ECUADOR

KIM PHILLIPS

Program: UW Microenterprise and Health in Ecuador, Winter

Kim’s Major: Communication Sciences and Disorders

Academic Life: The academic component of the program was mostly centered around reflections on experiences. We were asked to consider certain questions related to community development, health, and relationships, then share our thoughts in group discussions and written reflections. Before the program began, there were some required readings and videos to prepare a foundation of understanding of the topics we encountered along the way.

Kim’s Fieldwork: The entire course is considered fieldwork because we worked directly with women’s artisan groups. We helped them improve their processes and business structures, while working to empower them to feel confident about the work they do.

Housing: Because the program took us to different locations in Ecuador, our housing situation was variable. The first two nights, we stayed in Quito, the capital of Ecuador. We then traveled to the coast, where we stayed at Lalo Loor Dry Forest Reserve. We stayed in the Station House, which was a two-story lodge with no electricity. It was in the heart of the forest, so we were surrounded by nature and wildlife. We moved to the highlands for the next portion of the program and had homestays with families in the community in which we worked.

Study Abroad and Kim’s Future Aspirations: As a future speech-language pathologist, I will have clients of many different cultures and beliefs. It is important that I expose myself to many different people, and this program was a great opportunity to do that. My eyes were opened to a different way of thinking that will allow me to relate more effectively with a wider variety of future clients.

“I now feel like my college experience would have been incomplete had I not gone abroad.”

Kim in front of a museum that overlooks the city of Quito.