As you may recall from the August 2015 edition of our Alumni Newsletter, UCI’s Study Abroad Center received a Generation Study Abroad Grant in partnership with six of our schools (Claire Trevor School of the Arts, the Francisco J. Ayala School of Biological Sciences, the Donald Bren School of Information & Computer Sciences, the Henry Samueli School of Engineering, the School of Physical Sciences and the program in Public Health) to award six students in the fields of STEM and the Arts study abroad scholarships in the amount of $2,500 each.

Our Generation Study Abroad STEAM Scholarship recipients have now returned from abroad and four of them were eager to share their experiences:

**PHYSICAL SCIENCES:** Adam Hanania *(New Zealand Univ. Fall 2015)* is now back home from his semester abroad at the University of Auckland. Although he has resumed his Physics major, he also surprisingly added French as a second major, after a Māori language class re-invigorated his want to learn new languages and understand them proficiently. Study abroad also impacted Adam’s personal life as he has made the conscious decision to be a vegetarian after exposure to some different ideals in New Zealand.

Adam says, “I met some amazing people that greatly shaped how I see the world and its problems, to the point of radically changing my ways to help do my part. I met a few vegans and vegetarians, (for animal rights, religion, and environmental reasons) and we debated existential and worldly issues and I eventually came to the conclusion that if I did not change my ways, I’d be a hypocrite. From these new views I’ve been more inclined to pay attention to politics and pay attention to how we can conserve and live more sustainably to help save the planet.”
Adam believes it is crucial for STEM majors to study abroad, but not for the reasons you might think. He said STEM majors need to study abroad because “they spend so much time indoors studying and away from social interaction. Not only does it (study abroad) force them to socially interact, but it also invites culture and adventure into their lives. What better time to get away than when we are young and have the opportunity with amazing study abroad programs? STEM majors have the rest of their lives to work on their careers but will only have so many opportunities to live in another country. I found myself in New Zealand and I would have never been able to find this new me, had I not had the opportunity to have this amazing experience.”

ENGINEERING: Vicki Au (Hong Kong University, Fall 2015), returned from Hong Kong feeling that she experienced quite a lot of self-learning and personal growth. While abroad she lived in dorms with both local and international students, was active in school clubs, and served for the university’s CEDARS (Centre of Development and Resources for Students) department as a Cantonese tutor for nonlocal students. These experiences taught her the wonders of interacting with people of different backgrounds and upon return encouraged her to participate in the International Center’s English Conversation Program for two quarters after returning from abroad. Vicki stated, “Since engineering majors have a heavy academic load, I know that my peers sometimes think they do not have the time to spend a semester or two abroad. However, I think that studying abroad should be an experience everyone should take advantage of, regardless of major. Immersed in other cultures alone, one builds many important qualities such as responsibility, independence, and social interaction skills required for the global job market.”

INFORMATION & COMPUTER SCIENCE: In following up with Nerissa Del Rosario (UK: English Univ. Fall 2015), she exclaimed that the Generation Study Abroad STEAM Scholarship unexpectedly expanded her career path. Although she is still an Informatics student, while abroad she took a class in Fashion Marketing & Retail at the University of Manchester. This class exposed her to design and understanding consumer behavior. In the course, she designed marketing campaigns and learned how to make your product appeal to a wider audience. This sparked an interest in basic user-centered design concepts and she ended up interning as a ...story continues on page 3
Marketing Assistant the Spring Quarter after she returned to the U.S. That internship then led her to secure another internship this summer in UX/UI which compliments her Informatics background and newfound interest in design. She stated, “None of this would have been possible without study abroad and the help of Generation Study Abroad. I have unexpectedly found a career goal that motivates me and excites me for the future.”

**BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES:** Charlene Tran (Lab Research, Osaka Univ. in Japan, Summer 2015) always had an interest in neuroscience, but it wasn’t until she participated in a full-time research project in Japan that she realized this was the field she wanted to pursue. Her research focused on how certain membrane compositions can facilitate the aggregation of toxic substances in the brain, which may lead to the onset of certain neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer’s. Upon return to UCI, she took mostly neurobiology courses as part of her new major and got involved with volunteer opportunities with the Alzheimer’s Association. Charlene stated, “My lab and research supervisors were amazing, making sure to answer any questions that I had as well as ensuring my good health and enjoyment in Japan. Before going abroad, one of my goals was to form lifelong connections with my mentors and colleagues in Japan—and so far so good! In November, one of my supervisors came to Irvine to visit me, and I still remain in contact with him and many others that I met abroad. Without the STEAM scholarship, it would have been considerably more difficult to be able to study abroad, and I may not have met the wonderful mentors and international friends that I met. Studying abroad was by far the most treasured memory from my undergraduate years, and I’m ever so grateful for the STEAM scholarship to support young scholars to go abroad, experience the world, and fulfill their passions.”
This year UCI’s Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), in coordination with the Study Abroad Center, launched the Research Abroad Fellowship. This fellowship recognizes research or creative projects by UCI undergraduates under the guidance of UCI faculty that are conducted abroad or projects resulting directly from an undergraduate's experience abroad. We are pleased that seven students were awarded in the inaugural year:

