experience was witnessing the European migrant crisis in Hungary. This really opened my eyes to the world and made me realise we are truly blessed to live in Singapore and should not take its peace and stability for granted.

WEN FENG This SEP was the longest I had been away from home and I certainly grew outside of my comfort zone. Living away from familiar things has greatly widened my perspective.

How did the Loh Boon Chye & Family SEP Awards help you on this journey?

WEN YAN I’m grateful I was able to fund my SEP on top of using my own savings without burdening my family. Although I had been saving up through various means, it would have taken me quite some time to save enough. I was able to have an enjoyable exchange without having to worry incessantly about the finances because of this award.

WEN FENG My family and I are extremely grateful for this award as it certainly helped to lighten the financial burden of studying in the USA. With the cost of living being substantially higher than Singapore, this award allowed me to focus my time and energy on learning about the diversity of this world instead of feeling uneasy about my daily finances.
Fretting over the cost of an SEP? Check out the numerous awards you can apply for!

**LOH BOON CHYE & FAMILY SEP AWARDS**

The Loh Boon Chye & Family SEP Awards were established through a generous donation from Mr Loh Boon Chye, an NUS alumnus. Mr Loh believes in the value-add SEP offers to undergraduate education, and hopes to support financially-needy students for SEP to the UK, USA and China. Up to three awards valued from S$3,000 to S$6,000 are available each academic year.

**SEP AWARD FOR THE COMMUNITY SPIRITED**

The SEP Award for the Community Spirited was created through a generous donation from Mr Dilhan Pillay Sandrasegara, the Head of Enterprise Development Group of Temasek International. This award was set up for students who have demonstrated a desire to give back to the society through consistent and active community involvement. There are eight awards available each academic year each valued at S$6,000.

**NUS IN ASIA SEP AWARDS**

To encourage more students to participate in SEP to Peking University and Tsinghua University, students can now apply for the NUS in Asia SEP Awards. These awards are valued at S$8,000 each, and there are up to six available every academic year!

**CHINESE UNIVERSITY STUDY AWARDS**

The Chinese University Study Awards (CUSA) are valued at S$3,000 each (12 awards per academic year) and are open to students going on SEP to one of the C9 League universities in China.

- Fudan University, Shanghai
- Harbin Institute of Technology, Heilongjiang
- Nanjing University, Jiangsu
- Peking University, Beijing
- Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai
- Tsinghua University, Beijing
- Xi’an Jiaotong University, Shaanxi
- Zhejiang University, Zhejiang

For more details on eligibility and application on any of the above awards*, refer to [http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/others/index.html](http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/others/index.html)

*Please note that eligibility, terms and conditions apply for different awards.

What advice would you give to students keen to go on a Student Exchange Programme?

**WEN YAN**  
Be practical in the application process and choose institutions that will give you a better chance of being accepted. Do not be disheartened if you are asked to switch choices as it could be a blessing in disguise. Regardless of destination, SEP provides a platform for you to step out of your comfort zone and takes you on an experience you cannot gain locally. Don’t be hindered by financial constraints – plan ahead, save up and look for external avenues of funding. This once-in-a-lifetime experience is worth the investment!

**WEN FENG**  
Adopt an open mind and choose a destination which will be highly enriching with ample opportunities to develop yourself. Interact with the people wherever you may go. It was through talking to locals that I learnt most about places I visited. Be it educating yourself or simply getting to know what’s interesting in a city, a local perspective certainly serves more merit than harm. Lastly, do bring some comfort items, especially food, which you may miss while on exchange!
Cruising through Croatia

Elliot Sim (Faculty of Engineering ‘15) went to the University of Zagreb in Croatia on his SEP and shared with us why you should consider studying there too!

The University of Zagreb in Croatia is one of the oldest and most reputable universities in Eastern Europe. It is a comprehensive university with a variety of courses to choose from. My professors were hospitable and patient in fostering the memorable learning experience I had during my exchange semester.

An emphasis on student benefits and welfare is still present in Croatian society. Even after the collapse of the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Food and accommodation in the university and transportation within the country are highly subsidised by the Croatian government. The cost of living is relatively lower in Croatia compared to other parts of Europe. Students interested in going to Croatia for their SEP need not be concerned that the cost of the exchange programme will be a humongous sum.

