



THE WOMAN'S EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY  
of COLORADO COLLEGE

# Newsfocus

WINTER 2018

FOUNDED IN 1889 TO GIVE ASSISTANCE TO THE STUDENTS OF COLORADO COLLEGE

## WES Welcomes Five Freshman Scholars for 2017-2018



Melissa Manuel



Grace Pantalone



Maeve O'Meara



Emileigh Rafidi



Joy Ryoo

By now, many WES members have had the distinct pleasure of meeting these five extraordinary young women. For those who may still be working their ways down the list, here is a short introduction to each of the new WES Scholars, in their own words.

**M**elissa Manuel is a writer and film director from Miami, Florida. Melissa's dream is to work for Walt Disney Studios. Until then, she'll continue to read as many books possible and understand the world and people around her to better her stories. She wants WES members to know what a huge weight receiving this scholarship took off her shoulders. Melissa may speak for each of the scholars when she shares how honored she is to be a part of an organization that is working towards empowering women to continue their education!

**G**race Pantalone was born and raised in Norman, Oklahoma. Some may wonder what brings her to Colorado, but Grace wonders what wouldn't. With a deep interest in culture and travel, she is excited

to cultivate new experiences in such a progressive environment. Grace plans to master Spanish and go on to study other Romance languages, as her family is native to Italy. At a local level, Grace cannot wait to celebrate the differences of the student body at Colorado College, building strong relationships and memories along the way. Grace would like to thank her mother, Cheryl Pantalone, for instilling a deep sense of curiosity about the world within her and always encouraging her to express herself. Grace's language of choice is poetry, but she also enjoys expression through visual art, music, and meditation. Grace plans to use her voice while simultaneously listening to those of others, as she is excited for the journey of discovery that college inspires.

**M**aeve O'Meara of Minneapolis, Minnesota, graduated from Hopkins High School, where she received departmental honors in health sciences and a commendation from the National Merit Scholarship program, participated in Earth and Health clubs, and played Varsity Vol-

leyball. Maeve is an AP Scholar with Distinction. She has been an avid wilderness backpacker since she was 13 years old, and is exploring the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska for 38 days this summer, with five other young women. Maeve is excited to join the Class of 2021 at Colorado College this fall, and plans to combine her love of nature and environmental science with her passion for medicine, to design her own major and pursue a career in Environmental Medicine.

**E**mileigh Rafidi went to Glendale Preparatory Academy for high school in Glendale, Arizona where she has lived her whole life. She is one of four kids in her house and the second oldest. She is so excited to leave the Arizona heat for the beautiful Colorado weather! Her interest in Colorado College was originally inspired by her mom who also attended CC, but Emileigh's interest grew because of her own love for the state and for the academic and athletic opportunities the school presents for her. She's been swimming competitively for nine years but took a break her senior year to run

*continued bottom of page 3 ...*



The **WOMAN'S EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY (WES)** is an autonomous community organization founded on April 20, 1889, to foster support of Colorado College. Its purposes are to bring community and college together, to give assistance to students of the college, and to undertake programs and projects to benefit the college, particularly women of the college. Gifts to WES are tax-deductible. **Newsfocus** is published twice a year as a service to members and friends of WES.

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Tell your friends about us and like us on Facebook! Keep in contact with us at **WES@coloradocollege.edu** or **(719) 389-7699**.

**Message from the President**

Crystal Bryant



**W**elcome to the 2017–2018 academic year!

This year, new students had the special treat of experiencing the solar eclipse during new student orientation. We were proud to “Meet and Greet” five new WES Scholars at our annual welcoming event on Saturday, August 19. Scholars and members had the chance to meet and mingle at the Scholars’ Tea on Thursday, September 28. And the Board of Managers held its annual retreat at the Penrose House. The summer and fall went by so quickly, and it’s hard to believe that winter is upon us, but, as usual, the year is off with a bang!

On Saturday, September 9, we held our annual Van Briggie Festival. Each year, the wonderful Van Briggie Committee adds new and exciting things. This year we partnered with The Bemis School of Art to further enhance the festival. This year’s festival also included a special dedication to **Fred Wills** and the dedication of the newly created Lorelei sculpture. If you were unable to attend, I highly recommend taking some time to visit the Lorelei sculpture.

