Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice WOW 2014
There is in most...some spark of idealism, which can be fanned into a flame. It takes sometimes a divining rod to find what it is; but when found, and that means often, when disclosed to the owners, the results are often most extraordinary.

-Louis D. Brandeis
The Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice World of Work (WOW) Fellowship is a prestigious grant that supports undergraduate students who engage in unpaid internships at social justice-focused organizations.

In 2014 alone, 30 students travelled to eight states and seven countries, spreading Louis D. Brandeis’ message across the world. Since the program’s inception in 2008, 175 Brandeis students have supported 142 different social justice organizations. Through these internships, fellows learn a great deal about combatting social inequalities. They return to Brandeis with enthusiasm and a refined understanding of what it is like to be change agents in the working world. Within them lies deep-rooted passion, idealism, and desire to make a difference. Fellows embody the spirit of Brandeis University, putting social justice into action and transforming the world one student at a time.

In these pages, the 2014 fellows express their gratitude to the Legacy Fund and its benefactor, Jules Bernstein ’57, and speak about their enthusiasm for social justice work.
Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice
2014 Fellows

Elsie Bernaiche ’15, Emerge Counseling and Education to Stop Domestic Violence, Cambridge, MA

Emmy Calloway ’15, MataHari: Eye of the Day, Boston, MA

Maya Cooper ’15 (Dec), American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY

Tinglan Dai ’16, National Consumers League, Washington, DC

Emily Friedman ’15, The Consortium on Gender, Security, and Human Rights, Boston, MA

Judith Giller-Leinwohl ’15, Greater Valley Area Health Education Center, Phoenix, AZ

Georgia Gkoulgkountina ’15, Public Defender Service – Mental Health Division, Washington, DC

Natasha Gordon ’15, Global Research and Advocacy Group, Dakar Fann, Dakar

Alexandra Hall ’15, Echo Park- All Children’s House Preventive Services Program at the Association to Benefit Children, New York, NY

Liset Hernandez ’16, CECYTE – EMSAD, Poturo, Churumuco, Michoacan, Mexico

Victoria Jonas ’15, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Sexual Assault Prevention & Survivor Services, Boston, MA

Ariel Kagedan ’16, AVODAH, New York, NY

Amelia Katan ’16, MassCOSH/Interfaith Worker Justice, Boston, MA
Jessenia Knowles ’15, Medical Care Development- International Division, Silver Spring, MD.... 22
Hannah Kober ’16, AVODAH, New York, NY................................................................. 24
Iris Lee ’15, The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, Boston, MA......... 25
Karen Lengler ’15, The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, Boston, MA.... 26
Estela Lozano ’16, San Francisco District Attorney Office, San Francisco, CA..................... 27
Trang Luu ’15, SJ Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam.................................................................... 28
Hailey Magee ’15, NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, Boston, MA.................................... 30
Samantha Malis ’15, Lawyers For Children, New York, NY........................................ 32
Sarah Margulies ’16, Alliance for Justice, Washington, DC............................................. 34
Alisa Partlan ’15, United for a Fair Economy, Boston, MA............................................. 35
Molly Pearlman ’16, Louisiana Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, New Orleans, LA........................................................................................................... 36
Amanda Pereira ’15, ETE Camp, Hinche, Haiti.................................................................. 38
Linda Phiri ’15, World Vision Brazil, Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil...................................... 39
Jessica Puterman ’15, American Jewish World Services, New York, NY............................ 41
Kathelyn Rivera ’15, Bairo Pite Hospital, Dili, East Timor............................................... 42
Veronica Saltzman ’16, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Boston, MA... 44
Hannah Young ’15, Streetlight Schools, Jeppesestown, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa... 45
Hello Mr. Bernstein,

It is my pleasure to write to you today to thank you for funding my summer internship and to inform you of the impact your support has had in my life and for social justice. You may not take time everyday to consider how your passion and efforts to achieve justice for all affects an individual like me, but I hope this letter serves to remind you of how far-reaching and meaningful your contributions truly are. To a student like me, the opportunity of a fully-funded, institution-approved internship is possibly the most inspirational experience one could hope for. My grandmother emigrated to America to give her family a better life, and although my parents divorced when I was in elementary school, I have had strong ties to my family my whole life. I have seen firsthand the value of hard work because my mom worked three jobs throughout my childhood to support my sister and I without the help of my father. My family has battled financial hardship and mental illness for as long as I can remember and this fuels me to study medicine and health sciences with the hopes of alleviating all of my family’s pain.

It seemed natural to pursue my education at Brandeis, an institution dedicated to social justice. I was incredibly blessed to receive the Daniel Elkaim ’81 Alumnus scholarship to attend Brandeis, and I have since learned that it is not merely a passion for social justice that unites this community, but rather the strong network of alumni, who foster the dreams of the next generation of ‘Deis students with their constant involvement and support. I personally thank you and Mr. Elkaim for your generosity and good faith by continuing to work towards our common goal of achieving equity among groups of people and protecting every individuals’ fundamental rights to life, health, and justice. Mr. Bernstein, I feel rewarded to have dedicated an entire summer to the promotion of women’s rights and the end of domestic violence; but even more, I feel proud that I was entrusted the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice. This honor was bestowed by someone who has spent a lifetime advocating for and achieving justice for workers’ rights. Your hard work has given me an opportunity to begin my career working towards a similar end, and I am forever grateful.

My final days at Emerge with supervisor Ted German, Director of Training at Emerge. Ted has 18 years of experience working on domestic violence issues.

Elsie Bernaiche ’15
Emerge Counseling and Education to Stop Domestic Violence, Cambridge, MA
I spent the summer at Emerge, domestic violence counseling and education center, based in Cambridge, MA. My mother has worked in the field of domestic violence her whole life and I was able to work with her in summer 2013 as an intern at NoVA, the Non-Violence Alliance. I decided on Emerge for this summer’s internship after I learned that their program directors are the establishing members of the nation’s first abuser education program, back in 1977. Women have experienced violence at the hands of their partners across all cultures and all epochs of human existence, permissible and perpetuated by patriarchal social norms. I believe that injustice for one is injustice for all, so I will work to protect the rights of women and children and against systematized oppression in the future. My work at Emerge has inspired me to pursue a career with the United Nations, improving victim services worldwide.

In closing, I would like to thank you again for contributing to my success as an undergraduate student at Brandeis. I can promise you that I will continue the legacy of your dedication to social justice in my future, and I hope that can serve as humble compensation for your invested kindness.

Sincerely,

Elsie Bernaiche ‘15

PS: If you are ever in the area and would like to meet, or if you’d like to have something fun to do on-campus, I am a varsity volleyball team member (and recent all-time record holder!). I can also be reached via email at ber110@brandeis.edu.
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I hope this letter finds you well. I’m writing with many thanks and appreciation for your support and funding for the Social Justice WOW recipients this past summer. I interned with a women’s social justice organization called MataHari, working primarily in an IT/web development capacity for an organization which works with issues related to domestic work and domestic violence.

Interning with MataHari was a goal I was working towards for the entirety of the past year, as the opportunity to learn how educational technology and information accessibility could affect and empower lower-income communities, and how I could participate in facilitating the creation of this technology, was very important to me, especially coming from a background in which I found technology to be a creative and life-transforming outlet. And for this opportunity, I thank you -- with your generous support, I was actually able to take on this internship and these tasks this summer and pursue my personal, career, and social justice-oriented goals.

After this summer, I’ve found myself committed to exploring a career path in web development, and I’m currently focusing on how I can use my skills to better the websites and improve the user accessibility and information access of nonprofit and activist websites. At MataHari, I learned a lot about what it meant to be committed to a cause, and how that translates to the work that I’ve now found I want to do, and I am continuously grateful to you for this, Mr. Bernstein! I’m excited to dive in to the field of tech activism and development after graduation, and hope to make you proud with continued commitment to social justice, economic justice, and educational equity.

