THCAS Alumni Profile

Alumnus: Hannah Potter

What degree(s) did you receive from ECU and what year(s)?
I received a B.A. in Multidisciplinary Studies with a dual major in International Studies/Religious Studies in May 2014.

Tell me about one of your favorite memories of your time at ECU?
My favorite times at ECU were the conversations I had with my professors within my departments. I had the privilege of small-knit programs with instructors that offered meaningful time and mentorship to students. These professors invested a great deal of time to me, showed me their academic rigor combined with community interest and inspired me to pursue work within the academic realm.

Where are you currently employed?
Chilamate Rainforest Eco Retreat, a family-run conservation project based in Sarapiqui, Costa Rica.

What is your professional title/position?
Special Programs Coordinator, long-term volunteer

What do you do in this role?
Aside from assisting in guest services and needs around the conservation and sustainability aimed eco-tourism project, I assist in the administration of several different community development projects including the opening of a non-profit kayaking development program serving local at-risk teenagers, a mobile iPad lab, ESL lessons and a weekly soccer camp. Additionally, I created several websites for the business and its affiliate community initiatives.

How do you feel ECU prepared you for your career/life outside of college?
I feel that ECU’s emphasis on community engaged scholarship and community involvement encouraged me to pursue projects that develop and exist in an integrated, holistic, and positive manner in regards to their interactions to the environment and local community.

Currently, what are you most proud of accomplishing in your life?
Although it is not a specific event, I feel most proud of my ability to adapt to new environments and to interact meaningfully with people from diverse ways of life. In the past six years, I’ve studied/worked in Egypt, Morocco, India and Costa Rica, in addition to my time spent at ECU. Even during my time at ECU, I always tried to stretch my personal environment by acting as a Saudi language partner, volunteering daily at the Little Willie Center and interning with AMEXCAN. These experiences taught me about the lengths of my capabilities as a person, but more importantly I made strong relationships with people that have showed me the varied ways of approaching and
appreciating life. Conversations, observations and connections with people coming from different religious, cultural or even socioeconomic backgrounds stretches your understanding of truth within our existence and how we can meaningfully approach our life moving forward.

**What are a couple of your future goals?**
I plan on moving to Egypt in the fall to pursue some sort of project related to Maternal Health. The access to healthcare by pregnant women has been something that I found needing of concern and attention, but I have never found a way to become involved. I would like to gain experience in this area while also practicing my Arabic with the eventual goal of attending a public health graduate program. Long-term, I would like to end up in an academic environment, but I am still exploring how to combine my interests in community action with academic interests in gender, Sufism and sustainable development.

**How do you like to spend your free time?**
I enjoy cooking, walking, reading, eating and spending time with those that I love.

**Where do you currently reside (city/state)?**
Chilamate, Costa Rica

**Is there anything else you would like to share with others about yourself?**
I am currently in the start-up phase, with another ECU student, to start a website dedicated to sharing stories of women worldwide, with the vision of complicating the idea of what being a woman means. We hope this project can lead to more tangible projects aimed at maternal health. The website will be live by April 22, 2015, and can be found at [shaktivoicesofwomen.wordpress.com](http://shaktivoicesofwomen.wordpress.com). Check it out!