I’d like to continue to encourage anyone interested in participating in the group to reach out to **Karen Rubin** or anyone on our nominating committee. Because of job and/or family commitments, many people who are interested in our group are not able to attend our monthly Thursday Board of Managers meeting. However, they are still interested in contributing as Mentors, Committee Members, etc. Our Members-at-Large category fills this need. Our Members-at-Large are able function in a variety of roles. I’d specifically like to encourage you to consider being a mentor to one of our outstanding scholars. This is a great opportunity to get to know a special young lady as she launches into the world and to help her do so successfully. We’ve all had mentors that helped us along our path and this is a chance to pay it forward by sharing your knowledge and experience with a scholar! If you are interested in being a mentor, please reach out to **Sharon Grady** or anyone on the Scholarship Committee.

As always, we need to say thank you and farewell to wonderful members of our Board. **Meg Chojnacki, Elaine Derbenwick, and Sue Graham** have been invaluable to our efforts. We are so appreciative of their time and commitment and look forward to seeing them at several WES events in the future!

As I step into this new role, I am looking to all of you for suggestions on how to further strengthen the role that WES plays in the lives of our Scholars and the community. If you have ideas, or would like to participate in any way, please feel free to reach out to me! Again, thank you to those who already participate and to those who are thinking about joining us in the future. Our program and scholars depend on you! 🌟

## Dr. Marianne Stoller's Gifts

The following tribute was given **by Sharon Rice** at Dr. Stoller's Memorial Service.

**A**s many of you know when Marianne retired from Colorado College in 2004, she joined the Women's Educational Society Board. Since 1989, this organization has been funding CC projects, buildings, and scholarships with an emphasis on young women. As WES pondered how to continue fundraising, Marianne volunteered to give tours to adults. This seemed a perfect extension of her student field trips and archeology digs in the Southwest.

With her extensive knowledge of the Southwest and her personal acquaintances with numerous Native American and Hispanic people, her gift of these trips was very popular. Marianne would sit at the front of the bus relating interesting and educational information as only she could. She offered about fifteen trips mainly in the Southwest but also in California and in Canada.

Another gift was all of the knowledge and wonderful memories that she imparted to all of the trip participants over the years. Approximately 200 adults can thank Marianne for these memorable experiences. As you may know, \$100 from each participant was given to WES for the Scholarship Fund. Another gift was the numerous young women who benefitted from these scholarships.

One of the Freshmen WES Scholarships was named to honor and remember Marianne. Each year, with Marianne's help, one of the five Freshmen Scholars has been selected for the Marianne Stoller Scholarship Award. Many of these

**Editor's Note:** Thanks to all who shared articles and photos for this edition of the *Newsfocus*. Being new to the WES Board of Managers, it's entirely possible that as an editor, I may have inadvertently looked over the misspelling of a name or a standard WES convention for handling an event or title. I hope you will call these to my attention.

With appreciation,

**Cindi Zenkert-Strange**  
cmzenkertstrange@gmail.com

recipients met Marianne and became close to her. What a gift this was to each of these women. Marianne was certainly a role model for them. In her will, Marianne gifted \$10,000 to WES to be used in a separate fund. Money from this fund will be awarded to a WES Scholar at the end of her senior year to be used at the Scholar's discretion. So the gift of Marianne will continue well into the future.

Her gift to me was asking **Cathy Wilson-O'Donnell** and me to take over the trips when she was no longer able. She continued to meet with us, advise us, and give us new ideas for trips. I learned so much from Marianne, for which I am incredibly grateful. I have learned so much about the Southwest and about how to organize and lead trips. Most of all I had a dear friend who has played a major role in my life for the past few years.

Yes, Marianne left a memorable legacy! Those of us who have been lucky enough to be on her trips or who personally knew her will cherish her legacy for our lifetimes. Her gifts keep on GIVING! ✨

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## WES Welcomes Five Freshman Scholars for 2017-2018 ... continued from page 1

cross country and play soccer. She'll be swimming for CC this school year to challenge herself in the sport again. She's so excited to start a new adventure in Colorado!

