David Benke is one of the five seniors who will be graduating from the Certificate in International Journalism program this Spring 2016. He is an exchange student from the University of Trier in Germany and has been studying at Hamline since last fall. I had a chance to sit down with Benke and hear how he feels the CIJ program has influenced him as a global citizen and how his experience abroad has helped him grow as a person.

One of the main objectives of the journalism program at Hamline is to help students develop a global understanding. When asked about how being a part of the program had influenced his global perspective, Benke admitted, “It definitely broadened my horizons.”

He mentioned that course-wise, there is nothing comparable to global studies or communication studies at his university back home. For Benke, being able to take courses like he has at Hamline has had a significant influence on his perspective of the world.

“It sheds a completely new light on what you’re learning and how you’re looking at issues and goings-on of the world.”

Being a student in the CIJ program means you are typically someone who spends a great deal of time paying attention to news and international affairs. Most students in the program are also concerned with working towards bridging the news and information gap. David Benke is no different. When I asked him about how his time in the program influenced how he saw his role in this, he said, “In general, you realize you’re consuming more news than before, and more globally.”

He then went on to clarify that in part, it was because he was studying abroad. Since he has been in Minnesota, he has found himself “following current events here way more intensively than in Germany.”

However, not only has the amount of information he consumes changed, but Benke says the way he understands what he is taking in is now from a more critical viewpoint.

“You are more aware of what you are actually consuming.”

Along with the courses he is taking, Benke also shared how his internship at Inside Humanity, an on-campus website [developed by another CIJ senior, Devan Flaherty], helped him gain more hands-on journalism experience. During this internship, he was able to work on one of his most rewarding pieces, regarding a rehabilitation center’s wheelchair basketball team.
Conducting user research for

The New York Times

By Colleen Schauer

On Monday, October 5th, Professor Suda Ishida’s Media in the Digital Age class welcomed a guest speaker from The New York Times, Ms. Maura Youngman, to talk about her research experience in the work place.

Youngman is a CIJ alumna who graduated from Hamline in 2009 with a major in Communication Studies. Following graduation, she worked at the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting in Washington D.C. for three years before pursuing an M.A. in Human-Computer Interaction at the University of Michigan.

She studied abroad in Russia and Scotland, worked for Alternative Law Forum in India, and taught technology to women with visual impairments in Rwanda.

Youngman currently works as a digital media analyst for The New York Times Customer Insight Group, which focuses on data analytics and user experience.

In the world behind news stories, Youngman explained that the research process starts with a meeting between departments to discuss how new products or updates are expected to work to attract and gain readership. These updates can include changes to format, content, website, and mobile applications associated with The New York Times.

During this meeting, departments work together to figure out the target audience. However, differing opinions can cause conflict. “The newsroom and advertising are like the separation of church and state,” Youngman joked, adding “The CIG unit is Switzerland” and usually acts as a liaison between departments.

The next step is to seek out the opinion of consumers. Interviews are a simple way of finding out consumers’ opinions, while usability tests are more formal and find problems with changes made to the website and mobile applications.

To better understand the consumer experience, media logs are also used. Youngman spoke about one study in which participants logged their media usage over the course of two weeks. This was “to draw on themes of how people are using news sources,” Youngman explained.

Analysts can also collected data with surveys. However, there are limitations. Youngman noted that “People who tend to respond are a very selective group - those who really like something or those who really don’t like something.”

Lastly, conversation facilitation, the process of getting stakeholders to talk about how they cover breaking news, and generative exercises, or sketching out thoughts about ways to present news, can be useful methods to understand and unite the staff. “People feel more as if they are a part of making this new thing,” Youngman said.

Youngman left students with the following advice, “Always treat your internship like your big girl job. People recognize passion and hard work. If you find an internship that you aren’t passionate about, it’s also really telling – so try something else.”

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Many students join the Certificate in International Journalism program in hopes of pursuing a career as a journalist. Others see it as a way to strengthen their writing skills while learning about international issues.

Senior Aaron Marciniak would probably put himself in the second category. Though he is pursuing a Certificate in International Journalism, he is an English major, a Political Science minor and interested in obtaining a Master's Degree in International Relations in the near future.

Marciniak pointed out that his CIJ internship last fall with the Twin Cities Daily Planet enabled him to gain journalism experience, while also exposing him to political and social justice issues.

The Twin Cities Daily Planet is an independent non-profit news organization based in Minneapolis. It has four members on the editorial staff, led by Ms. Adaobi Akolue, and a number of freelance contributors from the Twin Cities area.

The publication has an emphasis on social justice issues and diverse staff members.

As part of the internship, Marciniak was required to attend editorial staff meetings every Tuesday to discuss news trends and to take part in the decision-making process about stories to be covered weekly for the publication. During the three-month internship, there were several situations concerning the Black Lives Matter movement which Marciniak had opportunities to observe how news editors and reporters intensely debated their role in reporting these situations. Marciniak noticed that although the news editors and staff members supported the movement, they were also critical of certain aspects, including the role of women and peaceful versus aggressive protesting.

Marciniak spoke about the hesitancy of women in the Black community to call police. “There is a fear that bringing police into the situation will escalate rather than resolve the situation, as was the case with Jamar Clark.”

The female editors have also been a helpful influence for Marciniak as he learns more about the issues, not only from a political standpoint, but also from a humanistic standpoint. Marciniak said, “My editors bring a lens for me as a white male that’s completely different from anything I ever thought. They provide a new perspective that I find fascinating.”

As an intern, Marciniak’s main task also involved researching and fact-checking stories. One of the investigative stories he wrote was about the impact of the Light Rail’s Green Line on several business communities on University Avenue.