Moreover, Croatia is also the gateway to many Eastern European countries with many direct bus and train routes to cities such as Budapest, Ljubljana, Vienna, Sarajevo and Belgrade. This makes travelling so much easier and affordable!
Exploring Diversity

Kenneth Lee, a student from the Faculty of Science, embarked on the Duke-NUS Joint Summer Program to Cambodia and Malaysia last summer. During the programme, he took a field module entitled Environmental Conservation and Urban Tropical Ecology. Immerse yourself in his recount of this unique adventure!

What attracted you to this module?
I love travelling and exploring places, cultures and people from different countries and jumped at this opportunity to immerse myself in diversity. I was also attracted to exploring environmental conservation with students from an overseas university.

Describe your experience during the Duke-NUS Joint Summer Program.
Exciting, enriching and engaging! Besides classroom lessons, we went on exciting field trips to zoos, grasslands, nature reserves and parks. One of our field trips involved bird-watching, helping us appreciate the importance of and need for bird conservation in Cambodia. It was most engaging when we explored conservation issues during projects and discussions with guest speakers from government and non-government organisations.

Would you recommend this module to other students?
Absolutely! Since there are no prerequisites, any student interested in unique and exciting experiences during the summer should apply. The module was intellectually stimulating and greatly deepened my appreciation for ecology. You will enjoy it!

Did the programme change your perspectives and certain mind sets you had?
Prior to embarking on this programme, I had thought of conservation simply as preserving nature which was struggling to survive due to human intervention. After visiting numerous conservation sites and interacting with conservationists, nature lovers, and government representatives, I realised there are many stakeholders involved in conservation and problems often begin with us humans. We can make a positive impact by being more aware of the consequences of our actions and can advocate conservation efforts through social platforms and public education.
Labour of Love

Meet Olivia Tang and Alice Ung Ngoc Anh, both recipients of the Tan Mingwei Global Community Service Grant. Read on to find out how both stepped out of their comfort zones to help others.

Olivia Tang

I found great joy in being of service to the needy. My wish is for our words of encouragement to stay with the children and that they will be surrounded with a safe and loving environment to grow up in. With thanks to the Tan Mingwei Global Community Service Grant, this experience has inspired me deeply and I would love to return to that little town again!

Olivia Tang,
NUS Business School,
i-Intern with the Chinese Agape Foundation in Jiangxi, China

INTO THE UNKNOWN

Staying in College of Alice and Peter Tan (CAPT) which is focused on community engagement, I had the privilege of knowing Dr Tan Lai Yong who had undertaken prior overseas stints in non-governmental organisations. Through Dr Tan's contact, I found myself in China four months later. The Chinese Agape Foundation is a charitable organisation headquartered in Texas. In China, more than 100 orphans are cared for in each of their five centres. They are provided with food, clothing, medical care and education.

MORE THAN JUST WORK

Prior to this stint, the main tasks I was responsible for were to improve human resource policies and to spend time with the children, giving them guidance, support and love. My time was divided between translation work, tutoring the children, and helping with an outreach campaign. While I was there, I noticed not all children brushed their teeth every night and started a group to do so. Starting with three young girls, the group grew to an average of seven nightly. To ensure continuity, I assigned the older girls to distribute the remaining dental floss I had before leaving.
I had a remarkable experience working at Nile’s Sun Association, the world’s first specialised scientific society in pyramids’ science. They aim to expose the secrets of the pyramids’ science and apply it on modern practical areas including medicine, biology, energy and community service.

Alice Ung, Faculty of Engineering, i-Intern at Nile’s Sun Association with AIESEC Global Citizen Program in Cairo, Egypt

LAND OF THE PHARAOHS
Together with eight other interns from different countries, our role was to support the research of pyramids’ science and promote the association through various environmental activities. For a start, we read about pyramids’ science and its applications, then assisted in the association’s activities to promote the applications of pyramids’ science relating to technology. We organised several events to teach people to build a pyramid model for meditation practices. Participating in the Interns’ Conference was my most incredible experience. I had the opportunity to engage in cultural exchanges with 200 other interns from around Egypt during the leadership training.