**J**oy Ryoo is a Korean-American from southern California. Equidistant from the beach and LA, she was heavily immersed in life inside the OC bubble. But she did take hiatuses, taking part in recreational activities such as hiking and bouldering. She cherishes being around those who share her spontaneity and effervescence. She likes to talk... a lot [her assessment], which then relays her infatuation with politics and conversation about anything thereof. She's excited about being at CC, not only because of its proximity to the Rockies, but also because of the holistic change it represents in ambiance and climate. ✨

## Attention All Members: E-mails Needed

If you have not provided your email information in the past to WES, or if you have a new email, please submit at this time. Going forward, WES plans to send invitations and other communications electronically, so this is critical for keeping up to date! Please send any new or changed email information to **Helen Knight**, WES data base manager, at **helen\_knight@q.com** and **WES@colorado college.edu**. Also be sure to "like" and "follow" WES on Facebook!

## WES and Fine Arts Center Present 2017 Van Briggles Festival

The beloved Van Briggles Pottery Festival, sponsored by the Woman's Educational Society of Colorado College (WES) and the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College, Bemis School of Art, was held on September 9, 2017. It was a spectacular fall day that brought out record attendance!

Kicking off the festival was a memorial tribute to **Fred Wills**, a Van Briggles potter for more than forty years. He worked at the Van Briggles Memorial Pottery and the pottery in the Roundhouse on 21st Street. He demonstrated his pottery throwing skills on the tour as recently as last September, just months before his death.

Guided tours of the historic building ran from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and were sold out by 1:00 p.m. A new feature on each tour was a portrayal of Anne Van Briggles by Fine Arts Center Docents **Sherri Bristol**, **Audrey McGuire** and **Cindi Zenkert-Strange** (also a member of the WES Board.) Tour escorts, which included WES members, as well as docents, pointed out features of the building as they guided attendees to multiple stops where **George Eckhardt**, CC Campus Planner and preservationist; sculptor, **Larry Terrafranca**; and **Dan Crossey**, CC Facilities Services Carpenter and Cabinet Maker, spoke about historic events related to the building. Final stops included a display of Van Briggles pottery by collectors **Gary Conover** and **Rob Wheatley** who also validated/authenticated Van Briggles pottery brought in by attendees; and an opportunity to view the Van Briggles video, including interviews with former Van Briggles potters, **Matt Mayberry**, Director of the Pioneers Museum, **George Eckhardt**; and **Caroline Vulgamore**, WES Member-At-Large.

**Kathy Honea**, renowned Van Briggles expert and author, also returned to the festival and offered remarks at several key festival events. Other community organizations represented at the event included The Horticultural Arts Society, Friends of Monument Valley Park, Historic Preservation Alliance, Manitou Heritage Center, and the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.

A dedication ceremony of the Lorelei marble sculpture, created for the Horticultural Art Society by Larry Terrafranca, a master stone carver and designer, took place at noon in the Horticultural Art Society's Heritage Garden. The Lorelei was Artus Van Briggles's most popular piece. It is reminiscent of an old German poem portraying a young woman betrayed by her sweetheart, who fell to her death from a dangerous rock on the Rhine River, and whose siren ghost continues to lure sailors to their destruction. Artus created this sculpture as his first "figural vase form" upon returning to Cincinnati from Paris, and perfected it with his famous



*Close-up of the Lorelei sculpture commemorating one of Artus Van Briggles's most popular designs.*

matte finish. It is on display at the Metropolitan Museum of art in NYC as well as many museums nationwide. According to the [Mountain States Collector](#), a 1902, two-colored Lorelei was sold at auction for \$247,000 in June 2015. Matt Mayberry offered remarks in honor of the occasion, and the Horticultural Arts Society provided refreshments.

A variety of other activities engaged the public, including dynamic pottery demonstrations by **Jeremiah Houck** and **Jamie Howard** of the Bemis Art School. Attendees could also opt to try their hand at wheel throwing under Jeremiah's and Jaime's expert guidance. **Fred Wills, Jr.** was on hand with his father's pottery wheel, demonstrating wheel throwing, and talking about both his father's and his own career as Van Briggles potters. In addition to purchasing time on the pottery wheel, attendees could also purchase pottery created by Colorado College students, as well as several WES items, including the Van Briggles Memorial Pottery Walking Tour Guide, WES mugs and coffee beans and other WES or Van Briggles-related items.

