

SMALL WORLD NEWSLETTER

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JORDAN: A Thousand Years of History *by Sam Weiss*

Sam Weiss is a senior majoring in Development with minors in Arabic and Philosophy. He participated in the CIEE: Middle East Studies study abroad program to Jordan in Spring 2019.

"My name is Sam Weiss, and I am a 4th year student studying International Studies, specializing in Development Studies. I am also completing minors in Arabic and Philosophy. I spent Spring semester of 2019 in Amman, Jordan on the CIEE: Middle East Studies, study abroad program.

I had the incredible opportunity of both studying on the program, taking courses such as Colloquial Arabic and Modern Standard Arabic, Arabic Media, and Economic Development of the Middle East, and also interning with Save the Children International in their regional

office. The day started with taking classes, from 9:00 AM until noon. I then headed off to my internship.

At Save the Children I managed a team of 12 information and communication officers who compiled and edited situation reports. These reports were composed of effectiveness analyses, warfare and humanitarian access constraints, and monetary reports on behalf of field offices based in locations around the Middle East, such as Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Gaza, and Eastern Europe such as Ukraine.

Outside of school and my internship, I explored the rich Jordanian culture, immersing myself in cafes, museums, markets, old ruins, and hikes. Jordan is filled with thousands of years of history, making each and every day a learning moment. Every hike was filled with castles, Roman ruins, or ancient rock carvings and engravings. Every community had their own story -- a refugee, an immigrant, a Bedouin, a Jordanian, a Palestinian, a Syrian, and the list goes on. At various different points, I found myself meeting people of all backgrounds.

Through the program I volunteered at a

The photo above is of a Bedouin camp in Wadi Rum that we visited. The Greco-Roman ruins below are in Jerash, Jordan. They date to the 2nd century A.D.

refugee camp just an hour outside of Amman. I also met with government officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, drank tea with Bedouins in their tents, and even met with U.S. officials at the U.S. embassy.

Since Amman is centrally located in the Middle East, travel opportunities are endless. My friends and I traveled outside of Jordan to explore even more. We went to Oman, Thailand, and Israel/Palestine. I had other friends who even made it to Lebanon, Egypt, the UAE, and

Turkey! Most importantly, I learned so much ranging from the history and culture of a country, how to be open to new experiences and face fears, and of course, polished up my language skills!"