PERSONAL GAINS
Working in the association gave me tremendous experience in organising community activities and I learnt how to develop a globally impactful non-profit organisation. I also honed my communication and leadership skills and met amazing friends through the AIESEC network and activities. As I had the privilege to work with many outstanding people, I am greatly inspired to go the extra mile and volunteer my services for the society. I am motivated to continue serving my community in Singapore and to raise it to new heights.

Are you an advocate for the less fortunate and passionate about finding opportunities to give back to the community? The Tan Mingwei Global Community Service Grant can help you on your mission to rekindle others’ hopes and dreams. This award is open to full-time NUS undergraduate students who can carry out community service or will participate in internships with community service providers in developing countries.

The skill or service could be directly related to the student’s field of study (such as medicine, engineering, IT, science, and environmental studies), or you could tap on more generalised skills and teaching. A maximum of four grants, valued up to S$2,000 each, will be given per academic year. The actual amount will be decided based on the nature and merit of the project and the applicant’s financial needs.

For more details on eligibility and application, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/others/index.html

The AIESEC Global Citizen Programme is an international volunteer programme that allows youths to make a positive influence on local community overseas. To find out more, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/IRO/opps/others/out/index.html
Wide-eyed in Boston

Abigail Lum Yan Yi from NUS Business School was wide-eyed during the summer at Boston University (BU). Read on to see what caught her attention!

"Taking Public Relations in BU was an eye-opening experience. Classes comprised of students from truly all walks of life. One was an experienced radio talk-show host; another was a senior who fully embodied the spirit of life-long learning, and others. As Americans tend to be more vocal in expressing their opinions, I was involved in many debates on such issues with an extremely diverse group of people.

Having received the NUS Awards for Study Abroad (NASA) Enhancement Award, it greatly helped in financing my expenses on i-SP. This award allowed me to live in the city, near BU, which saved me a lot of travelling time that I could use to truly experience campus life and the culture, sights and sounds of Boston. It provided me with the opportunity to be exposed to people from different backgrounds and empowered me to become a more open-minded and well-informed individual."

Going to Boston University?
Abigail shares her top 5 tips!

- Living in Boston is expensive. Be prepared for it. A debit/credit card will be very useful when in the States.

- To save money, cook your meals and take the bus (BoltBus, Greyhound etc…) when travelling to other cities instead of renting a car (some of my bus tickets are literally $5, interstate).

- Participate in activities organised by the BU International Students & Scholars Office team. It’s a good way for you to know students from other countries, as well as full-time BU students!

- Apply for your visa early and have all your documents ready when you’re at the embassy. I was reprimanded by the clerk several times for holding up the line while consolidating my documents for submission.

- Always check your passport stamp after immigration. I had the wrong date stamped on mine and I didn’t realise it until weeks later. I had to go back to the airport to get it fixed.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL SUMMER PROGRAMMES (i-SP)

NUS students can embark on summer programmes offered by partner universities and global university networks of which NUS is a member. The programmes allow students to explore and cultivate a deeper appreciation of the culture and lifestyle of the host country. For more information, visit www.nus.edu.sg/iro/opps/summer/index.html

NUS AWARDS FOR STUDY ABROAD (NASA)

NASA Enhancement Bursaries and/or Scholarships are given to undergraduate students who are going on short term and special overseas programme. For more information on eligibility, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/nasa/sc/index.html
Leaping into Research

Ong Yik Sin Taylor, a student from the Faculty of Science, went on the Santander Undergraduate Research Exchange (SURE) Programme to King’s College London (KCL). Find out how this SURE Programme funding aided him during his stint in KCL.

What did you learn?

Being my first research experience, it was indeed an eye-opener for me! There were plenty of new lab techniques that I wouldn’t have known beforehand. Having learnt the scientific theories and basic lab skills back in NUS, it was a great opportunity to apply them in real-life research projects. The team was mainly made up of postdoctoral researchers who were very knowledgeable and introduced new lab techniques and skills to me. This i-RAP experience also opened many doors which my future career path could lead to.

How did the SURE Programme help you?

Initially, I was fairly hesitant about going overseas for a summer research programme. However, I finally decided to give it a try after my friends who went on overseas exchange returned with unforgettable experiences. I’m glad I took that leap of faith because I have not regretted my decision at all!

