

MERTIE W. BUCKMAN INTERNATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

international system dealing with this issue. I not only substantially improved my oral French skills through total immersion, but I was also introduced to the West African cultures, especially that of Senegal, through my Senegalese colleagues and cultural activities. I took advantage of weekends to travel to other European countries including Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, and Germany, and observed the practice of political systems and people's way of life. As a food lover, I not only tried out all the specialties of the different cities I visited, but also discovered the West and North African cuisines that are available in the Goutte d'Or neighborhood.



Anjali Tadavarthy '24

Hometown: St. Paul, MN

Major: International Studies & Political Science

City/Country: Vienna, Austria

Employer: The Organization for Security Co-operation Europe Parliamentary Assembly

This summer, I had the opportunity to work at the Organization for Security Co-operation Europe Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA) in Vienna, Austria.

My main task as an intern was to attend high-level political dialogues between diplomats from each of the 57 participating states in the organization. In these meetings, the diplomats discussed various European security concerns, including the war in Ukraine, the tensions surrounding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the pressing effects of climate change and cyber-ICT on European security. Through listening and observing these meetings, I achieved one of my main goals of interning at the OSCE PA: to understand international negotiation and dialogue outside of an American-centric context and understand how an international organization functions in general. While I learned that international negotiation and dialogue are often lacking, even in an organization founded for the very purpose of dialogue, it was fascinating to see it firsthand. I also had the opportunity to research issues related to Kosovo and Serbia, which expanded on my previous semester's study abroad in the Western Balkans. I am very grateful for the opportunity to intern abroad in Vienna, as I have gained a great appreciation for the city and hope to return someday.



Ethan Valbuena '24

Hometown: Atlanta, GA

Major: International Studies

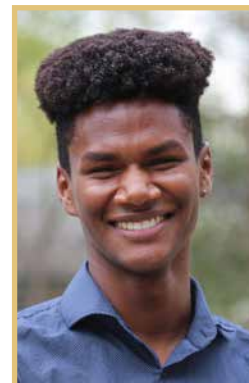
City/Country: Valencia, Spain

Employer: ASPANION

I spent my summer in Valencia, Spain, as an intern at ASPANION, a nonprofit that assists families affected by childhood cancer. My main responsibilities as an intern were to teach English classes, help translate documents into English, and assist with administrative duties. I can easily say that teaching English classes was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I worked with three

different age groups and all different levels. It was a learning experience for me because I had never taught classes like this before, but with the help of my coworkers and a lot of trial and error, I feel like I caught on quickly. I also assisted with volunteer activities led by ASPANION for children affected by cancer and their families, such as music classes and the annual summer camp they have each year.

Overall, I believe that my time interning in Valencia was one of the greatest experiences of my life. This summer taught me how to live independently in a foreign country and gave me the priceless opportunity to experience the vibrant Spanish culture firsthand. It also helped me greatly improve my Spanish, which will assist in my studies back at Rhodes. After teaching English for two months in Spain this summer, I already have plans to return after I graduate to work for longer! I want to thank the Buckman family for making this special experience possible.



Adam Young '24

Hometown: Longwood, FL

Major: Economics and International Studies

City/Country: Madrid, Spain

Employer: Fundación Balía

Fundación Balía is a social work program that offers tutoring services and child care during the summer to low income and immigrant families. During my time at Fundación Balía, I helped tutor children, ages 5 through 12, in math, science, and writing. I also

helped oversee the children during different excursion activities such as going to the pool or to the park. Much of the program was designed to provide a safe space for the children to relax, since they come from challenging home environments. As a result, much of my job included resolving conflicts between the children, as well as helping them to be better advocates for themselves and communicate their different needs and emotions.

Through my time at Fundación Balía, I learned how universal issues facing immigrant and low income families are. Similar to children in the United States, many of the children expressed issues of feeling different from their peers, whether due to their ethnicity or lack of access to different resources. Fundación Balía emphasized a mindset within the children that their ethnicity or family situation is not something that inhibits them and that with the right skills they will succeed in life. Working at Fundación Balía allowed me to learn the importance of making each child feel powerful when they are faced with so much adversity.