- **Antonia Bacigalupa Albaum**, International Studies, *The Current Status of the Malvinas/Falkland Islands Conflict and Barriers to Peace*


- **Bernard Beronio**, Anthropology, *Perspectives on Sleight-of-Hand Magic among People of Different Genders, Ethnicities, and Socio-Economic Classes in Orange and Los Angeles Counties*

- **Laura Hunerberg**, Sociology, *Cultural Lives Compared: American and Dutch*

- **Harwood Garland II**, Anthropology, *Longitudinal Tropospheric Gas Analysis in South Pacific*

- **Jasmin Pannier**, Art History, *Reformation Politics and Costume in Hans Holbein’s Portraits*

Students are increasingly combining research and study abroad with up to 20% of returned study abroad students reporting they’ve done it. A wide variety of majors are represented including international studies, political science, anthropology, art history, neurobiology, computer science, engineering and more! Many of these students presented their research at the UROP Symposium in May. See and hear about their experiences in our most recent [YouTube video](#).

Some students participate in programs that have research as a major component of the program. Neurobiology major Charlene Tran (*featured on page 3*) said her summer lab experience in Japan was a dream come true.
Being a member of a chemical engineering lab that focused on the chemical engineering aspect of Alzheimer’s disease allowed her to form strong professional relationships with professors in Japan which will be a huge benefit in her professional career. “Being a full time researcher was an amazing opportunity. Every day brought a new challenge, and it allowed me to experience not only the frustrations of an unsuccessful experiment, but also the pure joy when a breakthrough occurs,” explained Charlene, whose paper she completed during her program will be published in a scientific journal!

Aliza Asad (pictured right) whose research project focused on the health care response to Syrian refugees in Turkey, explained how doing research abroad enhanced her research experience, “When you visit an area you are researching you gain a perspective you wouldn’t if you were simply reading documents at UCI. My study abroad experience served as an opportunity for me to see the relevance of my topic in the world.”

Many students develop research projects of their own which not only allow them to strengthen research skills, but also make their study abroad experience more meaningful.

Antonia Albaum (pictured left) confirmed that her Research on the Malvinas/Falkland Islands conflict enhanced her study abroad experience because she was able to engage with the host culture in a more unique and deeper manner than she would have with out the research component.

Medha Asthana (featured on page 7) who studied political life within a university climate in Chile, explained that focusing on her research topic completely transformed her study abroad experience, “It was my field work of attending university debates, student marches, student government meetings, various political ceremonies, and more that fortified and amplified my entire study abroad experience.”

...story continues on page 6
As Katie Khuu explains, doing research while abroad can bring unexpected benefits, “When I studied abroad in Edinburgh, Scotland, I met all three authors of the paper that my research project with Professor Pearl is based on. I took a class with Professor Frank Keller, met with Professor Sharon Goldwater, and finally collaborated with Dr. Stella Frank. I actually didn't know that all three of them would be at Edinburgh. I was so amazed that these names on the paper could now be linked to distinct faces and voices. I loved the moment when I realized that I could finally talk somewhat intelligently with Professor Pearl about the research that we're doing. Achievement unlocked!” Katie was the recipient of the UC-wide UCEAP Research Award for 2015.

The Study Abroad Center and Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program are looking forward to supporting many more Antresearchers Abroad!

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Share your old study abroad photos on Thursday with #TBT (throwback Thursday) #UCIAbroad
Spring of my junior year, as a recently-declared Anthropology major, I apprehensively approached my faculty advisor and the Director of the Anthropology Honors Program, Professor Keith Murphy, about wanting to conduct ethnographic research for my senior honors thesis. I pitched him my idea – studying abroad while doing research. Apparently, this was not done very often and was considered an ambitious project, but I was willing to go the distance – literally. This tall research order came with the requirements of choosing a study program that not only fulfilled degree requirements, but one that would also allow me to stay in one location for an extended time, gain access to lots of local youth, and immerse myself in the culture. Through the guidance of my study abroad advisor, Chrystal Fairbanks, I chose the UCEAP Fall 2015 program in Chile at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile).

At first, I shied away from the idea of a full immersion program because I wasn’t confident that I could survive or do well academically in a language I wasn’t fluent in. How could I maintain my grades if I couldn’t express myself in the classroom? What if I couldn’t understand the teachers? How easy would it be to make friends with locals? Even though I had completed 2 years of Spanish, 6 months speaking only a foreign language is a long time. From my first day in the capital city, Santiago, to the depths of Chile’s winter in June, I found that my concerns were not completely off-base. There is a natural period of transition and adjustment when you plop into a new country. But it was a process that I, along with every other participant, went through - getting used to Chilean Spanish, the Chilean metro, the Chilean university, the Chilean people, everything. Through this process, I realized this was the most fulfilling and gratifying experience I could have ever had. I was not only immersed in Chilean society, but I was also at a Chilean host university, taking multiple courses in Spanish – American Anthropology, Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation, and Corporate Social Responsibility, speaking a non-native language every day and eventually I rapidly began to develop fluency, becoming friends with Chilean peers, being a tourist, conducting my own research, and doing an internship.

