Solidarity March

By Taryn Urban ‘18

On October 6, a seemingly endless stream of students, faculty, and staff made their way in complete silence across campus towards Hufnagle Park. This journey was part of a new Bucknell tradition called the Solidarity March. Modified from the Stop the Hate Rally that has been held in past years, the aim of the Solidarity March was to continue the conversation started by last year’s Solidarity Ceremony, in which the Bucknell community came together to show support for students who have faced discrimination in forms such as transphobia, homophobia, and racism. The silent march was added to the program this year in order to “send the powerful message that Bucknell and Lewisburg must reflect upon recent events of hate and move forward as a community”. As a member of Social Justice Residential College who attended this event both last year and this October, I was glad to see this shift in the tone of the event, as it is important to recognize that all of us can be the perpetrators of acts of discrimination and hate, whether we intend to or not, and that we are all responsible for seeking ways that we can personally improve the campus climate for those who are marginalized and oppressed.

As the march reached Hufnagle Park, the Bucknell community joined with Lewisburg residents to enjoy performances such as songs, poetry, and interpretive dance by students and community members to bring awareness to various issues faced by our peers.

Followed by the Solidarity March was another event, Spotlight on Human Rights, which featured presentations from the Black Student Union, Students for a Free Tibet, Active Minds, ATHENA, the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, and Ubuntu. The idea originated from Gabby Palumbo, last year’s Ubuntu president, as a means to promote various organizations on campus that strive for improving human rights. Given the similar aim of both events, the Solidarity March and Spotlight on Human Rights combined.

I had the opportunity to give a presentation on behalf of the GSA, and for me, it was certainly rewarding to shed light on the LGBTQ+ rights movement to a group of people who otherwise might not have known much about it. The GSA has hosted events open to the whole student body before, but we’ve never been able to simply talk to the Bucknell community about some of the forms of discrimination that LGBTQ+ people face in this country, as well as some important aspects of history that aren’t very well known outside of the LGBTQ+ sphere.

Let’s hope that this tradition endures, and that it will be followed by many more steps forward in the march for equality in our community.
Common Ground

By Audrey Love '16

I had wanted to participate in Common Ground since my first year of college, and after hearing so many of my peers describe it as, well, indescribable, I decided to spend my fourth and final Fall Break at Cowan discussing race, ability status, gender, sexuality, and class.

I am sure that several of my peer CG participants were, like me, drawn to Common Ground because of the saliency of topics of diversity, particularly sharpen my awareness and strengthen my ability to address the social ills that plague this campus in my everyday life.

Indeed, Common Ground was very much about learning—but not in the way that I anticipated. The ways that I have “learned” about diversity before—via lectures, theoretical discussions, presentations, and speeches—have been as a passive recipient of ideas that I sometimes had difficulty gripping emotionally. Diversity had not been a discussion, but a lesson, something to be absorbed and grappled with conceptually.

Common Ground challenged students to engage in a different type of learning. We did a lot of activities that helped us to grapple with concepts of race, ability status, gender, sexuality, and class, to process them conceptually as many of us already have in a classroom setting, albeit in a novel way. Yet it was the discussions that followed the activities that were truly enlightening. It is one thing to, for example, intellectually grasp the concept of a gender spectrum; it is another thing entirely to listen to another human being describe their relationship to their gender identity and the difficulties it may have caused them.

At Common Ground, students are challenged to share their experiences in the safe environment that we establish. The discussions that we had allowed my peer participants and I to cultivate a raw, visceral understanding of the way that others experience their identities, how these identities affect their self-conceptualizations and the ways that others treat them.

There was a striking palpability to all of the things that I “learned” at Common Ground.

Best of all, I walked out of Common Ground not only with a completely transformed understanding of identity, but also with sixty new close friends, and I can’t imagine finishing out my senior year without these amazing individuals. To any CGers reading this—you all amaze me every day.
Teaching in Myanmar

By Jessica Khin ’16

This summer, I had a great opportunity to work back home in Myanmar. My Freeman-Miller BPIP Internship fund assisted me to work for an unpaid internship in a Monastic school located in Mandalay, Myanmar. Phaung Daw Oo Monastic School is one of the biggest of its kind, and has gained its popularity and received funds from organizations from Australia, Germany and Japan. Phaung Daw Oo has three types of schools: normal state school, school with child-centered approach (CCA) and western-styled English speaking school called fast track (FT). I worked in FT department, and taught science to Grade 3 and 5 students and English to Grade 8 students. The main goal of the FT department is to provide a Western education style, by teaching the subjects in English and using textbooks from western countries. This was my first time teaching so I was very nervous. I tried different teaching methods and incorporated fun games and quizzes occasionally. I was thrilled each time students spoke and asked me questions in English as it was very exciting to see young children eager to learn and speak in a foreign language. My involvement with the young children made me reflect on my experience learning English for the first time nine years ago.

Phaung Daw Oo Monastic School provides English classes called Bridging classes and PCP classes which are taught in English by foreign interns, mainly from the United States and Germany. I met a lot of young people who want to study abroad because they were aware that better education can create jobs for them and that the current education in Myanmar is insufficient for their needs. My responsibilities as an intern also included working with high school graduates. Occasionally, I provided presentations about study-abroad experiences and answered questions about financial aids, essays and personal statements. During my time at Phaung Daw Oo, I stayed in a girls’ dormitory at the monastic school with other students and teachers. It was definitely a new experience for me as I got to share stories, and befriend students and teachers who came to Mandalay from distant smaller villages. I had a chance to visualize the difference lives between developed and underdeveloped areas within Myanmar, which gives me strong motives to work for Myanmar’s child development in the future.

