Jenna's Major: Community and Environmental Sociology, Global Health Certificate

Program: SFS Field Practicum in Public Health & Environment, Summer

Academic Life: The first two weeks of the program involved primarily classroom and field lectures. The coursework informed us on major public health and environmental issues of the region, as well as presenting us with the influence of local Maasai culture. Our regular lectures took place in the open-air multipurpose room at the Kilimanjaro Bush Camp; however, we were also fortunate to have field lectures at several local clinics, a Maasai homestead or “boma,” and the main community water sources. The classroom learning experience helped to inform our research during the second half of the program.

Jenna's Field Research: The final two weeks of the program focused solely on conducting our directed research in the field. Our study was to assess the effects of the closure of the Imbirikani Group Ranch Clinic, a free clinic which had been funded by an American couple, on the surrounding community. Through our research, we were able to identify the primary areas of public health concern in the Oliotokitok sub-county and assess the need for improvement or intervention by the government, health facilities, and community.

Jenna's Field Research and Her Future Aspirations: Our directed field research taught me important issues of public health, key research methods and tools, and valuable collaboration skills. As an individual interested in pursuing a career in a public health field, this knowledge will be of enormous value as I move forward with my studies and post-college endeavors. The many obstacles during the program, including cultural differences, language barriers, and time-constraints, improved my critical thinking skills, as well as my ability to cope with stress and overcome challenges.

“You will have a new view of your home, your culture, and the world in which you live.”

Jenna showing off her Wisconsin pride at Amboseli National Park.