Initially, it was not easy to afford an overseas trip, especially for two months in London. Being awarded the SURE scholarship has allowed me to enjoy my experience in London better without the constant need to monitor my financial expenses. With lesser financial burden, I was able to do more things, like not scrimping on food. I believe that being able to enjoy oneself allows one to learn better.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ATTACHMENT PROGRAMMES (i-RAP)

IRO offers opportunities for students to broaden and enhance their undergraduate research experience through two to three month-long attachments under the mentorship of top researchers at renowned universities around the world. For more information, visit www.nus.edu.sg/iro/opps/irap/index.html

SANTANDER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH EXCHANGE (SURE) PROGRAMME

The SURE Programme is a scholarship scheme funded by Banco Santander. NUS collaborates with selected partners in Asia, the Americas, and Europe under the SURE Programme to offer research projects to NUS undergraduates overseas. At the same time, NUS also offers projects to students from selected partners. Worth US$2,000 each, the SURE Programme provides up to eight scholarships for NUS undergraduates and up to seven scholarships for students from partner universities. For more information, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/financial/out/others/sure/index.html
Spotlight STEER Brazil

Themed as “Discovering the Solidarity Economy and Social Business in Brazil”, STEER Brazil 2015 brought students from across different faculties to meet organisations that have emerged to help local communities – co-operatives, micro-finance organisations, venture philanthropies and non-governmental organisations. Students additionally obtained an overview of the history, society, culture and economy of Brazil through lectures at the University of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo State University and Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, and a networking session with International Enterprise Singapore. Participants enjoyed their experience at world-renowned sites such as Christ the Redeemer in Rio.

Sneak-peak into STEER 2016

Keen to explore other countries for STEER?

Here’s a sneak-peak of some other STEER destinations coming up in 2016:

- CAMBODIA
- CHINA
- COSTA RICA
- HUNGARY
- INDIA
- INDONESIA
- KAZAKHSTAN
- THAILAND
- THE MIDDLE EAST (OMAN, QATAR, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES)

ABOUT STEER

The NUS Study Trips for Engagement and EnRichment (STEER) programmes are designed to familiarise students with the diverse socio-cultural-economic environments of newly emerging markets, such as those in Asia (Vietnam, Myanmar, secondary cities in China and India), the Middle East (Gulf Co-operation Council states), Latin America (Brazil, Chile, etc) and so forth through a mix of classroom-based learning and experiential site visits. These geographical areas represent important focal points of increasing diplomatic, trade and academic interests. For more information, please visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/opps/steer/index.html
ABOUT SSUE
The prestigious Sino-Singapore Undergraduate Exchange (SSUE) Programme is spearheaded by the respective Ministries of Education (MOE) of Singapore and China. It is the only G-G (Government-to-Government) Tertiary Exchange Programme between Singapore and China. Initiated in 2002 by Singapore’s then Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong, the programme aims to instil Singaporean students with a global perspective and an enhanced understanding of China and its potential and to expose students from China to various aspects of Singapore life, education and culture. The programme consists of two legs – the first in China (May), followed by the second leg in Singapore (July). For more information, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/opps/others/out/sinosg/index.html

Sino-Singapore Undergraduate Exchange (SSUE) Programme

Ng Hui Min, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

This programme provided me with a great platform to engage in meaningful interactions and forge deep friendships with fellow Chinese classmates, that I would not have accomplished by travelling there on my own. Through talks by local professionals, we learned about the potential economic transformation of the western part of China in the years to come. I was thrilled to be given the opportunity to visit Guiyang and Chongqing at the start of their economic transformation.

