

Location: Durban, South Africa



Majority of my time was spent in Durban, a coastal city in eastern South Africa in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Durban, formerly known as Port Natal, is the largest city of the KwaZulu-Natal province, and the third largest city in South Africa. Durban is home to nearly 600,000 people who identify as African, Indian, White, and Colored*.

*Note: Colored is a term used in South Africa for persons of mixed ancestry.



Fun Facts:

- Over 51% of the residents identify as Black South African, followed by Indians/Asian (25%), then White (15.3%), and Colored (8.6%).
- The largest ethnic group in Durban are the Zulus. The official language is English; however, the native language is Zulu.
- Durban is home to the Mahatma Gandhi museum (pictured below).



Power and Oppression in South Africa Post-Apartheid **Tiana Hickson, MSW** **University of Michigan-10-07-2019-GIS Poster Session**

Global Field Agencies:



Meyrick Bennet Child & Family Guidance Centre:

The Meyrick Bennett center is a non-profit organization that offers psychosocial-spiritual support to individual children and their families. The Meyrick Bennett Center finds that community-based intervention mechanisms are just as important, if not more, than individual counseling services. Additionally, the Meyrick Bennett Center's affiliates notes that poor mental health is linked to on-going bullying within the schools.

Outcomes: As a result, we were able to present to students between second and fifth grade on the psychological dangers of bullying, as well as preventative measures. The students planned, organized and presented on a skit during class on preventative measures, as well as intervention methods to stop bullying behaviors within the school.

University of KwaZulu-Natal Discipline of Social Work:

I had the opportunity to meet with Master of Social Work students, as well as Doctoral students whose research involved abuse and neglect of Black South African "house help," human sex trafficking in the form of "sugar-daddies", and violence against refugees in South Africa.

Outcomes: Masters students presented on their research to the entire faculty where we reviewed their research and offered feedback. As a result, I acquired skills and strategies for presenting or performing in front of an audience.



CONNECTION:

Classroom:

- SW 625 and 630 prepared me for working with children who had experienced severe trauma. I was able to complete an assessment, as well as provide therapeutic services to child victims of abuse.

Career:

- After exploring South Africa's policies and procedures, I solidified my plans to become an entrepreneur in the non-profit sector. One action step I plan to take is building a youth center that offers financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and leadership skills classes. The organization will focus on policies that directly affect their communities and taking political action. The development of this plan is set to occur in the year 2023.



Accomplishments:

- Visited Cape Mental Health, located in Cape Town. Cape MH is a mental health agency that services marginalized Cape Town residents. We visited three locations who provided services to children and adults with severe intellectual disabilities.
- Toured South Africa's government (parliament) and observed a legislative hearing.
- Provided mental health services to children with traumatic experiences.

Advice:

- Journal daily so you can reflect on your journey once back in the states!
- Take time to learn the culture prior to engaging with the community, and if you don't know something, ASK!
- Be careful not to apply Westernized theories and practices to the communities in which you work in.
- Be authentically you!
- Network, as you will encounter some of the most precious people in informal ways.



Acknowledgments:

I would like to thank OGA for accepting my application for the global independent study. Without your hard work and dedication I would not have experienced this amazing journey. Thank you Dr. Sandra Momper for meeting with me countless times and spending countless hours ensuring that my project was close to perfect. I would also like to thank Dr. John-Langba for arranging a safe and comfortable stay in Durban, and providing us with a wonderful schedule filled with events to facilitate our learning. I would like to extend my gratitude to all of the donors for providing financial assistance! Last but not least, I would like to thank all of the wonderful people I met in South Africa for making my trip an unforgettable experience! It is my hope that the Global office will continue to bless students with the opportunity to travel abroad!