Thank you again for all of your support - very much looking forward to meeting you!

Best wishes,

Emmy Calloway ’15
ekcalloway@gmail.com
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I had an outstanding summer that allowed me to grow both personally and professionally. Because of the WOW fellowship that I received I was able to intern at the American Civil Liberties Union where I worked side by side with leaders in the legal field, fighting to ensure that civil rights and liberties are upheld. I would not have been able to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity if not for the World of Work funding so I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your generous donation and continued support of the WOW fellowship program.

During my time at the ACLU I worked on their Campaign to End Mass Incarceration. My supervisor worked to coordinate the campaign efforts of the fifty affiliate offices around the country. My job was to assist her in that support, wherein I summarized media reports of our various initiatives, analyzed policy proposals and developed policy recommendations and suggested talking points for advocates across the country. Throughout the summer I was fascinated to learn about the ways in which the ACLU combined public policy initiatives with strategic litigation in order to win real reforms across social justice initiatives from marriage equality to racial justice and national security.

Working at the ACLU, I learned a lot about the law school process, the many routes a law career can take in order to bring about social justice, and steps I can take to best position myself to enter the legal field. The connections I made this summer were invaluable and they would not have been possible without your generous donation.

I cannot thank you enough for providing me the funds that allowed me to partake in this great opportunity. Your support not only allowed me to learn skills in strategic advocacy but also continues to provide learning opportunities for the next generation of social justice leaders and advocates.

Thank you again for your continued support!

Sincerely,

Maya Cooper

Maya Cooper ’15 (Dec)
American Civil Liberties Union, New York, NY

The attorneys surprised us by setting up a video chat with the interns, and their highest profile client, Edward Snowden.
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

My name is Aaron Dai, and I am a junior at Brandeis University majoring in Politics and International and Global Studies and minoring in Legal Studies. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the generous funding that made my internship with the National Consumers League possible this summer. The time that I spent with the League has shown me the importance of educating the general population about the impacts that public policy can have in their daily lives.

I worked as a Public Policy intern during my tenure with the National Consumers League from late May to mid-July. As an individual who is extremely interested in policy analysis, the internship position attracted me immediately, and I saw this internship as a wonderful way for me to gain experience in analyzing social policy. The League’s legacy and history as the first consumer advocacy organization in the nation greatly impressed me, and their mission of protecting ordinary citizens from the dangers of fraud and promoting their interests made the organization a very attractive place to gain the experience that I would need for my prospective future career as an international lawyer.

During my internship, I worked with my supervisor as well as the League’s executive director to draft various policy proposals, including an energy proposal that was presented to the League’s executive board of directors. In addition, working at the League allowed me to have experiences that I would have never dreamed of, such as attending Congressional hearings and meeting United States senators. I also learned that NCL does not only represent and advocate for consumers in the US, but also for consumers in the international community. Perhaps one of the most vivid memories that I had this past summer was at a Child Labor Coalition Conference, hearing a young woman talk about how she was brought to the United States as a child laborer from Africa when she was only 7 years old. That testimony was shocking and motivated me to further invest myself in this field of consumer advocacy so as to eradicate these societal injustices. The breadth and scope of the League’s mission is truly extraordinary, and it was a privilege to work for such a noble organization.
My time at NCL has allowed me to grow exponentially as a consumer and has allowed me to gain crucial insight with regard to the ways that public policy can affect the everyday lives of ordinary people in such a significant way. After the internship, I came away with a wealth of new knowledge in everyday issues that I shared with my family and friends. This internship opportunity would have certainly not been possible if not for your generous support. Once again, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for providing me with the financial means to pursue this wonderful work opportunity that has allowed me to reinforce my core values and discover my passions.

Warmest regards,

Aaron Dai ’16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I have just spent a summer working for the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, an opportunity possible only because of the generous and empowering support I received from your donation to the Social Justice World of Work Fellowship. I am unbelievably grateful and appreciative that I was granted this opportunity to live in Boston, to gain work experience at a non-profit NGO, and to further deepen my research interests in social justice and peacebuilding. I have learned ways of looking at the world and at war that will inform the way I look at current events and conflicts, as well as learned immensely about my career interests and what I would like to research in the future.

Emily Friedman ’15
The Consortium on Gender, Security, and Human Rights,
Boston, MA

The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights is an organization devoted to the creation of multidimensional, structural, feminist gendered analyses in finding sustainable and just solutions to armed conflict internationally. They work to connect this body of research and literature with policy-makers, educators, and activists on the ground to help transform the way we look at gender, human rights, and security in conflict.

At this organization, I was given the chance to become involved in a number of different projects and learn a range of new skills. I was given an opportunity to become Team Leader on a project that connected me with professors from all around the world who teach courses on human rights, international relations, and armed conflict. I spent a lot of time conducting targeted research on the role of masculinity in militaries. I listened to and transcribed lectures regarding the role of women’s organizations in post-conflict reconstruction. My favorite project was writing Country Profile Reports. I was assigned to write the reports for three different countries, which involved researching the context of the current armed conflict, United Nations history and involvement in the situation and subsequent Peacekeeping Mission, resolutions, and general discussion of the issue. These report drafts were sent to the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for inclusion in their MAP Report, which they send to the United Nations Security Council every month.
I have always cared deeply and passionately about human rights and peace-building, and this internship truly gave me the opportunity to become a more informed, knowledgeable, effective and practiced peace-builder and researcher from now on. I go into my senior year at Brandeis anticipating to spend a semester tying together what I have learned this summer about peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction with what I know about psychology and the effects of chronic, sustained stress on the psyche. I wish to express, from the bottom of my heart, how grateful and honored I feel to have been able to have this experience.

Thank you,

Emily Friedman
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I wanted to take this time to thank you, so much, for your generous contribution to my summer internship at the Greater Valley Area Health Education Center. My summer experience would not have been possible without you, and allowed me to learn more about this amazing organization, help my community, and understand public health as it functions on the ground.

Day to day this summer I was teaching public health classes to underserved, underinsured, underprivileged children at free health clinics. This included topics such as Fire Safety, Sun Safety, Germs and Hand Washing, and Bullying. Through these classes I got to see how eager children are to learn, while also experiencing barriers to their getting information that they desire. Lackluster parental involvement, language barriers, and socioeconomic disparities all played a part in reduced resources and ailing health for these children. After teaching the classes, I would head back to the Greater Valley Area Health Education Center (GVAHEC). For the rest of the day I would help individuals who came through the Center connect to resources related to health and housing.

GVAHEC is on the same campus as legal immigration counseling services, a food bank, a clothing bank, and a community college. The wide variety of individuals that came through the Center gave me the opportunity to see people at differing points in their life experience; some were in crisis, some stabilized, some somewhere in the middle. My opportunity to help all of these individuals and their families become more self-sufficient was truly an honor and could not have happened without you.

My devotion to social justice was only further enhanced through this summer’s experiences. Through an analysis of the individuals coming through the Center, I found that 97% of people that benefit from GVAHEC’s services are living at 150% of the poverty line, with well over half living beneath 100% of the federal poverty line. After my experiences this summer, I am hoping to follow a path into social epidemiology, and work to find the social determinants of health that lead to health disparities, and work to minimize these disparities on a larger scale.

Thank you again for your generous contribution to my summer and my future. It means the world to me, and there truly are no words to adequately explain the impact this summer, and you, have had on my life.