ABOUT TF LEARN PROGRAMME @ NUS
The Temasek Foundation Leadership Enrichment and Regional Networking (TF LEaRN) Programme @ NUS aims at grooming the next generation of Asian leaders by providing opportunities for cultural exchange, networking, community engagement and leadership development. Students participate in either one of the following two periods: (i) the Student Exchange Programme or (ii) the NUS Overseas Colleges programme in Semester One (August – December) or Semester Two (January - May) to partner universities in Southeast Asia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. For AY16/17 students receive S$5,000 – S$7,000. For more information, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/iro/opps/others/out/tflearn/index.html

ABOUT TF LEARN PROGRAMME @ NUS

Mr Wong Wai Siong Clifton, TF LEaRN outbound scholar to Chulalongkorn University, Thailand

After about four months of community service at The Goodwill Group, Thailand, I have come to appreciate what we have in Singapore. I had experience volunteering in teaching/education related community service projects previously. The Goodwill Group, which seeks to empower disadvantaged women, has allowed me to build on this experience and on to a wider perspective. Instead of teaching a classroom of young children, my challenge was to teach a group of women, from age 20s to 60s. This was overwhelming at first as it was a very different experience teaching adults compared to young children.

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Yale Visiting International Student Program (Y-VISP)

In Yale, I settled readily into community service student groups and engaged deeply in their activities. I realised that we are all motivated by a similar sense of purpose, amidst our busy schedules. The students I worked with valued contributing in small ways, and did not think that they had to do something “big” to make a difference. I participated in a programme run by a church to befriend, encourage, and support those staying in homeless shelters. I learned that putting aside time to befriend and take interest in the lives of others could be meaningful. I would definitely encourage all those going abroad to learn more about the community by engaging with the less fortunate.

Letts Tan Ang Ching, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

ABOUT Y-VISP

The Yale Visiting International Student Program (Y-VISP) is an honours programme at Yale University, designed for undergraduates from partner institutions to join the Yale undergraduate community for a full academic year (junior year). For more information, visit http://www.nus.edu.sg/IRO/opps/others/out/y-visp/index.html
An Uber Experience to Remember

SEP gave me the opportunity to travel and witness how different cultures live and work, enriching my learning experience and, helping me to learn how to put theory into practice.

Why Thammasat University and how did you come across an Uber internship in Thailand?

I was already considering an exchange programme at an Asian university as I had just returned from the USA and was looking for a destination nearer to Singapore. The push came when my senior shared with me about his rewarding and cost-effective SEP experience to Bangkok. While I was there, I was looking around for an internship and came across Uber’s Facebook page. I took a chance and applied. As Uber had only started in Thailand slightly more than a year ago before I joined the team, I was delighted to be in the first batch of interns working in such an exciting start-up.

Cool! Tell us more about your internship.

During my three months at Uber, I was attached to the recruitment section and the customer relations and partnership sections, which allowed me to gain a different perspective within the company. We had a few interesting events involving roads shows and a flashmob which we helped to organise.

During one of the recruitment events, we had a photo booth for people to take photos and post them on social media. We also helped to recruit full time staff for the Uber office.

What did you learn while in Thailand?

The language barrier was definitely a challenge. During the recruitment campaigns, I was not able to answer questions as many of the participants did not speak English, nor did I speak Thai.

Hence, I had to pick up a few simple phrases in Thai in order to guide them to our main booth where my local colleagues could better attend to their enquiries. This experience taught me to be more confident when I was not able to communicate effectively with many of the locals.
Gaining from Giving

What were you tasked with on this internship?

I drafted a disaster risk reduction framework for all regional countries and managed internal databases. There were also several ad-hoc assignments that stretched my capacity, such as drafting a regional appeal for the migrant crisis at the Andaman Sea and co-authoring a compendium of migration crisis operational framework. I improved my skills in reading and analysing numerous disaster management policies in different countries, programming and designing publicity materials.

How did the i-Intern Award for Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) help you?

NPOs typically do not provide remunerations for interns. However with this award, I could cover my living expenses. It also helped to finance the registration fees of some conferences and workshops that I attended and provided me with many networking opportunities. This award propelled me to achieve my dream of working in an international organisation, focused on humanitarian relief. I am grateful for this opportunity as it gave me a chance to impact people’s lives.

“
My time at IOM was one of the best experiences that I have ever had! IOM employs staff from all over the world and we try to learn from each other while promoting our individual cultures.

Gregorius Ivaniddo Pandisurya,
i-Intern with International Organization for Migration (IOM), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Recipient of the i-Intern Award for Non-Profit Organisations

“

Gregorius, together with his supervisor, Chris Hoffman whom he considers his friend and mentor

Gregorius (third from right) with the other interns of IOM working towards the same goal of improving the lives of others