# *Engaging Contemporary Social Justice Themes with International Community Organizations*

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## *Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Berlin, Germany*

I completed a Global Special Studies in coordination with a Global Course Connection: SW 710 International Community Organization.

The course provided intensive place based experiential learning, around comparative community work.
In the course we examined the following: core concepts of community practice, major models of comparative policy work, practical steps for community-based work.

## *Community Partners*

**AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS:**

- **PIC (Prostitution Information Center)**
- **P&G292 (Prostitution and Health)**
- **"Young In Prison"**
- **ACM (Amsterdam Coordination Center for Human Trafficking)**
- **Hotmamahot**
- **Hague University of Applied Sciences**
- **JSO Expertise Center for Youth, Community and Education**

## *Community Partners*

**BERLIN, GERMANY**

- **Gangway, E.V.**
- **Ploetzensee, Juvenile Justice Facility**
- **Aufwind, E.V.**
- **Paul Lobe School**
- **Richard Keller School**
- **Tempelhof Airfield – Syrian Refugee Center**
- **INVIA – Human Trafficking**

## *Social Work Competencies Developed*

This opportunity allowed me to gain additional knowledge, skills and abilities in a majority (if not all of the social work competencies).

**Competency 4: Diversity and Difference:** Allowed me to diversify my skill set and understanding of cultural humility.

**Competency 10a: Engagement:** This opportunity involved engaged pedagogy and it's application through action-based learning. I was afforded opportunities to gain knowledge concerning specific marginalized groups from an international standpoint.

## *Lesson Learned*

There are so many lessons I learned, it's really difficult to put into words how transformative my experience was.

- Society is global, there is no you versus us.
- Think outside of American values and norms.
- It's important to be flexible in community work.
- Take on new experiences as a learner.
- It's okay and beneficial to allow yourself to be transformed by the communities you engage with.

## *CAREER CONNECTIONS*

My experience globally, has undoubtedly shaped my social work career. As a future social work practitioner, I plan to focus on management if human services and social policy and evaluation.

This opportunity has shifted my mindset in a global way, that can't be changed. I view the world and policy different and realize the interconnected dynamics of our global society.

## *ADVICE*

- Research history and current events
- Be reflective and introspective
- Identify and check your privileges and bias
- Have an open mind
- Engage with an open heart
- Be Flexible

***Acknowledgements***:
University of Michigan – SSW
Office of Global Activities
Dr. Larry Gant
Christiane Gant
Olad Allen