Best,
Judith Giller-Leinwohl

Judith Giller-Leinwohl ’15
Greater Valley Area Health Education Center, Phoenix, AZ

2014 Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund For Social Justice WOW 9
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Just a month ago, I was living in Washington, D.C. working closely with defense attorneys for the Mental Health Division of the Public Defender Service. My unpaid internship as an investigator brought me a step closer to my future career in law, and enriched my understanding of social justice. I gained so much more than I expected, and it was all possible because of your support for the Social Justice World of Work fellowship. I would like to take this opportunity and thank you for your amazing contribution; I am truly humbled to have been one of the many Brandeis students whom you helped realize their dreams.

I am a senior at Brandeis University, and I am studying English, Political Science, and Legal Studies. I love political philosophy and learning how to communicate effectively. I have also been a captain of competitive mock trial teams at Brandeis where I practiced trial advocacy. My academics and mock trial experience honed my passion for a future profession as an attorney. I dedicate myself to organizations that promote social justice, and find real meaning in educating others and myself on its importance. This summer internship complemented my interests uniquely.

The Public Defender Service, Mental Health Division (PDSMHD) defends individuals who are involuntarily committed to psychiatric institutions. Unlike most legal interns, PDSMHD investigators are active “field agents” for their clients’ defense. I travelled to various mental hospitals in D.C., and helped inform them of their legal rights. I then followed up with each case by interviewing family members and community agencies, serving subpoenas, requesting record releases from psychiatric hospitals, reviewing and summarizing medical records, and even attending Mental Health Commission and probable cause hearings. This internship was unique in that I had the direct legal experience I wanted to decide that law school is the right path for me.

In addition to my professional growth, I engaged deeply with social justice issues regarding mentally ill clients. At PDSMHD, I learned that unfortunate as it is, mentally ill clients are defined by their illness, and this mentality has detrimental consequences with regard to their liberties. The stigma of mental illness is not only prevalent in society – in the way doctors, and nursing staff deal with clients – but it seems to be embedded in the legal culture. PDSMHD combated that stigma with every client, and every case; my mentors taught me the importance of respecting clients’ “expressed interest,” and how to advocate for what they consider just.
These past few months have propelled me in my academic and professional development. My mentors, my clients, and my coworkers provided a challenging and stimulating environment in which I practiced my skills, and sharpened my passion for social justice. This would not have been possible without your support. In one page there is only so much I can say, but I hope I was able to convey my deep appreciation for you. Thank you for supporting the endeavors of the Social Justice fellows at Brandeis.

Sincerely yours,

Gina Gkoulgkountina ’15
ginagk@brandeis.edu
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thank you for your donation! I was able to spend the summer working in Dakar, Senegal because of your generosity. I studied abroad in Dakar during the spring 2014 semester and was amazed by the variety of non-profit organizations that were working in the city. I was interested in exploring the option of working with one in a more intensive capacity than the semester internships, but it was not possible for me to fully fund a summer stay in the city. I’d heard about the WOW fellowship from numerous sources on campus and it turned out to be a great way for me to take the path I wanted without undue worry about financial matters.

My organization, Global Research and Advocacy Group, is a non-profit NGO based in Dakar that focuses on helping marginalized populations live better lives in the city and elsewhere. I worked as a Global Initiatives Intern, meaning that I was involved with all steps of the process of formulating proposals for research projects based on assessing the needs of populations in the region, editing those proposals, submitting them, and any editing needed after submission during the ensuing rounds of the bidding processes. I translated a large amount of documents throughout the summer and though I was not entirely sure of my French language abilities beforehand, my conversational and writing skills improved by leaps and bounds. Immersion in a francophone environment – especially while living with a Senegalese host family – really gave me the confidence I needed to be okay with stumbling through a few words or grammatical patterns before being comfortable enough to rattle off French with greater fluency. French ability was one of my goals for the summer and definitely something I am very proud of now.

Natasha Gordon ’15

Global Research and Advocacy Group, Dakar Fann, Dakar

A street in the northeastern part of Dakar.
Spending the summer working on international aid projects in a country directly affected by these projects was a lesson in reality. I connected to social issues in ways that I never had when just taking classes on these topics or discussing them among peers. My supervisor had been working in international NGOs for over twenty years, and he, as well as many of the other GRAG team members, brought experiences with them that I learned a great deal from. There are many well-meaning aid projects in effect in developing countries and many plans of how best to help, and that overflow of actions with less show of results can be dispiriting.

But what I learned most from working at GRAG is to never forget endurance. It may seem like things are going slow and the number of atrocities happening in the world are mind-blowing. But all one can do is clean up their corner of the world, connect to other networks of like-minded people, and do our best to excel at one project at a time.

My Sincerest Regards,

Natasha Gordon ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I cannot thank you enough for the generous funding you provide to Brandeis students that allows us to achieve our goals. The Social Justice WOW has helped me and many of my peers work for organizations that cannot afford extra hands, but desperately need them. My name is Alexandra Hall and I am a senior majoring in Politics and French, with a minor in Art History. I just spent my junior year abroad in Geneva and Paris studying international relations, multiculturalism, and policy development. After getting a sense of international policy creation I decided to return home and focus on domestic policy development to help those most in need.

This summer, thanks to your funding, I worked for a non-profit called Association to Benefit Children. It started as a school and social service organization for homeless and impoverished families in New York City, and has expanded now to four schools, a summer program, preventive service program, and social service aid program. Based in Harlem, Manhattan this organization helps those in the community overcome poverty and access basic tools to become independent and foster long-term stability in their homes. Having grown up a mile south of Harlem I knew this organization was truly aiding those close to my home and that by working for them I would be aiding my community immensely.

I worked in the ABC All Children’s House Preventive Service Program (ACH). This office, made up of seven young social workers, changed my life. Every day was a new adventure, depending on what the clients needed each day, and who was calling to ask for advice. Any day I could be on 2 home visits, running around the city to other social justice organization meetings, or playing with kids through play therapy practices in classrooms. Although I had not had much training in social work I learned their tools quickly and witnessed the awful bureaucratic system social workers must deal with early on in the summer. The way the preventive services works is the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) refers cases to the office and if the family fits the pool of people we work with we take the case on. ACH specializes in working with families who have a history of domestic violence or trauma, which has occurred in front of or with a child under 5 years of age. ACH is one of the only preventive service organizations now using Child-Parent Psychotherapy to restore family relations in the home.
In order to help restore family relations, along with the therapy, the office attempts to meet the family’s concrete needs. This is where I played the largest role. I researched and referred families to organizations in NYC for social services and childcare, helped them find housing, helped families prepare for housing court, helped domestic violence victims get orders of protection against their abusers, attended meetings with our clients to help them advocate for their need for shelter and protection at NYC government offices, and wrote a summer-camp grant proposal that ACH can hopefully use next summer to allow the clients’ children to attend summer camp. This past summer not only did I help many families progress towards become more independent and strong community members but I learned about the bureaucracy and awful policy in NY that prevents people in need from reaching their most basic needs in an easy and manageable manner. People should not have to wait six hours for a meeting with a housing aid advisor in a government office, or be on a two-year wait-list for NYC Housing Authority apartments. From the perspective of people most affected by NYC’s poverty and homelessness policies I learned what should be changed in the system on a policy-making level.

Thank you so much for funding this internship! I would also like to thank you on behalf of my supervisor who much appreciated having an extra intern whom they could not afford to sponsor on their own. The Social Justice WOW is truly an asset to the Brandeis community and I cannot wait to continue seeing projects students are able to accomplish thanks to your generous funding.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Hall
abhall@brandeis.edu ’15
Dear Mr. Jules Bernstein,

My name is Liset Valdivia Hernandez. I am immensely grateful and honored to be a Social Justice WOW recipient. Without your support, I would have been unable to travel to México to help the Mexican-Purépecha community obtain better health and educational outcomes. This underprivileged community in Poturo Michoacán México was in desperate need of support and with my various services, I was able to make a difference and change the lives of many individuals. The gratitude I feel towards your support is indescribable, but most importantly you should know that the WOW stipend that I was able to obtain changed the lives of many women, men, children and kids with special needs.