Initiated in 1994 through a generous gift of the Buckman family, the Mertie W. Buckman International Internship Program provides the opportunity for rising junior or senior International Studies majors to broaden global understanding through living and working abroad. Selected students complete an eight-week summer internship in the country of their choice. Recent destinations have included Austria, Chile, England, France, Guatemala, Ireland, and Spain. Mertie Buckman interns will have the opportunity to work with employers ranging from businesses to local human rights organizations.

Qualified applicants are rising junior or senior International Studies majors with a minimum overall/major GPA of 3.3 and relevant language skills. Selected students earn one credit of I.S. 470 and FI1.

The program is coordinated by the International Studies Department Chair, the Career Services Director, and International Studies faculty members. Please contact these departments with questions.



Rhodes College
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

SUMMER 2023



Jennifer Benton '24

Hometown: St. Louis, MO
Major: International Studies and French
City/Country: Paris, France
Employer: Association Culture Arts et Paix pour Les Enfants de Liban

This summer I worked for the Association Culture Arts et Paix pour les Enfants du Liban. My main tasks during my internship included translating the ACAPEL website and yearly bulletin, writing articles, and attending events

such as their general assembly and the proceedings of the National Asylum Court. Outside of the office, ACAPEL also provided me the opportunity to travel within France and visit sites such as Normandy, Bayeux, and Chartes for cultural excursions. During my internship, I had the opportunity to apply skills that I had learned in my courses, such as Translation 202. Being able to successfully translate documents and convey nuance and cultural norms was extremely rewarding and only possible through my background at Rhodes. I learned how a small-scale nonprofit functions in France and the steps that are necessary for funding and management. I was able to attend ACAPEL's general assembly and observe their budget discussions and administrative decision processes. One of the most exciting opportunities was attending France's National Asylum Court. I had the opportunity to attend court proceedings and witness the process of people coming in to appeal for asylum. I have some experience working with refugees in Memphis, so to be able to compare and learn more about the refugee process in France was a unique and rewarding experience.



Sarah Kate Childs '24

Hometown: Huntsville, AL
Major: International Studies
City/Country: Antigua, Guatemala
Employer: Dirección Municipal de la Mujer, Municipalidad de San Antonio Aguas Calientes

I interned with the Dirección Municipal de la Mujer in the Municipalidad in San Antonio Aguas Calientes, which is the local governmental office for women. While the office does serve all the women in the

community in various capacities, its primary project is the distribution of materials to indigenous women to help them make textiles. Such a project relieves the financial burden from the initial costs of weaving by providing enough resources for the women to complete a full project, which they can use either for themselves or sell for profit. My responsibilities were to help set up, organize, and distribute the resources of the office. I did so by packaging materials, organizing the textile resources, paperwork, and archives in the office, meeting local women to give out the materials, and conducting house visits to ensure the women knew how to weave before receiving their resources. In addition to propelling my Spanish language skills, this internship allowed me to have an immersive experience in an indigenous community and learn so much about the local norms, values, and

traditions. It challenged me to think in new ways about what makes a human rights group successful and provided me with immense knowledge about the governmental operations in Guatemala.



Maya Khalife - Hamdan '25

Hometown: Portland, OR
Major: International Studies and Spanish
City/Country: Santiago, Chile
Employer: Human Rights Research Center at the University of Chile Law School

I am extremely fortunate to have lived in Chile during an unprecedented historical moment in the country's history. During my stay, Santiago was undergoing a constitutional rewrite and civil society was highly engaged throughout the

city to combat longstanding societal grievances in recognition of the country's approaching 50th anniversary since its military coup. Everyday, walking through the streets of Santiago, I saw society's political engagement through public art and peaceful social protests. Through my daily interactions with locals, I explored and broadened my interests in democratic transition, constitutional reform, and the power of political legislation in human rights. My internship at the Human Rights Research Center — an organization affiliated with the University of Chile's Law School — I further expanded my interest in and understanding of Chile's political history and democratic transition. I partook in research about the effects and implications that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights presented towards human rights results in Chile and globally. I also had the opportunity to pursue independent research about the human rights implications of immigration politics and I wrote two articles that will be published in the Research Center's 2024 Human Rights annual review book. I entered my internship with an interest in human rights, and my interactions with my colleagues and their work affirmed to me that I want to pursue a career in international human rights law. I am indebted to the Mertie Buckman International Internship program for this unique opportunity to live and intern in the politically vibrant city of Santiago at this pivotal time. This transformational experience truly advanced my personal and academic development as I was exposed to ideas and issues that I intend to dedicate my life's work towards.



