

The Advocacy Project: BOSFAM
Personal Statement
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To say I am grateful for the support I received from the Jessica Jennifer Cohen Foundation would be a gross understatement. As a young graduate student, the biggest obstacle standing between this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and me was the financial burden. Working abroad, unpaid, for three months would not have been possible without the generous grant from JJCF and my experience in Bosnia and Herzegovina was fascinating and rewarding beyond measure.

It is difficult to summarize ten weeks in any capacity, but if I learned anything from this experience it would be the importance of an open mind and heart to absorb the many things that living outside of your comfort zone has to offer.

I grew very fond of this quote while I was in Bosnia by Alan Keightley that says, “Once in a while it really hits people that they don’t have to experience the world in the way they have been told to.” The Balkans is an immensely complicated and oftentimes tense part of the world that many are not familiar with. The more time I spent there and the more I learned, the more I realized there was so much I did not know, not just about the complex history and politics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but of the capacity for human kindness and forgiveness in the most horrendous of circumstances.

I am so grateful to everyone who supported my journey and my work this summer with BOSFAM. I hope to share the women’s stories with you and that you grow as curious and passionate about these amazing survivor as I have.