I began my internship at CECYTEM-EMSAD in June and ended in August. I spent about 10 weeks working at this organization. I would work Monday through Friday from seven in the morning to six in the afternoon. I would teach English in the mornings to children and teens and also educate teens, over the age of twelve, about sexual and reproductive health. In the afternoons, I would work in the community’s clinic and help take patient vitals and vaccinate patients. I worked really closely with the doctor to provide the best medical care possible. At the clinic, I would also hold weekly workshops on various health topics. Sometimes I would deliver these meetings at the clinic, or sometimes I would walk to nearby towns with the doctor in order to deliver this information. Another of my tasks was to work with mothers’ with special needs children and educate them about the different type of disabilities there are. I would support them and give them advice on how to work with their children. I took three family cases ad would go to their homes and provide their children with OT, Speech, Adaptive PE, ABA Behavioral therapy to these families.
The progress that I made with these children was extraordinary. The parents were amazed and could not believe how much their children had advanced in so little time. I was also amazed by how quickly my students learned English. I was even able to organize a graduation for them and give them certificates of completion for my course. At the clinic, all the community members wanted me to attend them because they loved the way I treated and cared for them. I was able to integrate myself very easily into the culture and customs of this community. I achieved my main goal which was to improve the health and educational outcomes of this community.

One of the biggest lessons I learned was that one can person can make a drastic difference, and without the WOW stipend I could have never impacted and helped so many individuals.

Once again, I want to thank you for providing me with this extraordinary opportunity to go to México and work at CECYTEM-EMSAD. With your support I was able to put Social Justice into practice and alter the lives of many individuals, and consequently helping me grow and mature as a student and woman.

Best Wishes,

Liset Valdivia Hernandez ’16
lisa8vah@brandeis.edu | 310.428.9019
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

My name is Victoria Jonas, and I am a senior majoring in Psychology and Women’s, Gender & Sexuality studies. This past summer I was one of the fortunate students selected for the Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund for Social Justice WOW Fellowship. I would like to sincerely thank you for your generosity in providing me with the opportunity to pursue an unpaid, though extremely valuable, internship during the summer. I interned for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, in the Sexual Assault Prevention & Survivor Services Unit, or SAPSS. I am passionate about responding to sexual violence (specifically in my own community, and on other college campuses as well), and through this internship I learned bounds about both prevention and trauma response work on a state level. I had the chance to meet and network with many professionals in the field, and learn about how one day I might turn my passion for social justice into a career like theirs.

Throughout my time so far at Brandeis, I have been an involved activist in the feminist and sexual violence response movements. Working for the Department of Public Health gave me the chance to see how my grassroots involvement in these causes can be translated to government work, and contribute to legislative change in a way that really makes a large-scale difference. Already this semester, I have had the chance to apply my new skills to my leadership work on campus. Perhaps the most valuable lesson I learned this summer is that activism, and social justice work, can take on many different forms: it doesn’t have to happen at a protest, or through a petition, or on social media. Social justice can happen behind a government-issued desk, and as demonstrated by my dedicated supervisors and co-workers this summer, very often does.

I am now in the process of deciding my future after Brandeis, and because of your incredible generosity this summer, I find myself decidedly pointed in the right direction. My experience at the Department of Public Health was an amazing chance to learn about myself, my selected career path, and social justice work at large. Thank you so much for your continued support of Brandeis students who wish to spend their time making the world a better place.

Thank you,

Victoria Jonas ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I wanted to personally thank you for your investment in my work over this past summer. My father, who passed away this past February, worked in international human rights and immigration, and his parents dedicated their lives to immigrant aid and preventing poverty amongst Jewish immigrants to Canada. Consequently, I grew up imbued with ideas of social justice, helping others, understanding that my world is affected by all those in it, and the importance of ensuring social welfare and justice. There was also a large emphasis on poverty, and helping others in a real and direct way.

To have been able to work for AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps in New York, NY, was an amazing experience. Not only was able to contribute to a cause that was dear to me on the most personal of levels, but I felt like I was able to contribute to making a difference.

I spent the summer at AVODAH working primarily on recruitment strategy and development. My tasks involved intensive research and analysis of 50+ university campuses around the United States. My goal was compile a comprehensive list of all potential partners for AVODAH in order to further our reach on university campuses. My research filed through university Hillels and chaplaincies, student clubs and organisations, university centers and institutes, and professors and their course offerings. This research proved very interesting as I was expose to the many facets of what mentalities and ideas might contribute to the fight against poverty. There were connections that impacted me in ways that I would not have expected. I also researched organisations that might prove to be good placement organisations for AVODAH, and learnt a tremendous amount in the process.

I attended numerous organisation events, and educational programs, and these really impacted me. Like I wrote about in a WOW Blog post, I found myself unable to sleep some nights contemplating poverty, and what my responsibility towards it was. My sensitivities were heightened to the suffering around me, and I noticed homeless individuals everywhere I walked in New York where I probably would have only regarded them passively before. I realised that I myself could not solve the problem I saw before me; that fighting poverty is not a task anyone can go at alone. That’s how AVODAH exists, to create a community of leaders with a common goal.

Ariel Kagedan ’16
AVODAH, New York, NY
I want to thank you again for affording me this opportunity; you’re continued support is truly invaluable. I have had truly instrumental experiences that have shaped my conception of how I’d like to advance in my professional and academic careers, I have learned, and with these new tools, I’m sure I will continue to learn. Again, I thank you for your investment in me, it is sincerely appreciated.

In gratitude,

Ariel Kagedan ‘16
617-548-0046 / akagedan@brandeis.edu
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thank you so much for your continued support for Brandeis students, such as myself, to build our professional experience through social justice work. I’m sincerely grateful for this summer’s opportunity to intern with Interfaith Worker Justice. My incredible experience would not have been possible without your generous support.

I had a fantastic summer fighting for economic justice with Interfaith Worker Justice. After an enriching one-week training in Chicago, I spent eight weeks at the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health. With MASScosh I worked on a report highlighting inequality in the Massachusetts’ workers’ compensation system. This report will inform MASScosh’s advocacy to reform the compensation system during the next legislative session. I feel extremely grateful to have been entrusted with such a meaningful project that allowed me advocate for low-wage workers’ in my own community.

I could feel my professional skillset expand throughout the summer. My confidence grew as I was challenged to interviewing professionals, collect testimonies from injured workers, and holding bi-lingual meetings. I honed critical skills, like learning to ask the right questions and incorporate constructive criticism. I benefited in ways I could not have anticipated and am truly grateful to have worked with the dedicated team at MASScosh.

Most importantly, my internship with Interfaith gave me the opportunity to empathize with and empower Boston’s marginalized communities. As a student, it’s easy to overlook those facing greater obstacles to economic advancement. Working with immigrants in Dorchester exposed systematic inequalities but also means for change. I know I will carry this experience and insights into my future endeavors. Thank you once again for enabling this fantastic experience.

Sincerely,

Mia Katan ‘16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

My name is Jessenia Knowles and I am now a senior at Brandeis University. I am a pre-med student that is double majoring in Biology and Chemistry and minoring in International and Global Studies. This summer I had the amazing opportunity to participate in an 8-week internship in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea thanks to your generous funding. I secured an internship with a non-profit organization, Medical Care Development International (MCDI), in Equatorial Guinea. There, I participated in organizing a clinical trial for the malaria vaccine PfSPZ, created by Sanaria. So far this vaccine has a 100% effectiveness rate and may potentially aid in preventing malaria for millions of people around the world as well as saving countless lives.