This fall, Aaron will be studying a Master’s Degree in International Relations at the University of Aberdeen in Aberdeen, Scotland. Upon completion, Aaron plans to continue to pursue a career in international diplomacy and public affairs.
Alum’s Passion for Photojournalism

Álvaro Galindo, a CIJ alum from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, Chile (2007), is an accomplished commercial photographer residing in Santiago, the capital city of Chile. He will return to visit Hamline this fall.

Currently, he works for several big brands, including Jack Daniel’s. In his spare time, Galindo continues to pursue his love for street and landscape photography, using his experience to showcase his city as one of the world’s most beautiful places to live in.

Galindo’s interest in photography and photojournalism was inspired by the streets of Minneapolis a decade ago, during his time as a CIJ exchange student at Hamline.

A display of Galindo’s cityscape photography can be found on his blog, lascallesdesantiago.tumblr.com.
Taking risks abroad in New Zealand

By Elena Deeter

On the airplane, sweat accumulating on my palms, I had no idea what was coming. What I knew: I was heading to New Zealand, I would be studying environmental sustainability and Maori culture, and I would be interning for the Green Party. What I didn’t know: almost anything about environmental sustainability or the Maori culture, and what my role would be working for the Green Party.

A mile up in the air, I realized I knew nothing. I was heading towards an abroad program that didn’t match my majors; I felt like I made a terrible mistake. It turns out, as an aspiring journalist, that it was the best mistake I could’ve made.

After 21 hours of airplane anxiety, too much over-thinking, and not enough reading material, I was in Auckland, New Zealand ready to experience the program through the eyes of a journalist. I decided that I would take the role of a reporter, going overseas to learn about the world from an outside perspective. A reporter wouldn’t worry that they didn’t take any classes on environmental studies; they would be prepared to listen carefully, ask tons of questions, and then follow up with research. That is exactly what I did.

For the first few fortnights of the program, 20 other students and I backpacked down Aotearoa (Maori word for North Island) alongside a few wise professors and a Maori leader, Nga. I took advantage of this resource, as a journalist, and asked Nga tons of questions. I allowed myself to get out of my comfort zone and participate in activities I wouldn’t have before.

I took off my shoes, hiked up my jeans mid-thighs and walked into a sacred river, in 20 degree weather, alongside a mountain. It was an optional spiritual opportunity, and I wasn’t spiritual but I did it, because it felt like a good way to learn about Maori spiritual rituals and beliefs outside of a textbook.

I asked questions and I participated, over and over. When I slept in Whakapapa’s Marae, I talked to the leader, along with his kids and wives, about modern day Maori. I learned Maori songs, prayed with them, and sang with them. We went to permaculture farms and then industrial farms; I talked to the farmers, the workers and looked for differences and similarities. I asked for clarifications from my classmates and my supervisors. I became a journalist. I wrote everything down. Now I felt more ready for my internship.

As an American, hearing that I would be interning at the Green Party seemed like a joke. The Green Party really doesn’t exist in America; it’s at least not successful. I didn’t know what I was getting into. I’m so glad I got into it.

I was a communications intern, and right away they were
excited to have me, and two of my other classmates on their team. The first big thing I did for them was a communications audit for their Green Party Headquarters. It gave me a chance to look at every single platform they were using for communications. From social media, to physical door-to-door campaigning, I studied what was the most successful, least successful and most important. I put out a survey and made fun pie charts. It felt amazing that what I did for them actually impacted what they wanted to work on.

Along with the audit, I created a marketing plan for showing off celebrity Green Party members, helped create scripts for talking to people during events, and made brochures using indesign for their Mainsails campaign. While doing real work, I was also trying to learn about the Green Party in general. I was lucky enough to visit parliament and see how it worked, and how the Green Party was involved.

I experienced so much during this semester. Who knew that sweaty palmed anxious woman on that plane would see mountains, volcanoes, rivers, the ocean, farms, walk for hours in rainforests, herd sheep while WWOOFing, walk a Climate Change March, listen to influential people speak about climate change and sustainability and learn from the most beautiful and insightful Maori men and women.

There's still so much to study, learn, and do. It's easy to study abroad and have your mind and life changed; it's difficult to keep that going afterwards.
When asked how he felt he had changed as a person because of the CIJ program, he responded with a laugh, “I could use the wonderful term, ‘global citizen.’”

However, despite the tongue-in-cheek nature of Benke’s response, he really has developed a sense of what it means to be a global citizen. Part of which, he explained, means being aware of the different interconnections of media, such as the effects of the U.S. presidential elections on different countries around the world.

Being an international student in the program has also provided a whole new element to Benke’s experience in the program. Studying abroad helped to increase Benke’s understanding of the United States and more specifically, Minnesota. He admitted that he had limited knowledge of Minnesota before arriving, most of which was based on stereotypes and what he had pieced together from mass media.

Through his time here in Minnesota, Benke has truly come to value the experience gained from the CIJ program and studying abroad. He also mentioned that it is an opportunity he hopes everyone has the chance to have.

“I would tell everybody who’s considering going abroad that they should definitely do it, because there is nothing to lose.”

Most importantly, however, he says he has learned the value of taking chances, being proactive and pushing himself out of his comfort zone.

“You grow with the challenges you are confronted with. You cannot improve if you always stay in your comfort zone. So it’s important that you take initiative and show the will to do something, to change something, to become someone.”

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Career Possibilities for CIJ Graduates

- Print, Radio, Television Journalism
- Online, New Media, Social Media
- Public and Private Media
- Political Campaigns
- Local, National, International Organizations
- Foreign Policy and Public Service
- Legal and Educational Laisons
- Public Relations and Advertising
- Communications Technology