

help...
learn...
explore!



Ursinus College graduate Kristine Mikkelsen volunteers at a Human Rights Project in Ghana

23-year-old Kristine Mikkelsen, from Lebanon, New Jersey, had always wanted to travel to Africa. Perhaps working on Barack Obama's presidential campaign the previous year ignited her passion to see Africa from a Human Rights perspective. As a Politics and International Relations Major with a Pre-Law focus, Kristine was driven by the desire to see tactile change, a desire that brought her to Ghana's capital Accra to volunteer at the Human Rights Project offered by Projects Abroad.

Over her 3 month stay, Kristine worked together with other volunteers on the same project: "We would receive projects and we would, as a group, decide what to do. We took a lot of initiative. We, the volunteers, give an outside perspective on human rights which is not inherent in Ghana."

Kristine believes Projects Abroad is making a significant change in Ghana through Human Rights volunteers like herself: "From making a change for a boy in the remand center to the legal assistance we provided in the slum, we are making palpable change."

During her time volunteering, Kristine had a lot of responsibility, working

on three different projects: The Fadama Legal Assistance Program, the Community Advocacy Program, which focused on research and education, and the Human Rights Journal – an in-house publication for all activities of the Human Rights Project in Ghana.

She is convinced that she has gained more leadership skills while working at the Human Rights Project and believes the impact the volunteers are making in the slums of Old Fadama in Accra is "incredible."

Admittedly, she acknowledged that things are slower in Ghana than the US; and even if she wanted to avoid it, she couldn't. However, she enjoyed the warmth from the people. "The people – everybody, are so wonderful and friendly."

Asked whether her volunteering experience will be useful for her future she answered: "Absolutely! It is no different from what I want to do. The journal is very useful; I can send that to employers in the future."

After her 3-month volunteer adventure, Kristine will remember many exciting

and empowering moments: "Meeting with the chiefs, getting the Human Rights Journal out and meeting a woman who came to us for help after been beaten and abused for over a decade were a feelings of triumphant elation."



We hope great stories like these inspire others to help Projects Abroad continue to make a difference, and by doing so, learn something themselves along the way.