During this internship opportunity I was able to experience the culture in Equatorial Guinea (Did you know it is the only country in Africa that speaks Spanish?) and I was able to use this opportunity to expand my career options. While working for MCDI I realized I had a passion for public health abroad. I previously only considered working abroad as a medical professional, but thanks to the opportunity that the WOW Social Justice gave me I am now going to pursue a career in public health as well. During my internship I was able to read and revise important documents vital to the progression of the malaria vaccine trial. I also was able to interact with various doctors, lab technicians, nurses, funders and malaria experts. I learned how to distinguish between different species of mosquitoes as well as distinguish between male and female mosquitoes. I interacted with local community members, accompanied the spray team to local communities, and learned the science behind malaria prevention from bed nets. I helped create and translate documents that were to be used in the clinical trial and also provided and implemented suggestions to the team that were incorporated in helping MCDI’s mission.

“Creciendo Sin Paludismo”- Growing Up Without Malaria. This is MCDI’s slogan and was located outside of MCDI’s main office.
It is amazing to look back and reflect on what MCDI and my part in MCDI’s mission has helped and will help accomplish. The education and awareness of malaria, prevention, treatment and outcomes is important within itself. However, it is the potential eradication of malaria that is incredible. The implementation of this clinical trial within Equatorial Guinea is one step closer to a permanent prevention for malaria. Thanks to the Social Justice WOW funding I was able to be apart of this extraordinary opportunity and experience. Thank you Mr. Bernstein for allowing me to come a step closer to a career of social justice. This experience has motivated me to work towards a life of social justice in public health and medical care.

With much gratitude,

Jessenia Knowles ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

At the conclusion of my AVODAH internship, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you. I have learned a tremendous amount about the Jewish social justice community, antipoverty work, as well as the causes and effects of domestic poverty. By meeting many of the AVODAH Service Corps members and interacting with the participants of List College’s Pre-College JUSTCity Program (partially sponsored by AVODAH), I have refined my conception of faith-based organizing and the extent to which we have the capacity to move the American Jewish Community towards creating greater social change.

My experience at AVODAH has been crucially formative in my shaping my understanding of the larger issues that loom over even the most democratic societies. Although I have been previously involved with other forms of social justice activism, the lessons I have learned from my supervisor, Rabbi Stephanie Ruskay, in addition to the other staff members and participants, have enhanced my passion for attaining a more socially just society. I am not only honored to represent Brandeis University for its caliber, but likewise for its devotion to social justice. Brandeis’ Jewish roots and mission are inextricably tied to AVODAH’s goals, and it has been remarkable to create this synthesis.

Once again, thank you for your generous sponsorship, and I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Best,

Hannah Kober ’16
B.A., Near Eastern and Judaic Studies & Linguistics

Hannah Kober ’16
AVODAH, New York, NY
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thank you!

My name’s Iris Lee and I am currently in my fourth year at Brandeis University. My areas of study include economics and anthropology. After graduation, I aspire to work in the nonprofit sector and was very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with one this summer.

After returning from a semester abroad in Morocco learning about multiculturalism and human rights, I wanted to apply the knowledge that I learned at a social justice oriented organization. Only a few days after flying back to the states, I spent two and a half months interning at the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights. Not only did I gain real world experience by working with a nonprofit organization, but I also received academic enrichment from gaining exposure to so many gender and security related issues that I knew little to nothing about only a few months prior.

A large reason why I chose to work at the Consortium this past summer was because of my interest in gender issues, so I’m really glad to have learned so much more about them in such little time. Working with the Consortium staff, I also saw the endless amounts of energy that they put into the organization. Every day in the office, I watched them with awe and inspiration at the drive and dedication that they had and hope to one day work with as much fervor as they do.

Due to your generosity, I could spend a few months in Boston this summer, which could never have happened without your help. After completing the internship, I’ve solidified the belief that I would like to work in the nonprofit sector in the future. I had always wondered whether working in a nonprofit would be the right choice, but after this summer, I know that doing so would be a way to fuel my pursuit for social justice and change. I cannot thank you enough for making this opportunity accessible to me this summer.

Warmest Wishes,

Iris Lee ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I've had a memorable summer full of learning experiences interning at the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights in Boston. Your generous donation allowed me to complete this unpaid summer internship while lessening the financial burden it would cause on my family. I've had much to be thankful for you and your contribution is certainly on the list.

This summer, I contributed to an extensive research effort by the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights. The Consortium integrates the study of gender and women into research on human rights, security, and armed conflict. Its mission is to create a more peaceful, just and gender equitable world through programs designed to produce cutting edge gender analysis of war and peacebuilding, transform gender and security research and policy agendas and foster innovative education, activism and practice. My research focused specifically on gender and environment security, and it opened my eyes to the aspect of gender vulnerability to environmental disasters and/or unpredictability in a most enriching way.

Through this experience, I furthered my ability to conduct gender analysis, a skill I had already been learning through my studies of Women, Gender and Sexuality at Brandeis. Being an International and Global Studies major as well, I became more informed of conflict-like situations happening all around the world, and of the United Nation's efforts to mitigate the effects and create sustainable peace. It was an incredible addition to academic material I had become familiar with at Brandeis.

Besides the increased familiarity with the academic content the Consortium works with, I also learned much about the challenges facing NGOs. With only 3 paid staff members and a ambitious goal in mind, the Consortium manages to navigate the world of funding, applying for grants and training multiple unpaid interns while conducting meaningful work that strives for social justice and social change.

As you can see, your assistance was invaluable to a summer full of opportunities for growth. I come into my senior year at Brandeis feeling better prepared to finish my majors, write a senior essay, and with a better understanding of the non-profit world as well as of myself. I can only imagine how many other students have been touched by your generosity and I wish nothing but the best in all your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Karen Lengler ’15

Karen Lengler ’15
The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, Boston, MA
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thank you very much for the wonderful opportunity that you have given me this summer. I interned at the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office in the Victim Services department. This experience gave me another outlook in social justice and without having this internship I would never have had the chance to have a new perspective. I am very fortunate for this funding and want to be able to express my gratitude.

I was one of the few interns at the victim services who were able to communicate with victims every day and give them assistance with our California Victim of Violent Crime Compensation Program. During my internship, I had the opportunity to meet with many victims and their families. It has been an eye opening experience to see the emotions of the victims.

Especially in court with sensitive case such as homicides, domestic violence, and sexual assault the victim is very vulnerable and it’s victim services job to provide the support. The victim advocates whom we assisted were there for emotional support for the victims to listen to them relives the incident during court. I was facilitating administrative as in checking in clients, updating cases, and constantly using a database that had information about various cases. I would also contact clients to let them know about our resources such a referrals to mental health clinics, relocation, and helping with paying medical bills due to the incident.

There are many Latinos in the San Francisco community and most of them do not speak English. I am always glad to assist them because it is very difficult to understand the criminal justice system. Many of them come in with information that is in English but it vital to their case but just want an explanation of the forms that are given to them. Some of them are undocumented immigrants who are terrified to speak about their incident because of the constant terror of being deported. Some of them who have been a victim of a violent crime have the option of applying for a U-visa but have to demonstrate that they were cooperative with law enforcement and during court. During my time in the internship I would support my supervisor in collecting all the U-visas that were sent to our office and review to check if the victim was cooperative during their investigation and throughout court.

As you have seen from many others, and me without your help I would never have had this phenomenal internship that helps me follow my career path and personally. You’re amazing generosity is greatly appreciated because coming from my background as a child of immigrants my parents would not have been able to give me this same experience. I wish you have a great life with love and peace because you are a blessing too many.

Sincerely,

Estela Lozano ’16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I would like to thank you for your donations to Brandeis’s WOW Social Justice Fellowship which allowed me to conduct such meaningful and unforgettable internship in Hanoi, Vietnam this summer. I really appreciate your support and commitment to social justice as I could not have been able to complete my work without your kindness.

