

PERICLEAN NEWSLETTER



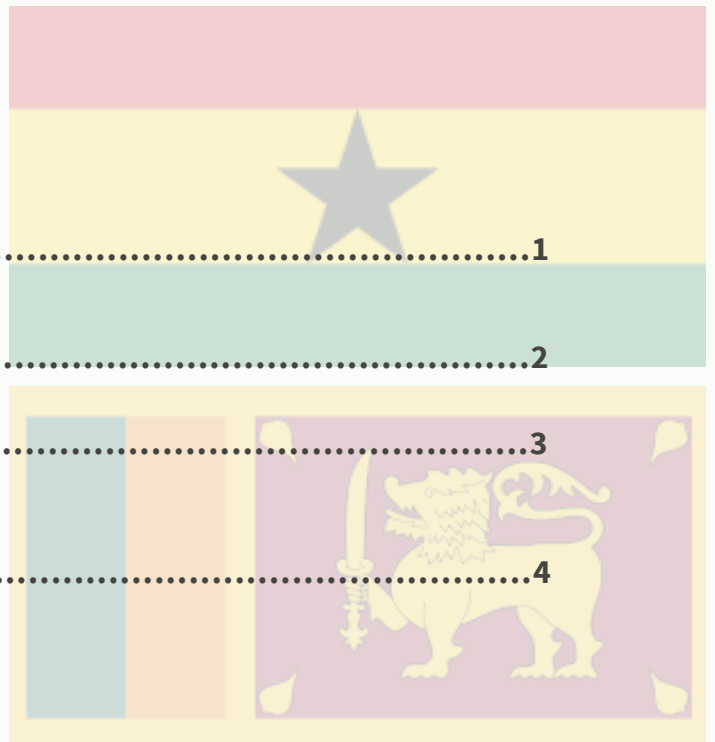
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Class of 2020: Cuba

BY CATHERINE STALLSMITH

Moe Mosmiller and Kendall Kirkpatrick are 2020 Periclean Scholars. As they prepare to graduate from Elon, they reflect on their Periclean experience. Ten members of the 2020 Cohort travelled with their mentor, April Post, to Cuba in January 2020 to work on their film project. While they were only there for nine days, they learned about many different identities within Cuba. “It was my first time in Cuba so it was really cool for me to see what we’ve been studying for the past 3 years”, Mosmiller recounts. While the students were based in Havana, they travelled to rural farms to meet farmers, met university professors, waiters at local restaurants, workers in the tourism industry, and nonprofits working on elementary education.

The 2020 cohort faced a lot of unconventional roadblocks in establishing their partnerships but Kirkpatrick, a cinema and television arts major, used her field of study to help her cohort with their documentary. She explained the contact that the 2020 students had with the School of Communications to know what kind of equipment was necessary to film their documentary. The documentary is called *Sin Embargo*, and the goal of the documentary was to give the Cuban people a voice to share their stories to an American audience in a way that isn’t usually available to them. Each person interviewed for the documentary was asked to describe one word that described them as a person, one word that described Cuba as a country, and a story from their personal life or experiences that represents what it means to be Cuban. As Kirkpatrick said, a “People to people connection is really important when it comes to relationships of countries”. When asked to talk about what they took away from their Periclean experiences, Mosmiller said, “Sometimes we need to take a step back and realize some things are out of our control”, referring to the travel restrictions in Cuba that required the project to be re-framed.



Students from the 2020 cohort conduct an interview for their documentary, *Sin Embargo*, while visiting Cuba in January 2020.

She also noted the importance of working with people on a personal level, reflecting how a project is not sustainable without people connecting with people personally. “We overcame a lot”, Kirkpatrick said. While they could only be in Cuba for nine days, she said the relationships they made were very formative and they had broader interactions with people than they expected.

Kirkpatrick and Mosmiller both shared that they had met people they otherwise never would have interacted with on campus when asked about the impact of Periclean on their experience at Elon. Kirkpatrick mentioned that it took a lot of effort to stay cohesive when the group was working on different projects at once. She explained it as a class setting that everyone chose to be in, so everyone was committed to working together. Mosmiller noted that Periclean “attracts students from all over campus” and that there is a mix of majors and interests, as well as the option to interact with faculty from different disciplines. She mentioned that other universities do not have a lot of on-campus opportunities that are as unique as Project Pericles.

Class of 2021: Sioux Nation

BY ANYA COCOWITCH

The Periclean Scholars Class of 2021 spent the spring 2020 semester working to further strengthen their partnership with the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC). The organization provides advocacy services to children in the community who have been traumatized by sexual and/or physical abuse, incorporating modern and traditional Lakota practices in order to protect and heal affected children.