The WES Van Briggles Pottery Festival has become a must-attend event for many in Colorado Springs and is a

wonderful opportunity to continue to expand the partnership between WES and the Colorado Springs community. Proceeds benefit the WES scholarships and programs. Many WES members were instrumental in presenting this year's successful festival, but special thanks to board members **Ann Burek**, **Faye McQueen**, and **Barbara Mitchell**, for their leadership. ❧



**Eileen Martin** (right), Board of Managers Second Vice President, pictured with **Sarah Healy**, WES Member-at-Large and former Van Briggle Chair; Sarah has been instrumental in making the VB festival what it is today.



The newly dedicated Lorelei sculpture by **Larry Terrafranca** located in the Heritage Garden of the Horticultural Society.



**Karen Honea**, Van Briggle expert, speaks at the Lorelei sculpture dedication, prior to the unveiling. **Matt Mayberry**, Director of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, is immediately to the right.



**Judy Casey**, **Faye McQueen** and **Judy DeGroot**, current members of the WES Board of Managers, are pictured at the WES sales table with WES Scholar, **Cinea Jenkins** (mentor, Faye McQueen)



Inside the pottery tent at the Van Briggle Festival. Pictured in the foreground, **Jeremiah Houck** (right), Bemis School of Art.

# 2017 WES Scholars' Tea

**W**ES members, Scholars, friends, family, and community members were invited to tea at the magnificent Stewart House on September 28 to welcome the five new freshman Scholars as well as a sixth upperclassman who was named a WES Scholar after a previous recipient departed CC. These awards bring the total number of current CC students supported by WES scholarships to 20.

CC President Jill Tiefenthaler was on hand to offer remarks and spend some time in conversation with the newly named Scholars. See Jill's blog post for more of her perspective on this wonderful event. <https://sites.coloradocollege.edu/president/page/11/>

With a bountiful selection of delicious teas, savories, and sweets served in elegant surroundings, accompanied by ethereal Celtic harp, the WES family began the year in community, renewing friendships, and establishing new relationships. 🍵



*Pictured left to right, new freshman WES Scholars Melissa Manuel, Joy Ryoo, Maeve O'Meara, Emileigh Rafidi, and Grace Pantalone with Colorado College President, Jill Tiefenthaler.*



*Past WES co-Presidents **Meg Chojnacki** (left) and **Ann Burek** pictured with our new WES scholar from the junior class, **Natalie Watrous**.*



*Celtic lever harpist, **Danika Puhsek**, who entertained at the Scholars' Tea.*



*WES Scholars chat with Colorado College President, **Jill Tiefenthaler**.*



*Jill Tiefenthaler welcomes the WES community from the impressive staircase of Stewart House, with WES Board of Managers President, **Crystal Bryant** (to left holding paper).*

## Donation to WES's Endowment

**Anne J Stone**, Colorado College class of '78, passed away in April 2017 in Massachusetts. She was a woman of science and her career ended with project management at Proteon Therapeutics. She had traveled the world extensively, but her passion for green eating resulted in her creation of her web site Thriving on Plants with Coach AJ (Anne). Anne is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, and many dear friends.

As part of her estate, Anne made a substantial donation to WES. This donation will be added to our endowment to contribute to our annual scholarships as well as other programs that benefit Colorado College. ✨

## Meet and Greet with New WES Scholars and Families

**O**n August 19th, members welcomed the newly announced 2017-2018 WES Scholars, along with their families, to a continental breakfast and meet-and-greet in the WES room of Worner Center. Several WES mentors met their Scholars for the first time and had the opportunity to meet their Scholar's families, as well. Board of Managers President **Crystal Bryant** gave attendees an overview of the Women's Educational Society. The entire WES family is looking forward to supporting these Scholars on their CC journey! ✨



**LEFT:** WES Scholar **Melissa Manuel** with friend, **Harrison Lake**.



**TOP:** WES Scholar **Emileigh Rafidi** pictured with her family and WES mentor, **Judy DeGroot**, at far left.



**BOTTOM:** WES Scholar **Grace Pantalone** with her parents (far left and right) and Grace's WES mentor, **Cindi Zenkert-Strange**.

## Splendors of the Southwest Canyons Tour, Sept 2017

A first person account from WES member **Jeanne Stiles**

**T**hirty-five travelers met at the airport in Las Vegas to board the bus that would be our home on the road for the next week. Thanks to careful planning by Sharon Rice and Cathy Wilson-O'Donnell, we never had to travel very far before we were gazing at the spectacular scenery of southwest Utah and northeast Arizona. Our first destination, Zion National Park, was where we were introduced to our wonderful guide, **Gary Ladd**. His knowledge and expertise in geology, photography, as well as astronomy, made our trip rich in the incredible history and beauty of this region. We learned that the rock formations of red-dish-brown Navajo sandstone were 190 million years old.