Empowered by my passion for development work and experience gained abroad, I came back to my hometown feeling excited about all the challenges and opportunities I would have. Over the last three years, I have been working with nonprofits tackling social justice issues in the States and Honduras, but I always wonder what it would be like to do justice in my home country. Hence, I decided to come back and worked for SJ Vietnam, a nonprofit organization aiming to bring more opportunities to children with less access to education and health care.

Over my internship, I traveled to many parts of the country, talking with children and their families to understand their background on climate change, its effect, and how they can prepare when natural disasters come. Thanks to conducting research and talking with people in the field of international development, I was able to visualize the landscape of development work in Vietnam, and how helpful it would be if all children and school teachers can have access to more information and be trained for protecting themselves. The result of my work is the setting up of 4 pilot information centers on climate changes.

My summer internship has changed my thinking of how social justice should be. It might not need to be building a whole new developed city or creating a new banking system but as small as talking and understanding the community and their need. The huge project must start from detailed components such as coming down to the village and staying at their house to know what it would be like over a stormy night.

Trang Luu ’15
SJ Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam
Coming back to Brandeis after my 3-month journey in Vietnam, I am more prepared to move forward in my career path of an international development professional. I hope I can set foot to more places, learn from more people, and strengthen my belief in social justice cross cultures. Again thank you so much for supporting me at the very first start of this journey. I know I could not be able to make this happen without your help. I wish you good health and happiness.

Sincerely,

Trang Luu ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

This summer, I had the great pleasure of working with NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts, a political non-profit organization that works to protect and expand access to reproductive health service for women across the Commonwealth. Because the choice debate is so heavily polarized, people tend to forget that, at its core, choice is a social justice issue. All individuals have the right and freedom to exercise their own bodily autonomy; any attempt to restrict women from making the medical choices that allow them to plan their families is a direct affront to women’s independence and women’s reproductive health.

I have been working with NARAL in some capacity since Summer 2013 when I interned for NARAL Pro-Choice New York. Upon returning from New York to Brandeis for my junior year, I accepted a position as a NARAL Campus Organizer on the Brandeis campus, mobilizing my pro-choice peers and creating reproductive health-oriented advocacy campaigns to identify gaps in reproductive health access on-campus. After working with NARAL for the entirety of the 2013-14 academic year, I accepted a position at NARAL as their Intern and Campaigns Coordinator for the summer of 2014.

As NARAL’s Intern and Campaigns Coordinator, I was responsible for supervising NARAL’s ten political interns, coordinating all of our volunteer efforts for our endorsed pro-choice candidates’ campaigns, and build NARAL’s membership by meeting one-on-one with Boston-based individuals who expressed interest in volunteering with our organization. This opportunity allowed me the chance to learn the inner workings of a small non-profit organization while also developing my capacities for leadership and crafting strategic organizing strategy. Without your generous funding, my experience this summer would not have been possible, and I sincerely thank you for the opportunity to pursue my passions in a field that is so close to my heart.

Hailey Magee ’15  
NARAL Pro-Choice  
Massachusetts, Boston, MA
My summer at NARAL concluded in the best way I could have imagined. In August, we became aware that NARAL Pro-Choice America was offering large grants for state affiliates to hire a paid, full-time staff member to oversee the state’s campus program and electoral efforts. I drafted and submitted our grant proposal (which allowed me to gain grant-writing experience, an opportunity I did not foresee myself having this summer), and on August 20, I learned that we had received the grant and I would be officially hired as NARAL’s Political Organizer. I am now working for NARAL full-time, in a paid capacity, and am thrilled that my WOW-funded summer allowed me to effectively climb the career ladder to reach my current position.

Thank you again for your generosity and kindness. I look forward to meeting you in person!

Warmly,

Hailey Magee ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

My name is Samantha Malis and I am a senior at Brandeis studying psychology with a minor in business. I am so fortunate to have been chosen as one of the lucky students to receive the Social Justice WOW scholarship. Words cannot begin to express how grateful I am for the incredible opportunity that you provided for me this past summer. Through your generous donation, I was able to pursue the field of social work and find my passions for the non-profit world, while also determining what career path I may wish to follow in the future.

I worked as a social work intern at Lawyers for Children, a non-profit advocacy organization in New York City. This wonderful organization consists of lawyers and social workers that provide free representation and services to children in the New York area that have been either voluntarily placed in the foster care system, or are involved in cases of abuse, neglect, adoption, or high conflict custody cases. I was able to explore this system through an incredibly hands-on position—attending court cases, sitting in on client interviews, and visiting the youth’s homes or group placements when necessary. More specifically, through this experience I was able to learn the interpersonal and professional skills necessary to become a social worker and participate in a helping role. Thanks to you, I was able to use the summer before my senior year to find a career path that I can be passionate about and gain exposure to situations that I could only have dreamed of seeing first hand.

In addition to the experiences that I was able to witness, my proudest accomplishment of the summer is a new children’s “give-and-go” library that I started at the office. Many of the clients that I worked with were young teenagers with children of their own. With my supervisor, I was able to bring literacy to the youths and help the mothers bring reading home to their children. This project allowed me to combine my passion for reading and my love of children to provide the necessary support for our clients. Without your help, these children may have never received the thousands of book donations that they did.

Samantha Malis ’15
Lawyers For Children, New York, NY

32     2014 Louis D. Brandeis Legacy Fund For Social Justice WOW
This summer was the most incredible experience in which I have ever been fortunate enough to participate. The knowledge and relationships that I gained while at Lawyers for Children are invaluable, and I will forever be grateful to you. I have learned so much, not only about what it takes to be a social worker, but also about social justice and the foster care system of New York. Being a part of an advocacy group such as LFC has highlighted how important it is for every individual, including children, to have a voice and have their wishes heard. As I move forward in both my academic and career paths, I do so with clarity and confidence. Knowing that found a love for this work and have made a difference doing so is the most wonderful gift. The impact that you have made on my life is indescribable.

Thank you so much,

Samantha Malis ’15
smalis@brandeis.edu
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

My name is Sarah Margulies and I was one of the incredibly fortunate recipients of a Social Justice World of Work Scholarship. This past summer, I worked at Alliance for Justice and the experience has truly reinvigorated my passion for social justice as well as my belief in myself. I would not have been able to take an unpaid internship without your incredibly generous support.

As a development intern at Alliance for Justice, I learned how a nonprofit operates and how it is able to implement its version of social justice throughout its activities. Alliance for Justice empowered me by giving me the opportunity to work on a variety of different development activities. From enhancing my event planning skills at our annual Justice First! Luncheon to proofreading grant applications, working at Alliance for Justice gave me the experiences I need in order to further my career in development.

After submitting my final piece of work for AFJ (a memo on how to use social media in promoting our Amazon Smile presence), I realized how amazingly open everyone at AFJ had been to me. Alliance for Justice employees do amazing work every day bringing transparency to the court system, but they were also incredibly helpful in giving advice. Even Nan Aron, the president of AFJ, took a couple of interns out for coffee and ice cream. Getting her insight on the political process and how the Supreme Court has changed over the years enriched my perspective on the type of things I can accomplish.

I am so amazingly grateful for the gift you gave me. I came into this summer so confused about my future, and now I have confidence and skills that will guide me to my future career. I would never have been able to do this without your support.

Sincerely,

Sarah Margulies ’16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I would like to express my gratitude; thanks to you, I was able to take advantage of a wonderful experience of learning and growth this summer. I spent the summer interning in the development department at United for a Fair Economy.

Although I had interned in the nonprofit sector previously, this was my first experience in development and my first experience with a real mentor in the field. My supervisor at UFE taught me a lot about fundraising, communication, and the nonprofit world. I learned many key skills and strategies that will certainly be useful in my future career. Moreover, I began to make connections in the field and gained insights into the workings of a small nonprofit organization with national reach.