Anna Lebrun '24

Hometown: Rockville, MD
Major: International Studies & History
City/Country: Paris, France
Employer: SOS Casamance

This summer, I completed an internship with SOS Casamance in Paris, France. SOS Casamance is a small NGO that operates both in Paris and in the Casamance region of Senegal. In Paris, the organization works to aid migrants and refugees as they integrate into life in Paris.

The organization provides legal and administrative support and offers literacy courses to migrants. In Casamance, the organization facili-

tates sustainable development in the war-torn region. I was primarily involved in the operations in Paris, but I learned so much about how small NGOs operate in France and across borders.

I aided with the instruction of the French language and literacy class. I worked with students to improve their reading and writing skills so that they can find work, access health care and social assistance, and generally navigate Parisian society. My other tasks included translating and updating documents for publication, drafting articles for the blog, and attending networking events with my boss. My internship was an invaluable experience, allowing me to improve my French and learn about how NGOs function. Most importantly, however, this experience familiarized me with the unexpected difficulties many migrants and refugees face while living in Paris and affirmed my commitment to working in a field that supports migrants and refugees.



Maggie Mathis '24

Hometown: Conway, AR
Major: International Studies
City/Country: London, England
Employer: Thames Reach

I was able to work for Thames Reach's Tenancy Sustainment Team (TST) in London, England. TST works with individuals who have experienced difficult sleeping conditions and to transition and acclimate them into independent accommodations. I was able to travel

with my colleagues all over South and Central London to visit and work with clients in their residences, which was invaluable in being able to understand the work that Thames Reach does, but was also extremely helpful in figuring out how to successfully navigate all of the public transportation in London! TST supports clients in very expansive ways ranging from immigration issues, debt repayments, grant applications, employment skills training, and helps them connect and access a multitude of other resources all to help clients successfully transition into independent accommodation. While working with TST I was able to learn and understand how non profits in London actively worked with each other to provide resources and support, and I was able to compare and contrast the ways in which the British government and nonprofits can provide support, resources, and funding compared to the United States.



Elayna Davis-Mercer '24

Hometown: Takoma Park, MD
Major: International Studies
City/Country: Dublin, Ireland
Employer: VOICE of Irish Concern for the Environment

This summer I had the opportunity to intern in Dublin, Ireland, for an 8-week period. I interned for the organization VOICE Ireland, the leading experts on waste reduction and the implementation of a circular economy in Ireland.

Within this organization, I worked under the communications director to help communicate the goals of the organization with different stakeholders such as members of the community and government officials.

Within this position, I learned a lot, not only on communication strategy but on the facets of a circular economy and how different communities can ultimately make the shift away from a take-make-waste model. For much of my time, I worked on creating communications assets to put forth on the organization's social media and website. These included articles on relevant news or events, small videos, and typical social media posts. In addition, I took on the responsibility of putting together the Annual Report, which included compiling all relevant documents and images as well as drafting a report that would entice future sponsors or donors to the organization. One of my favorite things I got to do with this organization was lobby members of congress to support a proposed environmental bill. A senator invited us to watch the debate and multiple supporters of the bill mentioned that they were only in attendance because VOICE Ireland had brought the bill to their attention through our lobbying efforts.

Ultimately, I enjoyed my internship, and it allowed me to learn more about the field I hope to pursue and how this field might differ in a smaller country such as Ireland, versus a large country such as the United States.



Mehn Tala Norm '24

Hometown: Yangon, Myanmar
Major: International Studies
City/Country: Paris, France
Employer: Association SOS Casamance

I interned at a local and international solidarity and humanitarian organization based in the Goutte d'Or neighborhood of Paris' 18th Arrondissement. I carried out a variety of tasks such as teaching alphabetization and beginner-level French to adult immi-

grants, taking and editing photos and videos of activities, working as an assistant at weekly solidarity sale of clothes and household goods, and accompanying social and cultural excursions. I had the opportunity to interact with asylum seekers and immigrants from the Middle East and Africa and learn about their stories. Through exposure to the reality of immigration, I reflected upon the

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