

A & S STUDENTS NAMED FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

RECIPIENTS RESEARCH WAYS TO ADVANCE GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUES, IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, AND HEAL TUMOR CELLS.

BY SHERRI MILES

Three students in the College of Arts & Sciences were named 2011-2012 Fulbright Scholars. Here are their stories:



Rebecca Alarcon

Returning to Costa Rica and the Reto Juvenil International organization where she volunteered in 2010, Liz Rebecca Alarcon (BA '11, International Studies/Sociology) will carry out her Fulbright project, "Development from the Bottom Up: Partnerships for Self-Sustainability in Los Jazmines, Costa Rica," developed with advisor Steve Ralph, director of student services in the Department of International Studies.

Alarcon will examine how a small group of indigenous women from one of the poorest locales in Costa Rica worked through an "executive board", the Association of Los Jazmines Women, to successfully create partnerships with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to improve living conditions in their community. Alarcon will study the structures of these NGO partnerships and also poll the residents of Los Jazmines to follow up studies she initiated in 2010.

Chirag Gheewala

Chirag Gheewala (BS '11, Chemistry/Biology), will conduct research in Madrid at Spain's Institute of General Organic Chemistry. His Fulbright project, "Synthesis of Bioactive Chromanes," developed with advisor James N. Wilson, an assistant professor of chemistry, involves both organic chemistry and molecular biology. He will produce organic compounds called chromanes in a chemistry lab and test their restorative properties on tumor cells in a biology lab.

Chemistry has an extensive history of cross-cultural collaboration, which is more important now than ever before," says Gheewala. "Cross-cultural cooperation requires effective communication and mutual cultural understanding. Working with the scientists in Madrid will provide me the international exposure necessary to hone these communication skills and prepare me for a career in chemistry research.

Rachel Libby

Rachel Libby (AB/MA '11, FILAS), a graduate of the Fellowship in Latin American Studies (FILAS), a five-year dual-degree honors program, is continuing to work toward her goal of improving global health. Through FILAS she spent over a year abroad—in Cuba, Argentina, Panama, Nicaragua, and Haiti—serving in field hospitals, completing health-education projects, and acting as a medical translator.

Libby's Fulbright project, "Health-Education Programs in Dominican Bateyes: Evaluating the Community-Based Approach," developed with her advisor Sherri Porcelain, a lecturer in international studies, builds on the work of the Dominican Republic's National Center for Child and Maternal Health. She will study the impact of health-education programs on Dominican sugar plantations, or bateyes, where residents, who often are victims of violence, economic hardship, social stigmatization, and racism, are traditionally deprived of basic services, such as education and health care, offered to other Dominicans.

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