

## Examples of Excellent Paragraphs and Photos:

### Example 1:

As a Vira Heinz Scholarship recipient, Abigail travelled to Rabat, Morocco for two months. In Morocco, Abigail took courses in Moroccan culture and politics, as well as Darija, the Moroccan dialect of Arabic. Abby's interest and focus of study was art as a tool for empowerment and political resistance. She studied the use of art and poetry during the period of time known in Morocco as the Leaden Years (1960s-1970s) as well as the ways that art and writing serve as tools of colonial resistance up to the present day. She also visited community art galleries featuring art that commented on topics such as government corruption, women's rights, and the influence of religion in Moroccan government, as well as observed murals and street art in Rabat and the many other cities to which she travelled on weekends. Abby was also able to visit a women's art collective where illiterate Moroccan women make art and furniture from recycled paper and sell it in the city market. Speaking with the founder of the social enterprise, Abby learned about the ways that art is being used as a means of economic empowerment, as well as fostering community among the Moroccan women involved. She hopes to return to Rabat to work further with the collective. Abby lived with a Moroccan host family and spoke Arabic at home. Her free time was spent at the beach with host brothers, sisters, and cousins, who taught her card games and helped her improve her Arabic. She also had many conversations with Moroccan university students about gender, sexuality, art, and youth culture in Morocco. Through language and cultural immersion, Abby was able to gain an understanding of Moroccan life, improve her language skills, and form lasting relationships with family and friends.

### Example 2:

Kaitlin spent seven weeks in Madagascar studying the political and social dimensions of healthcare and the benefits of integrating traditional medicine into Madagascar's westernized health system and Malagasy. In French, English or Malagasy, allopathic health care professionals and traditional healers shared the history of their professional field and personal experience. This intimate view into the Malagasy health care system allowed Kaitlin to challenge the preconceived definitions of health care and medicine that are prevalent in America. Based on the immense amount of first-hand accounts heard and extensive literature reviews, Kaitlin conducted research comparing Madagascar and America in regards to approaches to mental health. Her research revealed the important role that spirituality and the environment play in healing mental illness in Madagascar- a stark difference to the American approach. Along with interactions with health care professionals, Kaitlin stayed with two homestay families which offered deep immersion into the rural and urban Malagasy cultures. Kaitlin learned she can overcome challenges like bucket showering, living without a toilet, eating scary amounts of white rice, hiking a mountain barefoot, and waking up with the sun. Being a first time world traveler, she enjoyed and was inspired by the travel stories of the other American girls in her program. Madagascar gifted Kaitlin with two wonderful families, eight friends and an expanded idea of the concept "health care."

### Example 3:

Meg spent the summer taking classes and immersing in art history in Italy. At the University of Tuscia, a public university for Italian students, Meg befriended Italian students her own age that introduced her to their lifestyles, history and pride. Meg learned about Italian heritage and how art historical education is passed down through generations of Italian families. In her free time, Meg volunteered in a local artist's studio located in the original medieval quarter of the city, helping with basic tasks to fill orders. Through this volunteer experience, she was able to see how one man carried his artistic trade from his generations of family members in the studio that his ancestors used in 1200. Meg developed her knowledge of the Italian language, becoming conversationally fluent. This helped her to do communicative research to help her reach her goals and action plans. On weekends and days off, Meg took advantage of the transportation system in Italy and visited numerous villages and towns, always experiencing art museums and cathedrals and the roles they played in their communities.

### Example 4:

Katie spent seven weeks in the Dominican Republic studying Public Health at Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) offered through the Council on International Educational Exchange. Living with a host family in Santiago, she enhanced her understanding of the Spanish language through her interactions at home and in the classroom. Through her classes, Katie learned about the history and culture of the Dominican Republic, the many aspects of health care, and about health issues specific to the Dominican Republic. She also had the opportunity to tour various local clinics and hospitals in order to observe first-hand the Dominican Republic's health care system. One of the highlights of Katie's abroad experience was the week that she spent volunteering at a rural clinic in Ojo de Agua as part of her Topics in Community Medicine class. She had the opportunity to learn from a wonderful team of nurses and doctors and made many lasting memories with the locals. During her stay in Ojo de Agua, Katie was inspired by the story of Las Hermanas Mirabal, three sisters who were murdered for fighting against the dictator Rafael Trujillo for national independence, and actually got to spend time with the fourth surviving sister, Dedé Mirabal, at her home. Katie also volunteered as a Health Promoter in the marginalized neighborhood of Barrio Obrero, helping to educate the locals about health concerns and eliminating *criaderos* where disease-causing mosquitoes could multiply and flourish. In her free time, Katie took the opportunity to explore the capital of Santo Domingo, the beaches of Cabarete and Sosúa, as well as other places of interest inside and outside Santiago.

### Example 5:

Ahra spent the summer studying and traveling with the University of New South Wales in various cities throughout Australia. Her study focused on engineering in the growing renewable energy field and the importance of sustainable development of the global environment. While her traveling ranged from Northern Australia, through Central Australia down to the coast of Southeastern Australia, she learned that Australia was one of the leading nations in enforcing new and greener technologies in its society. Ahra's first full immersion of Australian culture

began in Darwin, Australia. Along with a glimpse of culture, she was introduced to the topic of sustainable development and its importance specifically in her future. She learned that the harm man has already done to planet Earth must be prevented from further damage. Her role as an engineer would be vital in the next few years. The personal drive of achieving a position as an engineer in the historical movement to clean and green Earth emerged when Ahra began her travels down through Central Australia. Here, she had her first encounter with the Aboriginal people and their lifestyle in our ever-changing world. Aboriginals in Central Australia live fully with a modest amount of readily available energy obtained through solar panels. She questioned, “If life is sustainable without all the frivolous energy we, as a developed country, tend to waste, then why can’t we all live a satisfying life without using excessive amounts of energy?” This is the question Ahra wishes to answer during her career as a chemical and petroleum engineer. As her studies continued in Sydney and Cairns, Australia, she realized that the issues of global environment never solely lay in the hands of engineers. Political, economic and social aspects may influence the answer she wishes to find, but as an engineer she only has one objective: create a sustainable world that will not hinder, but enhance the way of life.

#### Poorly Written Example:

My name is Sue. This summer I traveled to Costa Rica. I met a lot of awesome people who I went out with a lot. We spent a lot of time exploring Costa Rica together. I also took Salsa classes and went to Spanish classes. I learned a lot about Costa Rica and myself. I hope that I can go back to Costa Rica and travel more soon.



Aminah interacting with local children in Tanzania.



Taylor in China



Adiah in Japan with new friends



Estrellita volunteering in Tanzania.