Another stop on our tour was Bryce Canyon. Even though it is a bit more remote, Gary assured us it would be worth it to drive the extra miles and he was correct! The views are breathtaking. Multi-colored spire-shaped structures called hoodoos were everywhere. The brilliant colors of orange, red, and white made our photographs vibrant.

In Page, Arizona we had a very informative tour of the Glen Canyon Dam. The waters of the Colorado River and its tributaries are backed up about 185 miles forming Lake Powell. Gary led us on a lovely afternoon boat tour as we weaved in and out of the cuts and enclosures the river had created in the canyon. Before we left Page we had a wild ride in the back of a pickup truck on the Navajo Reservation that is home to Antelope Slot Canyon. The dry, sandy ride was the only way we could arrive at the entrance. This canyon was formed by erosion of the Navajo sandstone due to occasional flash flooding in the region. Over time the passageways have eroded away forming "flowing" shapes and gorgeous colors in the rock.

Our last stop was the North Rim of the Grand Canyon where Sharon and Cathy had secured cabins for all of us a year in advance of the tour! Gary led us in evening talks about astronomy and cosmology as well as more geological facts about this magnificent canyon! Best of all, he would join us at sunrise and sunset to advise us on how to capture the very best photos.

One of our fellow travelers, **Nancy Bentley**, asked us all to write down a few descriptive words of our trip experiences and she then put them all together to create a poem about our journey. Following are a few of the closing lines of our poem, "Stoned":

✿

### Stoned

Pink cliffs rocks, layer on layer, swirls and  
whirls of color

The beauty of light

Navajo sandstone, 190 million years

Light and

Abundance of majesty

An appreciation for geology I never thought  
I would possess!

Magical

Mystifying Hoodoos

Oh! What an adventure — red, violet, blue

Cotton candy clouds

Canyon of colorful silhouettes

Inspirational

Sensory overload

The quiet wonders of the universe gently  
awaken spirits

Enlightenment





**ABOVE:** WES members and Docents on the Splendors of the Southwest Canyons Trip.  
**BELOW:** Splendors of the Southwest Canyons Tavelers.



# Looking For Another Memorable Trip? Don't Miss the Next WES/Pillar Trip: Unique Utah and SW Colorado!

As of this writing, there were just a few slots left on this exciting itinerary. So, please call **Sharon Rice** *immediately* if you're interested. (Contact information at end of article.) Need more information? Check out the highlights below, and then turn to the article recounting the last unforgettable WES-Pillar trip. You won't want to miss out!

## Highlights of Unique Utah and SW Colorado April 29 – May 5, 2018

### Grand Junction Area

- Tour Colorado National Monument with a step-on guide
- Visit Dinosaur Journey Museum

### Moab Utah

- Explore Canyonlands: a wilderness of countless canyons and fantastically formed buttes carved by the Colorado River and its tributaries.
- Journey through Arches National Park: discover a landscape contrasting colors, land forms, and textures unlike any other in the world. The park has over 2,000 natural stone arches.
- Enjoy a Cowboy-style Dutch Oven dinner and a slow-moving evening boat ride on the Colorado River. Once the boat reaches the turn-around spot, the formal program begins with 40,000 watts of light illuminating the canyon walls, bringing them to life.

### Monument Valley and National Park

- Take a Navajo jeep ride: A 14-mile graded dirt road will show you around most of the major monuments (The Mittens, Three Sisters, John Ford's Point, Totem Pole, Yei Bi Chai, Ear of the Wind), and Navajo guides can lead you deeper, into Mystery Valley, Hunts Mesa and more.
- Stay at Goulding's Lodge in Monument Valley

### Hovenweep National Monument

- Walk among and learn about the mysteries and dramatic structures that remain of the ancestral Puebloans who occupied the area between 1200 and 1300 A.D.
- Visit the Anasazi Heritage Center: the museum displays the history and methods modern archaeologists use to reveal the past and preserve artifacts and records from excavations in the Four Corners area, one of the richest archaeological regions in the United States.

