Kali’s Major: Nutritional Science, Global Health Certificate

Program: CIEE Community Public Health Thailand, Fall

Academic Life: I studied Public Health at Khon Kaen University at the Faculty of Public Health. We had one class at a time, not including our Thai language course that continued from orientation in mid-August until mid-October. For the first seven weeks the majority of our time was spent in classrooms learning about public health management in Thailand. In the last week of this course we took a study trip to Laos to exchange knowledge about the Thai and Lao health care systems. The next four weeks, we attended workshops led by groups of U.S. students as well as student-led discussion sessions. During this time we spent time applying community research tools within local communities. Subsequently, we used these tools to formulate research proposals and conduct research within the local communities based on their expressed health problems. In groups of four students, we conducted field studies in particular communities, synthesized our research and implemented an intervention based on our results to encourage community health involvement.

Effect on Career Aspirations: I have a greater appreciation and understanding of language barriers. I now understand what difficulties people who speak English as a second language face here in the U.S. When I interact with others I will be more patient and accommodating if communication is difficult. As a future physician this will be very valuable.

Advice for Someone Considering Thailand: Definitely go for it! Thailand is a beautiful country and home to some very kind, welcoming, and humble people. The CIEE program will give you so much more than an international education. The workshops and group sessions, while time-consuming and tedious at times, were great growth promoting resources.

“If you want to be challenged this program is for you.”