United for a Fair Economy was in a transition phase when I entered, which I expected to negatively affect my experience. On the contrary, it gave me a chance to learn about how organizations (especially small nonprofit organizations) handle challenges and transitions. I was able to sit in on staff meetings and the team even encouraged my input despite being a temporary intern!

This internship was very special because, in addition to the standard development work, it gave me the opportunity to take charge of projects that built upon my own skills and knowledge but challenged me to go beyond anything I had done before. I learned how to create an effective and useful donor survey, a “rack card” brochure, and more.

This summer I learned and spoke and wrote about inequality and social justice in a new way. I learned about policy and non-policy actions to fight economic injustice, and why they are necessary. I learned about advocacy groups and the connections between them. I even got to visit the State House to see a policy achievement – the signing of the Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights! (signing day pictured to the right).

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to learn and grow this summer in ways that I could not have achieved otherwise.

Warmest thanks,

Alisa Partlan ‘15

Alisa Partlan ’15
United for a Fair Economy, Boston, MA
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

This year, things will be different for me at Brandeis. Things will be different because I am different. Working in New Orleans this summer changed my life. I am now completely focused on what I want to do in the next step of my life. This revelation is largely thanks to you.

I grew up in little Cooperstown, NY, with extremely socially-minded parents. They taught me from a very young age the value of community service and sticking up for the oppressed. These morals lead me to serve a year before college for AmeriCorps. I had an extremely enjoyable and monumental year traveling throughout the U.S. serving a diverse range of communities. When I got to Brandeis, I wanted to keep up this way of life, and luckily found many opportunities in Waltham.

During summers when I was in Middle and High School, I worked various jobs. I have worked as a sales person, waitress, hostess and other odd jobs. Last summer I took a nanny job for the summer. Although I had an amazing time, I longed for something deeper and related to my field and future. I knew, however, that I couldn’t financially afford to take the summer off working. That’s where your generosity comes in. I need you to know how much I genuinely appreciate the scholarship you funded. Learning about this opportunity made me so thankful. I finally felt like my hard work had paid off. I finally felt like I was on more of a level playing field.

When I said that the internship I did this summer changed my life, I meant it. Not only did I learn and experience a different culture, I got to explore a field I want to work in. I am very interested in criminal justice. Ever since I was a little girl, I dreamt of being a civil rights lawyer for the Southern Poverty Law Center. The Louisiana Coalition for Alternatives to the Death Penalty is not the SPLC, but it was the perfect place for me. I worked harder this summer than I ever have in my life. My 60+ hours a week were challenging and rewarding. I learned how to reach out to community members, lobby Senators, create content for organization publications, and truly put my heart into my work.
I also found my dream job this summer. The LCADP works closely with lawyers and investigators for nonprofit offices. Because of this, I was able to get involved with some current cases. I fell in love with investigation. I am currently looking into internships for next summer in investigation. It’s all happening very fast, but it’s so exciting. And it’s all thanks to you.

I truly cannot thank you enough. Your thoughtfulness has shaped my future and given my passion and dreams so much encouragement. I promise to do good things with your gift by sharing and pursuing what I have learned this summer. You can count on it!

Warmly,

Molly Pearlman ’16
mollypearlman@gmail.com
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thanks to you and your generous funding to Hiatt’s WOW Fellowship I had the privilege to work for ETE Camp in Hinche, Haiti this past summer. I had an incredible summer participating in camp preparations as well as traveling to Haiti and being a part of this incredible program.

My role was divided into two parts. Firstly, I was responsible for helping Shaina Gilbert with camp preparations including lesson plans, inventory and packing supplies during the first part of the summer. After this was completed I traveled to Hinche, Haiti alongside Shaina and other volunteers on July 4th, 2014. Upon our arrival we orchestrated the sign-ups of Opening Day during which over 100 parents lined up with their children eagerly hoping to have one of the available 60 spots for this year’s camp. Two days later ETE camp was officially in session. My responsibilities during the camp were to co-teach English classes every day to all of our brilliant and inspiring campers. Additionally, I also helped to lead afternoon activities for both the daytime campers and a group of alumni. Additionally, we helped the students prepare for their final presentations that blew the community away with all that they had learned.

The skills I have learned during this time are so much more than what can be listed on a resume. I learned even more to communicate despite language barriers, despite differences and going beyond the use of words, to manage a classroom effectively and to listen and be understanding of all those around me and their individual needs. Through this experience I have added fuel to my fire of working towards social justice for the rest of my life. The acknowledgement of my own privilege and the many benefits that we receive in this country at the expense of others was a difficult but crucial reality to remember in returning to the US. I have grown even more impassioned about the many important and meaningful ways in which I can continue to contribute to this world to further social justice be it in a small or large way. I had the honor to witness first-hand how much this camp means to these children and to this community and to contribute to it the amazing work it does. This experience would not have happened without your generosity and from the bottom of my heart and soul I thank you and I recognize the value of what you do for the lives of so many and for this world as a whole through this funding.

Thank you.

In peace, joy and love,

Amanda Caroline de Oliveira Pereira ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

There are no words that can fully express my gratification for your generous donation to my summer endeavor to work with World Vision Brazil. During my time interning, not only were my goals, such as gaining cross-cultural understanding through service fulfilled, but I was challenged and made to think more critically about issues that we face these days in international development.

Over the summer I worked as an intern for the People&Culture sector of World Vision in Recife, Brazil. There I helped organize organization events and assisted with day to day office work. Also, I worked in the translation department, and got to visit an Area Development Program (ADP), where about 300 children in a Brazilian Favela (rural area) are supported through planned daily activities and donations from assigned sponsors. Below, there is a photo of children supported by an ADP performing Capoeira, a Brazilian martial art. The children are taught by an instructor from the favela employed by World Vision. I got to participate in a lesson when visiting; there I got to see that the children are extremely talented.

Through my internship experience I got to interact with a large number of new people who helped reshape certain aspects of my cultural world view. I was given the opportunity to place the interpersonal skills I have acquired throughout the years, into a professional setting. I could not have asked for a more life transforming summer after my second year of college.

I want to thank you once again for your generosity. Writer, Malcom Gladwell writes that “Success is not a random act. It arises out of a predictable and powerful set of circumstances and opportunities.” Your investment in my summer allowed me to realize new potential within myself and provided necessary stepping stones for the rest of my college career. By working, I grew more efficient when performing tasks, willing to adapt to a new environment and more emphatic to the needs of others. Most of all, I became more bold to take actions that can change the world as we know it.

Be incredibly blessed.

Sincerely,

Linda Phiri ’16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

This summer was the most memorable, enjoyable and meaningful summer I have ever experienced. I had the great honor of interning with American Jewish World Service, working with them to reach the penultimate goal: a realization of human rights and an end to poverty in the developing world. I interned for the Experiential Education department and they put me right to work. The educational materials I produced will be utilized by AJWS for years to come, which proves to me that my summer was well spent. Additionally, I learned so much from the incredible people at the organization, especially Ruth Messinger who showed me what true leadership looks like.

With AJWS, I experienced things that I never even expected. The interns marched together in the New York Pride Parade, helped host a wonderfully successful fundraiser, heard incredible speakers from within AJWS and from all over the world, and were made to feel like an integral part of the organization. This experience will stick with me forever, and no doubt change my life’s progression.

