The Community Development program has several students who live outside of the United States. We are proud that the program is that far-reaching, and it makes sense because community development is going on around the globe. Here are a few students who are working in other countries, and doing extraordinary work!

David Emery is living and working in Cambodia. He began the CD program in the summer of 2008. “At that time I was volunteering as an International Manager with an international community development non-profit called Sustainable Cambodia. In December of 2009, using the skills and knowledge gained through the master’s program, I started Bareebo, a small local CD non-profit organization based in Banan Village, Cambodia.”

David gives specific examples about how this program has forwarded his work, “In the spring of 2009 I took Not-For-Profit Management. It was during the course of this semester that the idea of starting my own non-profit came into my head. Learning both the nuts and bolts of managing a non-profit as well as some of the theoretical concepts, I was able to begin to conceptualize what I thought I would like my organization to eventually look like. Later in the semester and with the help of my professor and fellow students, I made the Strategy Plan that my partner and I would later use to open and manage our non-profit. Additionally, the primary textbook for the class, The Jossey-Bass Handbook of Non Profit Leadership & Management, was and continues to be a valuable resource; the book sits on my desk near my computer and acts as my guide as I navigate the very tricky waters of starting and managing my own organization!”

David also discusses how the Community Capitals Framework have helped him in his work, “Learning the CCF drastically changed the way I looked at Community Development! The basic concept behind the framework is that communities are dynamic places comprised of many forms of capital, and that these capitals can be built upon and connected to help people build stronger communities. Many international CD organizations, however, focus only on having ‘needs assessments’ (which are important) done in the communities they work with, while completely ignoring what resources (or capitals) already exist. Using the fundamental concepts behind CCF, I was able to incorporate questions into the baseline and M&E surveys that I created for Bareebo that sought to identify what capitals already existed in the communities we work with. By doing this, Bareebo will have a much more solid foundation to do its CD work because we will know the needs and haves and track how they change over time.”

(continued...)
International Students

Arlene Lee works outside of the U.S. She is from Fertile, Iowa, where her family farms. She has been living in the Dominican Republic for 4 years and works with a Christian community development organization, “For three years I worked in agricultural development, mostly gardening with children. For the past year, I have been running a women’s center in the same rural community.”

Arlene says she had been looking into graduate programs for a long time, “but wasn’t able to find anything in this country that fit my interests and schedule. I even considered moving back to the U.S. at one time to pursue my master’s degree, but I was not ready to leave the Dominican Republic. When I heard about the Community Development Program, I realized it would be the perfect program for me at this time in my life. I have enjoyed getting to know the other students who share interests with me and have been impressed with the amount of contact I am able to have with my professors even from a distance like this. I also appreciate that the program is challenging me.”

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SAC Connection

Feel free to contact anyone on the Student Advisory Council with questions and/or concerns you may have about the Community Development Program. Our next SAC call is April 6.

Wendy Young, ISU, wyoung@riseup.net

Aaron Lander, ISU, alander09@gmail.net

Graham Callis, ISU, gcallis@new.rr.com

Lesa Jarding, SDSU, ljmjarding@jacks.sdstate.edu

Lisa Atkinson, KSU, latkinson@bluespringsgov.com

Satosa Itomi, ISU, satosa.itomi@gmail.com

Abbie Gaffey, ISU agaffey@iastate.edu

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