Last fall, the Cohort brought Larry Swallow and Arlana Bettelyoun, representatives from the OLCJC, to Elon's campus to raise awareness of the work of the organization and life on the reservation. Not only did Swallow and Bettelyoun's visit benefit the general Elon community, but it was a pivotal moment in their partnership with the 2021 Periclean Class. They were able to spend time getting to know each other on a personal level and talk about the future of their partnership. After the visit, the class was gifted a star quilt, which is a great honor in Lakota culture, symbolizing respect and generosity. The quilt now hangs in the Periclean office.

The Cohort has kept in close contact with the OLCJC and were able to fund two billboards to be put up on the reservation, advertising the organization's services. There has also been conversation about helping the organization with grant writing, updating their website, and making a documentary about the work OLCJC does.

On Elon's campus, the cohort planned to host a child abuse awareness week in April in honor of the OLCJC's mission. They planned to set up tables campus-wide with activities promoting child abuse awareness, host profit shares, and raise money for the OLCJC. Unfortunately, the implications of COVID-19 affected the cohort's ability to host the event in-person, so they had to shift the efforts onto a social media platform.

COVID-19 also impacted their ability to travel to the reservation, which they had planned to do this upcoming May. With many uncertainties about the future, the cohort is unclear when they may be able to travel to the reservation next, but in the meantime they are staying optimistic and continue to stay in close contact with the organization, building upon their strong partnership.



A photo from Swallow and Bettelyoun's visit in Whitley Auditorium in November 2019.

Class of 2022: Ghana

BY ANYA COCOWITCH

The class of 2022 Periclean Scholars spent this semester planning for the future and working to form relationships with each other and with their potential partnerships. At the end of last semester after considering several partnerships both in Ghana and locally, the cohort settled on two organizations: YOUDRIC and Down Home NC. YOUDRIC stands for Youth Development Research and Innovation Center, and the Ghanaian NGO focuses on youth reaching their full potential “by delivering a diverse range of interventions in the areas of education, health, and leadership in skills development,” as stated in their mission statement. The cohort has spent time communicating with YOUDRIC via Skype and email to talk about what a partnership could look like. They were met with much excitement from the NGO as they discussed a mutually beneficial partnership.

Down Home NC is the 2022 scholars’ local partnership in Alamance county. Down Home is a policy-based organization that works to raise the voices of the marginalized and the working people in Alamance county about issues directly affecting them. Their vision emphasizes, “by weaving together our different experiences, we can shape democracy that serves working people, where our labor is valued, our food, water, and land are healthy.” Members of the cohort have attended different events hosted by the Down Home learning about their grassroots approach to change-making.

In addition to working on the newly-formed partnerships, the cohort has put energy towards grant writing, fundraising efforts, and planning for future travel. The grant writing committee submitted a proposal for the Fund for Excellence Grant that, if awarded, would fund a visit from scholars to speak about the concepts of fair-trade learning and ethical global engagement, not only benefiting the Periclean Scholars Program but the entire Elon community. A fundraising committee has organized a letter writing campaign and planned profit-shares for the spring semester. Unfortunately, profit-shares were cancelled due COVID-19 implications. Lastly, the members of the cohort planned to travel to Ghana for the first time this summer, to meet YOUDRIC leaders and work on the partnership in-person. Those plans had to shift because of COVID-19 and are still up in the air of when they may travel next.



2022 Periclean Scholars (from left to right): Josie Cousineau, Lauren Grossman and Audrey Sears participating in a canvassing event hosted by Down Home NC.

Class of 2023: Sri Lanka

BY CATHERINE STALLSMITH

Dr. Mat Gendle, Periclean Program director and faculty mentor for the 2023 cohort, is excited to meet the 2023 scholars and looks forward to future opportunities for Periclean Scholars to visit their partnerships.

The newest Periclean Class, Class of 2023, consists of 12 students. Dr. Gendle is disappointed that due to the implications of COVID-19, the induction ceremony was cancelled. However, other Periclean Cohorts have reached out to support the 2023s. The 2022 cohort wrote a welcome letter, and the 2019 cohort left a comprehensive document before they graduated about Sri Lanka, Periclean, and working with Dr. Gendle. Dr. Gendle says with optimism, “there are better times ahead, I’m sure”. Until then, he and the other mentors will be in conversation about what it looks like to engage with the community from a distance using materials from the Global Service Learning Program.

The 2021 and 2022 Periclean cohorts had planned to travel this summer, but their plans have been put on hold as the university has suspended travel through August. Cohorts will re-evaluate their travel plans as necessary, as the safety of the partner communities is the most important thing and no travel will occur until it is approved by the university and the partner locations.

The Class of 2023 Periclean Scholars are listed below:

Allison Aramburu
Jamie Barfield
Virginia Beall
Caroline DiGrande
Abigail Fisher
Kasey Fountain
Hugh Goldstein
Luke Johnson
Callahan Johnston
Dwight (Hadyn) Stucker
Emerson Wells
Kathleen (Kate) Wirth