I cannot thank you enough for giving me this opportunity. To put it bluntly, I could not have afforded this summer were it not for the WOW fellowship. Without your help, I probably would have spent my summer at home working an uninspiring minimum-wage job. Without the WOW fellowship, I would not have learned about the importance of rights-based development, nor would I have heard first-hand about the plight of young girls in India who are forced to marry, or the dangers that gay people in Uganda face every day at the hands of their government. I would not have developed strong relationships with my coworkers, nor would I have learnt how to break into the non-profit field from those working in it currently. I am so grateful for what this fellowship allowed me to experience.
Most of all, the fellowship allowed me to connect with social justice, a concept that is an integral aspect of Brandeis University’s identity. Brandeisians hear about social justice all the time, but we seldom get an opportunity to live it every day. This summer, my job was literally to bring about social justice through education. True, my work alone did not “accomplish social justice” in the slightest, but I believe everything I did with AJWS contributed to the broader goals of repairing the world. I was immersed in ideas of social equality, power and privilege, grassroots activism, and human rights, and I came away from this summer with an appreciation of the complexity of the term “social justice” and the true importance of its implications. It was so wonderful to live what we learn at Brandeis every day. Most of all, it was at this internship that I truly understood what Justice Brandeis meant when he said that “The most important political office is that of the private citizen.” My job at AJWS was truly to think about how to get the private citizen to connect with social justice, and in doing this I realized that I too am a private citizen and I too have the power to change the world.

With deepest gratitude,

Jessica Puterman ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I can’t express how grateful I am for the opportunity you provided me with this past summer. I spent two and half months in Dili, East Timor working for the Bairo Pite Clinic (BPC). If not for your generosity I would not have been able to travel half way across the world to engage in one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life.

I first heard of the clinic through a group on campus called Project Plus One founded by a Brandeis alum for the purpose of supporting the BPC. I was eager to join because I sensed that this group of only a few individuals was dedicated not just to helping the clinic but to supporting projects that were sustainable and that would truly improve health outcomes in Timor. This past summer I joined the founder of PP1 as well as other clinic staff to help pilot an initiative called the Doorstep Treatment Support program which aims to decrease the prevalence of tuberculosis (TB) in the population through primary interventions. The experience was a great opportunity to see what I have learned in the classroom as an HSSP major about project implementation in a practical way. I am happy to say that the DTS program is now up and running and is already producing results. This program is now helping to identify more cases of TB as well as preventing children from developing TB.

In addition to working on the DTS program, I was also able to shadow a number of doctors and medical students at the clinic. I have always had an interest in global health. Therefore, observing how medicine is practiced in developed countries as opposed to developing countries was one of the things I was most looking forward to during my time at the clinic. There are so many barriers to care at every point of treatment at the clinic and in Timor in general, all of which are incredibly frustrating. But what stood out to me the most was the level of dedication on behalf of all of these health professionals to give patients the best care possible despite the circumstances. They epitomized what I have always believed the medical profession to be: a life in the service of others.
Now, being back on campus, I have a much stronger sense of what my goals for the future are. I want to help ensure that everyone has equal and adequate access to healthcare. My peers in PP1 are also dedicated to this cause and we will continue to fight for it by supporting the BPC. I can’t thank you enough for the chance to have such a fulfilling and motivating experience. I know many years from now I will look back at my summer as a pivotal point in my personal and professional development.

All the best,

Kathelyn Rivera ’15
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

Thank you so much for your donations to the Social Justice WOW Program. I mean it when I say that I could not have learned as much as I did and had the experiences I had over the summer without the funding. In fact, I probably would not have been able to stay in Boston to work. I am so grateful for your involvement in my education and experience at Brandeis. It is incredible to have someone who cares about helping me pursue my goals, especially through unpaid internships.

This summer, I interned at the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination in Boston. The Commission works to end discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodation, and more. I interned in the Housing and Testing department. This internship allowed me to work very closely with people most in need of social justice while also educating me in the way Massachusetts's discrimination law works. For example, one of the things every intern had to do was complaint intake. During intake, I met with a potential complainant to discuss alleged discrimination. At MCAD, we allow anyone to file a complaint for free. If a person decides they want to file a complaint, our job as intake specialists is to write a formal complaint for the client. This process was a great way to be in touch with people and the problems they have in society. Even though I couldn’t follow through with every case, it was great to be able to help people start a process to better their lives.

Additionally, my work in the Testing Department allowed me to test potential discrimination cases. The Testing Department does a lot of different kinds of tests: cyber, phone, and in person. I got to help create cyber and in person tests to build evidence for a potential discrimination case. This involved creating and sometimes carrying out the test, writing a summery, and creating a recommendation for the Commission to take further action.

The opportunity to intern at MCAD was extremely important in helping experiment in different areas of the law. I plan on going to law school upon graduating Brandeis and am definitely interested in some sort of public interest law. Working at MCAD was a great way to experience government work. Additionally though, it was a great way to learn about how the law works. Through both training and experience working, I learned about what citizens can do to fight societal injustices. I want to continue to help people through the law and am grateful to have gotten a first look at how it can be achieved.

Best,

Veronica Saltzman ’16
Dear Mr. Bernstein,

I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to extend my deepest thanks for your continuous support of Social Justice at Brandeis, and specifically, for your support on my personal path through the Social Justice World of Work Fellowship. Without the Social Justice WOW, I would have been unable to complete an internship abroad this summer. This internship was ultimately one of the most influential work experiences I've had so far, and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to gain experience through it.

This summer, I worked at a new non-profit organization in Johannesburg, South Africa, called Streetlight Schools. Streetlight Schools was founded just about one year ago by a young South African woman. Streetlight has partnered with Bjala Properties, an urban housing and community development project in Jeppestown, a neighborhood in Johannesburg that has historically faced high rates of poverty and crime. Together, Streetlight and Bjala have created Leopard Tree Learning Centre, an education lab based inside the Bjala housing project. Leopard Tree currently provides tutoring after school for about forty primary school students ages five through thirteen in Jeppestown. The tutoring services are free, and they are primarily in English and Math, although there are several other projects and activities that the students are working on. The education lab provides a forum through which the developers at Streetlight Schools can learn about the individual needs of students and their families, as well as a forum to try out new and innovative methods of education. Within the coming year, the Learning Centre will expand and cater to one hundred students instead of forty, in a new space that was donated by Bjala Properties. In the new learning space, there will be several new projects, including computer labs entirely made up of donated resources. By 2016, the organization plans on starting a private school using the methods they've found to be successful in the Learning Centre.

For my internship, I was responsible for conducting independent research relating to the expansion of the Centre and the organization as a whole. I was asked to start out by researching literacy and successful methods used to assess literacy in English Language Learners. I ended up developing three levels of literacy assessments, and administering them to the younger high-need and low-need students in the Centre. The results from the assessments helped us alter the curriculum of the Centre in order to best meet the needs of each student. In addition to the research, I was responsible for tutoring in the Learning Centre every afternoon, or, during the school break, for the whole day. This internship was a perfect fit for me because it provided me with the opportunity to gain the practical experience of conducting research and working in an office environment, all the while being able to work in the classroom, which is something that I enjoy very much.
Working for Streetlight Schools gave me the opportunity to work in an environment where I was able to learn a great deal from people in the non-profit field who are passionate about giving students the opportunity to have equitable education opportunities, which is an issue that I have been invested in for the past several years. Throughout high school, while working in the New Haven Public School System, I saw the injustices that so many students must face on a daily basis. The injustices that I saw in Johannesburg reflected the injustices that I saw in New Haven. Although they were often much more obvious in Johannesburg, it quickly became evident to me that in the United States, we are facing many of the same social issues that are prominent in South Africa.

Because of the opportunity that I was given as a Social Justice WOW recipient, I was able to learn a great deal about several of my career interests: education, promoting equitable opportunities, and non-profit organizations. This summer, I was able to see the unique way that these interests fit together, and I was able to think a great deal about how I would like to fit them into my future. Thank you, again, for making this possible.

Sincerely,

Hannah Young ’15