



## Lessons Learned Abroad

I have had a lot of great opportunities at BYU as far as international experiences go. One day I walked into the Kennedy Center and noticed a flyer for an internship in Geneva, Switzerland. I started pursuing that a little bit and while working with the Kennedy Center, I got a phone call asking if I would be interested in an internship with the International Trade Center in Kyrgyzstan. I said yes, but to be honest, it wasn't until I looked at a map that I found out where I was headed.

While I was in Central Asia, I traveled to neighboring Tajikistan and quickly developed a deep respect for the Islamic culture and people there. I decided to focus my studies and future career on the Middle East, and when I returned to BYU, I started taking Persian. BYU is a great university because students have a wide array of opportunities to try out different things, and the university has the resources to help students hone in on what they want to focus on and what is right for them.

Before I went to Kyrgyzstan, I was planning on studying business or economics. But while I was abroad, I realized that there is so much out there to see and so much good that can be done in the world. For me, majoring in international relations with a Middle East emphasis was the best way to maximize my contribution to society.

I could not have financed my international experiences without BYU scholarships; nothing that I have done internationally would have been possible. BYU has been a great aid and blessing to me in my life as their scholarships have taken care of my tuition and travel costs. Having to reapply for a scholarship every year has been a great source of motivation for me; it has helped me focus on my class work and go the extra mile, because without the financial aid, I always knew I would not have ability to go abroad.

No Events