

Personal Statement

Being a recipient of the JJCF award for 2011 has allowed me to participate as a Team leader in the 2011 Team Monterey three-week trip to El Salvador. Without this award I wouldn't have been able to engage and participate in this incredible experience working with the community of the Bajo Lempa. As a former recipient of JJCF in 2010, my time in El Salvador only reaffirmed my sentiments of gratitude to the foundation.

In El Salvador, my team and I worked within the fairly new rural community of Isla de Mendez on a waste management pilot program that they have recently developed and begun implementing. The town had attempted to implement other pilot programs to manage the waste in the region but had failed due to various obstacles that they were unable to overcome. Therefore, my team and I worked as junior consultants and began by collecting the information necessary for the purpose of conducting an analysis to then draft a template of a waste management plan that would be applicable to other regions with similar environmental characteristics. We are also working on a small film that will feature the problem of solid waste management, the stakeholders impacted by the problem, and the pilot program currently underway.

In sum, I believe this experience to have enriched my studies of International policy, my familiarity with participatory development work, and my sense of leadership skills. Three weeks in the field would not have been possible without JJCF and I would have missed this incredibly eye opening experience. Team Monterey would have also been significantly understaffed of leaders without your monetary support. I intend to cherish this experience, as my first experience working in a developing community such as Ciudad Romero, and channel the knowledge and skills gained from this to other aspects of my work. Again, I thank the Foundation for making this incredibly important work possible in El Salvador this year.