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Scholars Gain Transformative Study Abroad Experiences

Global Leadership Circle helps students expand their horizons through travel

JANUARY 3, 2023 BY SARA MAHMOUD



OXFORD, Miss. – Students' dreams of studying abroad or obtaining a life-changing internship can be difficult to achieve if financial resources are limited, but the **Global Leadership Circle** is making such dreams possible for **University of Mississippi** students.

Established by the **Ole Miss Women's Council for Philanthropy** in 2017, the GLC provides funds deserving students need to study abroad or gain a national or international internship. Students awarded an OMWC scholarship and who have a minimum 3.0 GPA can apply for GLC support.

Miley Ray, a junior OMWC scholar from Jackson, said the GLC helped fund her study abroad experience. She traveled to Florence, Italy, for a month during the summer to take a marketing and writing class.



Miley Ray, a junior from Jackson, used support she received from the Global Leadership Circle to fund her study abroad experience in Florence, Italy. Submitted photo

An international studies major with minors in Italian and journalism, Ray focused on improving her writing abilities. She hopes to become a travel writer after college.

"Gaining the skills of travel journalism was super helpful in shaping my career path," she said.

During her time in Florence, Ray also gained a better understanding of how other people around the world live, and she said the experience made her a better leader.

"When leading all different kinds of people, you have to understand the point of view of every person, no matter where they are or where they come from," she said.

GLC resources allowed Shelby Sledge, of Amory, a senior pre-dental business major, and Shelby Phillips, of Hattiesburg, a senior elementary education major, opportunities to study abroad in Florence as well. During their time abroad, they took a class on the culture of food and wine.

"We got to get out of our own surroundings and see things from a different standpoint while experiencing and appreciating all the things that make everyone unique," Sledge said.

"I'm going to be able to take what I've learned through my study abroad experience into future roles," Phillips said. "I'm better able to relate to people and get to know them."

While students studying abroad find themselves confronting unexpected cultural issues – such as navigating a country in which another language is spoken – Sledge and Phillips quickly realized that overcoming the challenges became a learning experience and a confidence builder.

"Being in a different country by yourself, not only do you have to be a strong leader for others but also for yourself," said Logan Thornton, a junior from Hattiesburg who was able to study abroad in Dublin, Ireland, thanks to the GLC.

The Women's Council scholars said overcoming disorienting and confusing situations and circumstances reminded them that they could depend on the skills and knowledge they gained at Ole Miss, as well as the core beliefs they learned from their friends, family and community.

"Just because you're in a different country doesn't mean you instantly become a different person," Phillips said. "You are still who you are. And while it's important to remain open and ready to embrace new people and cultures, the foundational standards you set for yourself in America are the same values you retain while studying in another country."

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Campus Briefs

Civil Engineering Professor Receives Most-Cited Paper Award

OXFORD, Miss. – Peer recognition is a rewarding experience for anyone, but University of Mississippi researcher Amir Mehrara Molan was elated when an article he co-authored recently received the Most Cited Paper Award at the 102nd Transportation Research Board meeting in the nation's capital. The International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology presented the civil engineering

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Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy's new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying "thank you." "It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to

Studying abroad has been a beneficial experience for these UM scholars, providing them with opportunities to learn new skills they can apply to different aspects of their lives.

"Through my experience, I learned that not everyone lives the same life, and my view of the world was so small compared to what is actually out there," said Hailey Ellis, of Olive Branch, a senior scholar who studied in London.

"It made me more empathetic and understanding of other cultures. I discovered that I can be a person who can adapt to unfamiliar surroundings and who is more open and accepting of people from cultures that are remarkably different from the one I've grown up in."

Gray duPerier, a senior scholar from Oxford who studied in Maynooth, Ireland, had a similar experience.



Hailey Ellis, an Ole Miss senior from Olive Branch, takes in the sights of London from the London Eye. Ellis said the Global Leadership Circle was instrumental in her being able to study abroad in Great Britain. Submitted photo

"While my time abroad made me really appreciate where I am from, I was also able to grow in so many unexpected ways," she said. "Being able to experience all that a country new to me has to offer and to fully immerse myself in another culture truly changed me as a person."

Being able to see life through different perspectives and learning first-hand about other people, places and cultures alters how one views the world, Sledge said.

"Having the opportunity to study abroad has shaped me, as I'm sure it has many of the other Women's Council scholars," she said. "I believe we've become better students, that we will be stronger leaders in our own communities and that we will be able to interact in a more informed manner as we encounter people from other cultures."

"Another benefit of being able to travel and study in another country is that I've got an even greater appreciation of the Ole Miss Women's Council program. ... The members of the Women's Council provide me with the resources I need to become the best version of myself,

whether it's here in Oxford through mentorship and other forms of support or helping me to be able to travel across the world to become a global leader."

For more information on the Global Leadership Circle, contact Suzanne Helveston, OMWC program director, at shelveston@olemiss.edu or 662-915-2956.

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