Faculty Report

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College - Arts and Letters
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Proposal title – Alternative Spring Break-South Africa
Country/ies visited – South Africa (Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Soweto)
Institution visited - Witwatersrand University
Dates of travel – March 24 – April 4, 2011
Number of student participants: 20

Previous IP proposals submitted and grants awarded
(list titles, countries and dates): 2003- 2010 – South Africa
1999, 2003 – Ghana, West Africa

Have all required reports been submitted? Yes

Other funding for this activity available/applied for: College of Arts and Letters

Proposal Abstract (75 word maximum):
ASB is a service Learning Project in South Africa involving 20-30 students and faculty persons. We traveled to Cape Town, Johannesburg, Soweto and Pretoria volunteering at youth centers, orphanages, middle schools and vocational schools. Students did physical work (paint, repair, etc.) in Kliptown at a preschool supported by the US Embassy and MAD (Make A Different) Foundation. Students will also volunteer at schools for children orphaned by AIDS. They volunteered at a Boy’s Shelter, too. As a result of an informational session held in South Africa two years ago, we included information on the LGBT communities that house their museum at Witwatersrand University.
Students learned about apartheid and its impact on the lives of all the people of South Africa. A live video-conference between San Diego State University, the LGBT communities aired at SDSU and will focused on issues of race and gender in South Africa.

**Travel report:**

**I. Opening/overview of intentions/activity**  
Alternative Spring Break-South Africa seeks to provide students with an intense understanding of the history of apartheid in South Africa and its correlations with US race history. Additionally, it provides students with an opportunity to make a difference in small, and yet large and lasting ways. For students who do not believe that they can afford to take an entire semester or year off from their daily routines, ASB is an excellent introduction and motivator to see the possibility of study abroad in the immediate, if not the distant future. The program brought together students from all backgrounds into a common experience that prompted their personal growth.

**II. In preparation for the trip abroad**

We collaborated with groups at SDSU (Women Studies Department) and the US Embassy – South African Mission and the M.A.D. Foundation (Make A Difference Foundation). These contacts were in person and via email. We have had a long standing relationship with the US Embassy and they assist us in making sure that the programs and projects we engage in are legitimate and viable. In some cases, they are intricately involved in the projects as embassy workers and volunteers.

Students were given information through lectures and readings concerning South Africa history and current cultural, racial and economic challenges.

**III. Upon arrival-specific activities**

Students are exposed to South African history through trips to museum sites, prisons, etc. South Africa has excellent museums telling their history so that those who visit understand the impact of Apartheid on South African society. After two days, the students were introduced to Soweto and the various townships struggling to develop a multi-racial society.

We met with students from the LGBT community and sponsored a live video conference with staff at SDSU to discuss SDSU’s Pride efforts and compared them to South Africa’s.

Students volunteered at the Abba House, an infant orphanage. They moved furniture and painted. (Of course they played with the babies, too.)
Students volunteered at a Boy’s Shelter. The residents were young men from various countries in east Africa. Most of them they tutored the students and relieved the staff by cooking dinner and serving the young men. Lastly, the students painted homes in Kliptown and tutored students in reading and English. School supplies were donated at Kliptown and the Boy’s Shelter in Pretoria. Baby clothes and Desitin were donated at the orphanage.

IV. Conclusion, recommendation, and next step?

Thus far, we have had students increase their interest in Africa study abroad program. Already we have students who have decided to study in Ghana during the summer of 2011 and some in Brazil who traveled in 2009. This year, we will begin the alternation between South Africa and Ghana. So, we will do Ghana in 2012 and South Africa in 2013.

V. Additional Information

All information should be sent to The Office of International Programs via e mail:

oip@mail.sdsu.edu