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Lord Acton Memorial Scholarship Reflection

When I first applied to be a part of the Association of American Study Abroad Programmes community, I have to admit that I didn't fully understand what the opportunity would mean to me. I didn't realize how rewarding the experience would be; and just how much it has helped me grown as a man who is pursuing dreams meanwhile trying to hold true to his ideals. In my application I wrote about a lesson that my parents have always taught me to live by while growing up: use the opportunities you have not for yourself, but for the sake of others – then you will find the true worth of what you have been given. Studying abroad in the United Kingdom provided yet another example in my life of just how important and meaningful it is to unite one's passions with a commitment to service; and how the true value of education is not in how we use it to further ourselves and our goals, but to equip us to better serve the people and the world around us.

During my time in the United Kingdom, I wanted to take advantage of the unique opportunity to research health care services provided to the disabled as a comparison to the model in the US and other systems around the world. As an extension of the research I conducted this summer on prosthetics, amputees, and healthcare systems in Ghana, I was able to learn the

unique narrative of amputees and rehabilitative care in the UK. My time there coincided with what many people know as the “poppy month”, which is a reference for Remembrance Day as a way to honor the armed forces who have died in the line of fire. I first learned this in the Imperial War Museum, where I was able to research about the history and expansion of prosthesis care in the UK following the World War. It was incredible to be able to learn how veterans reintegrated into society following the war, and how their disability became a badge of honor despite the challenges they faced. With the help of the Lord Acton Memorial Scholarship, I was able to follow this narrative at different places throughout the United Kingdom including the places like National Maritime Museum, The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Science Museum in London, and more.

Although during my time there I was able to learn about the history of people with disabilities, I also wanted to learn more about what services are offered to British citizens now. I witnessed first-hand how legislation and politics affected the people in the United Kingdom during my internship at Parliament. Working under my Member of Parliament who was a Minister for Schools, I was able to learn more about the political and education system of the UK, and just what legislators can offer to the people in their constituencies. I have personally heard testimonies from people in the constituency, many of whom are elderly citizens who rely on the services provided by the National Health Service. It is incredible how legislation shapes their everyday lives - and how one change, one person who is on their team and advocates on their behalf, can make all the difference. From summarizing think tank reports and policies, writing press releases and briefs, and also visiting the constituency, this unique experience to intern at Parliament has sparked my interest in education and how legislation can be yet another

avenue to help the people. I hope to be able to use what I learned to one day apply it to the field of medicine as a physician, and restructure healthcare systems around the world to ensure that all have access to care.

My experiences in the UK had an invaluable impact in the direction of my future and my academic pursuits. Without the help of the Lord Acton Memorial Scholarship and the people at the AASAP, I would not have been able to fully pursue the opportunities offered to me during my time abroad. I explored beyond London to the English countryside, attended a variety of English theatres and spectacles, and tasted some of the most diverse cuisine I have ever had in my life. During my first week in London, I heard a quote by Samuel Johnson that I think summarizes my time there and how much this experience meant to me: “When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford.” I want to thank AASAP and the Lord Acton Memorial Scholarship for allowing me to indulge in all that London - and life abroad - offered, and in shaping my journey as I continue to traverse through onto my path towards adulthood.



Learning about prosthesis and the history of rehabilitative care at the Science Museum in London



2
Left C-Leg[®] prosthesis with Endolite Echelon foot, 2013, Britain

The C-Leg[®] is a microprocessor-controlled hydraulic leg prosthesis system. It has been used to help injured soldiers who may have lost a leg during combat.

A more modern prosthesis featured at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Scotland



My coworkers and I during my last day for the internship at the UK Parliament