There was never a dull moment in my experience, and this experience defined my undergraduate career. In fact, the research and internship elements were those which completely transformed my study abroad experience. I was studying university politics at my host university, specifically how this very prestigious, conservative university influenced activism and its political environment. My fieldwork consisted of attending university election debates, student marches, student government meetings, various political ceremonies, and more, which fortified and amplified my entire study abroad experience.

...story continues on page 8
My research became a way for me to bond with many different people, too. Many Chilean peers gladly talked to me about politics, the upcoming student government election, and even helped me study for my own classes when I needed it. I made sure to do everything and anything I wanted to do during my time in Chile, and this also meant going beyond my comfort zone at that time and interning at an ex-detention-center-turned-memorial from the Chilean military dictatorship where I translated survivor testimonials from Spanish to English. My coworkers became some of the main informants for my research, who explained how the Chilean Student Movement was linked to concepts of democracy since the dictatorship, which only deepened my passion for both my research and internship. Frankly, all my active ties combined gave me unbelievable strength and purpose to keep giving my all.

Upon reflection, I am very grateful for the guidance I received from the UCI Study Abroad Center, as well as the on-site Chilean Study Abroad office, my faculty advisor, and the support I received through funding of $2000 total in grants for my research with the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) and the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), which alleviated expenses ranging from my voice recorder to my interview compensation money to other travel expenses.

Since my time studying abroad in Chile, my interests in Latin America and politics have only deepened, and set me up perfectly to apply for the U.S. Fulbright grant. I realized the same tools I used in Chile of immersing myself, meeting locals, asking the right questions, and analyzing the environment around me, would be helpful if awarded this grant for a different research topic in a different country. Specifically, I found myself being drawn to further investigate environments of youth’s political activism, and I applied to Uruguay, to conduct research on politically active youth within a rural town. This would be in stark contrast to the political environment of Chile’s urban university youth. Although I was designated as a Fulbright Alternate and my plans remain undecided, the lengths to which Chile has inspired me do not end there. I continue to speak Spanish fluently to friends and have become locally engaged in community organizing and political activism. By following through on ambitious desires that once intimidated me, I turned my study abroad experience into the most challenging and interesting experience of my life. I found new passions, close community, and an engaging research experience that has gifted me with incredible and unforgettable memories.
Friends of Study Abroad is your contribution to our scholarship efforts. This year we proudly recognize the following recipients:

- **Marlene Guerrero**, Business Economics, UCEAP Ireland for fall 2016
- **Samantha Ku**, Political Science, UCEAP United Kingdom for the 2016-17 year
- **Soo Jin Lee**, Public Health, UCEAP United Kingdom for fall 2016
- **Ye Bin Shin**, International Studies, UCEAP Korea for the 2016-17 year
- **Priscilla Tenggara**, International Studies, UCEAP Germany for fall 2016
- **Jay To**, Criminology, Law & Society, UCEAP Japan for the 2016-17 year

“As a STEM major, I studied abroad twice with the assistance of the **Gilman Scholarship** and the **UCEAP Promise Award**. I completed my Gilman follow-on project while abroad through a fantastic organization known as **Reach the World**. Through their website and support, I was able to write and publish a **blog** that was followed by an amazing classroom of low-income New York City schoolchildren. I put my background, motivations, experiences, fears and worries on display in order to inspire and encourage my students to seek their own adventures when the time came. Although intimidating, the most rewarding part of studying abroad was being able to integrate into foreign communities by being myself as I defined me; abroad I could afford to have a fluid identity that welcomed all influences and underwent personal development on a bi-weekly basis. My time abroad has been the shortest, but most influential chapter of my life, and I couldn’t have had that without the generous support of others.” - **Clair Mansour**, UCEAP United Kingdom fall 2015 & Germany spring 2016
We are also excited to recognize recipients of the UCI School of Engineering and UCI School of Humanities travel scholarships:

**Engineering**
- Jiufu Cai, Mechanical Engineering, UCEAP Australia for fall 2016
- Brandon Finger, Electrical Engineering, UCEAP China for fall 2016
- Andrew Kwok, Mechanical Engineering, UCEAP Germany for summer 2016
- Jongmin Mun, Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering, UCEAP China summer 2016
- Pauline Nguyen, Environmental Engineering, UCEAP United Kingdom for fall 2016
- Toan Tran, Undeclared, UCEAP Japan for the 2016-17 year

**Humanities**
- Amy Fan, English, UCEAP France for fall 2016
- Julian Vacio, Art History & Business Economics, UCEAP France for fall 2016

We are very grateful for the generous support of alumni and friends who donated during 2015-16:

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