### Cortez

- Crow Canyon: Take an archaeology and Pueblo Indian History Tour; followed by a tour to current dig site.



Hovenweep House By Jsweida – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=21112931>

Delicate Arch By Palacemusic - Prise de vue personnelle, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6020905>

Canyonlands Dinner Cruise and Light Show, <https://Moabadventurecenter.com>

### Additional Details

**Transportation:** this is a seven-day, six-night trip beginning and ending in Colorado Springs on a comfortable Gray Line bus, with bathroom facilities

**Meals:** All breakfasts are included; one welcome and one farewell dinner; the boat dinner in Moab; and one dinner in Monument Valley; one lunch included.

**Costs:** 20 participants will be around \$1900. If 25 participants, will be about \$1700; if 30 participants, will be about \$1600. Final payment due by Feb. 15, 2018.

### Registration

PILLAR Institute for Lifelong Learning  
4570 Hilton Parkway, Suite 101  
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

**Phone:** (719) 633-4991.

An initial deposit of \$500 reserves your spot. The deadline is past, but if you would like to be included, please contact **Sharon Rice** at (719) 278-0981 or [atsrice43@comcast.net](mailto:atsrice43@comcast.net)

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# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Would you like to become more involved with WES? Whether you are part of Colorado College or from the Colorado Springs community at large, we invite you to join the WES Board and become involved with our activities that benefit outstanding students.

We meet the first Thursday of the month except January, July, and August. You may choose from a variety of committees: Finance, Fundraising, Membership, Nominating, Program, Publicity, or Scholarship. Board members are also mentors to the WES scholars. Another way to participate is by serving as a Member-at-Large on one of our committees.

You CAN make a difference in a student's life. If you would like to join our efforts or have questions, please leave a message for us at (719) 389-7699 or at WES@ColoradoCollege.edu.

## THE WOMAN'S EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY *of* COLORADO COLLEGE

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### MEMBERSHIP FORM

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WES Membership is open to all. Dues are payable anytime during the calendar year from January 1 to December 31. All contributions to WES are for scholarships, programs, and projects that benefit students of Colorado College and are tax deductible. Membership is included in all categories and the amount above the \$30 dues level goes to the scholarship fund.

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- Annual Dues \$30       Baccalaureate \$50 – \$99       Cum Laude \$100 – \$249  
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- 

- New Member       Renewal       Gift to WES Scholarship Fund  
 Please call me about volunteering for WES

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Send completed form with payment to WES at:

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## Update from Senior WES Scholar Caley Nicholson on WES- Supported Travels

**W**ith support from WES, last fall I embarked on a study abroad adventure to Tuscany, Italy. For four months I lived on a wine vineyard in a small farming village, Montespertoli, an hour bus ride from the bustling city of Florence. On the vineyard, I studied sustainable agriculture and food justice- two topics I'm very passionate about.

The first thing that struck me about Montespertoli was the landscape. As far as the eye could see there were rolling hills covered with neat rows of grape vines and olive trees. In the fall, I spent many afternoons after class wandering around the vineyard and village admiring the views and observing all the different plants I've never seen before. Right outside my house were four beautiful fig trees and a rosemary bush taller than me!

In school, we studied the history of Italian agriculture and its economic policies. Once a week we went on excursions across Tuscany to connect our lessons to our surroundings. It was incredible to see and understand how the land reflected its history of sharing cropping, industrial farming, and the relatively new turn to sustainable agriculture.



On the weekends, I often traveled to near by cities or towns in Italy. Sometimes I just went to Florence for the day to get lost in the streets and wonder around the old churches and gardens. One of my favorite spots in Florence was the Boboli gardens- a beautiful green space filled with statues, fountains, and hedge mazes.

Looking back I'm so grateful for the opportunity to really connect with a foreign place. Being a young aspiring farmer, I was moved by the Tuscany landscape and its history. As a part of the study abroad program, I complet-

ed a two-month independent study on a small organic farm. The farmer, Lucca, showed me how to harvest olives and press them into olive oil. I also was responsible for feeding the sheep. Back on the vineyard where I lived, we participated in the grape harvest and the hanging of white grapes for Vin Santo—a special desert wine made of dried grapes.

Thank you again WES for making this experience happen. My adventure to Italy has brought me much personal and academic growth and fueled in me many new curiosities. ✨