I got first-hand experience of Myanmar’s education in a small community because of this internship. It is so overwhelming to realize the value of education that I have taken for granted. During the time in Mandalay, I met many strong individuals who were working towards change and better education for the next generation. I am so thankful that the BPIP fund had provided a wonderful opportunity for me to do the internship which has fully inspired me.
Study Abroad In Japan

By Sasha Bausheva ’16

I had known I would spend my Junior year in Japan since my first day at Bucknell. Japanese culture, language, and history are something I have been interested in since middle school, and a year ago I finally got a chance to travel to the heart of Japan, its former capital – Kyoto.

It is thanks to the Associated Kyoto Program (AKP) and the department of East Asian Studies, that I was able to have this incredible experience of living in Japan for almost a year. Since only one other Bucknellian participated in the AKP program, staying in a comfort zone with a bunch of close friends was not an option, so, when my adventure started, not only was I immersed into a new cultural environment, but also had to get used to a completely new group of people. I was surprised, however, by how friendly, enthusiastic and open-minded people in my program were; soon enough we all were exploring, traveling, having fun and sharing ideas with each other, like we had been friends for ages. I know for sure that my experience in Japan would have been very different without this amazing group.

It was also my first time staying with a host family – and for such a long time! – and I am infinitely grateful to the Sano family for making me feel like I was home away from home. Certainly, if you have chosen homestay over dormitories, the first couple weeks, or even months, can be awkward and uncomfortable, and there is nothing wrong about it; it is only natural. But take a step to get closer to your host family, make an effort to get to know them better, and you will not regret it, because you will most likely find out that your host parents are very caring, helpful and interesting people that can become a bridge between you and your host country.

Studying abroad can be challenging at times, since it requires patience, flexibility and exceptional open-mindedness. Once you arrive at your country of choice, you have to adapt to its social behavior norms, learn to like its food and, in some cases, pick up the language. It might take time to get adjusted and, in fact, you might even find yourself not being able to adjust at all, but no matter how your study abroad experience goes, I believe it is worth throwing yourself into a completely new environment for a semester or two.

Living and studying in another country gave me an opportunity to experience a new culture, discover breathtaking places, meet amazing people, and see the world from a different perspective... The list goes on and on. I think it is a waste not to use your chance to spend a semester/year in a completely different environment, if you are offered one. As much as I love Bucknell, there is a whole world outside of it, and I would definitely recommend rising juniors to explore it.

Contact gloaled@bucknell.edu for more information about how you can apply for a study abroad program.
Diversity is ...

What Bucknell students have to say about diversity.

“Many people misconceive diversity to simply mean physical differences. But this is only the surface of what this means. Diversity also means the various experiences, beliefs and perspectives that come with those differences. With these new views and beliefs we will change the world.”  
– Mathew Alexander Jordan ‘18

“I think learning more about diversity makes you more aware of experiences that other people have had and it helps you to become more aware of things that others are going through.”  
– Erin Clark ‘18

“Diversity breeds exposure to new stories, ideas, and perspectives that enrich and shape our awareness of problems that exist within and outside of our own experiences.”  
– Kathryn Lee ‘16

“Diversity is important because it gives people of different backgrounds the chance to learn from each other’s experiences. It allows people the chance to share their unique point of view, while simultaneously allowing someone with a different identity or background share their unique point of view as well.”  
– Ella Tanzuana Johnson ‘17

“Diversity is not about having different ideas or of being from multiple backgrounds, rather it’s about celebrating those differences and creating a positive environment for those around you.”  
– Dechen Yangkyi ‘17

“Think how boring life would be without diversity. Grey people doing grey things. Diversity is color and flavor.”  
– Christian Swartburgh ‘18

“Diversity is the culmination of all the influences and experiences that make us who we are; without diversity we could not connect to one another in a genuine and meaningful way.”  
– John Quinn ‘18

“Diversity makes life so much richer. If everyone all had the same thoughts, looks, beliefs, and all, where’s the life in that?”  
– Andy Alder ‘18

"Diversity is important because it leads to eye opening and mind opening. Talking with people that are different from you, whether it be race, ethnicity, ability status, gender, sexual orientation, religion, geographic origin, or one of the other many ways people differ, gives a good glimpse into what humanity truly is."  
– Hannah Rickertsen ‘18
Upcoming IEA Events

EVENT
Madame Presidenta: Why not U.S?
Film screening and panel discussion with filmmaker @ 7pm,
Gallery Theatre

EVENT
Project for Peace- Lunch and learn
Nov 19th at noon
Lunch provided

EVENT
Hot Topics discussion: Nepal pre and post-earthquake
IEA Lounge ELC
Noon
November 7th

EVENT
International Students and Internship Search
Panel discussion
Wednesday
November 11th at 6pm
Walls Lounge

ANNOUNCEMENT
International Education Week Photo Contest
Voting online Nov 5th-10th
http://goo.gl/forms/IFUxLCm2am
Finalist in the Library Nov 16th-20th

Professional Staff:
Jennifer Figueroa (ISS)
Rose Saville-Iksic (ISS Grad Assistant)
Tracy Russell (WRC)
Myrna Perkins (Administrative Assistant)
Rose Saville-Iksic (ISS Grad Assistant)
Sue Radel (Office Coordinator)
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