

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

India, English Teaching Assistantship

My career goal is to be a teacher in the USA. I decided to apply for English Teaching Assistantship in India after a travel-study trip there last year, where I traveled from southern India to the north and interacted with Professors, students, and NGO staff. The different customs and lifestyles caused me to reflect on my own and left me curious to learn more about the country and its people. My short journey to India awakened within me a quest for knowledge and taught me how to adapt and be more open-minded. Returning as an English teacher will enrich my career in the USA, which is rapidly producing a more diverse student population.

I have already had some experience as a teacher. This past summer, I was selected and trained at the Ella Baker Child Policy Training Institute as a Child Defense Fund Servant Leader Intern to teach first grade. I completed an intense training in classroom facilitation, management, and leadership in the community. We learned how to provide and implement multicultural education and work with multicultural students. I had the opportunity to engage students through theme-based and hands-on activities, while teaching an integrated English reading curriculum. I learned that students need to be able relate and be involved in their learning process in order to fully comprehend. My Child Defense Fund training will help me to interact with the students in India in an engaging way.

In India I plan to work with students and teach them through interactive games, music, poetry, and cultural discussions. Students need to be able to bring their own cultural backgrounds to the classroom. One of the corner stones of my training and teaching experiences as a Servant Leader Intern was an activity we called Harambee, which was a time to motivate each other for the day ahead through cheers and chants. We used these chants in the classroom to praise students for doing well and to keep them engaged. Harambee is one example of the many techniques I learned with the Child Defense Fund that I plan to bring to the classroom in India with me in order to enhance my students learning experience.

My civic engagement plan is to implement an adolescent book group, which would include facilitated discussions led by students in a book club setting. I have made arrangements with the US-based Words Alive organization, and they have agreed to help me create a lending library for the community. The focus of the library will be primarily on early literary development but also encompass a parent and teacher component.

As an African American, I was interested in the discussion of skin color within the media in India. For example, several products advocating lighter skin with such phrases like 'fair and lovely'. I plan to research how this issue affects students in India and research ways to strengthen the younger generation's sense of self-worth.

After ETA, my goal is to apply to a teaching credential program and earn a Master's degree in Education and/or Women Studies. An ETA will help me to reinforce my teaching skills and provide me with broader knowledge of other cultures, which will help me to make an impact in the lives of my students by giving them a new perspective. This opportunity to teach in India will not only present me with classroom familiarity, but will develop my ability to work with a diverse range of students. I plan to live and teach in the San Diego area, which is home to immigrants from all over the world. Working with students in India will be an enormous benefit to help me better serve my future students.

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

Spain, English Teaching Assistant (ETA)

Spain is an ideal location for which I can serve as a U.S. Student Ambassador, teach English, and incorporate lessons that build upon my own entrepreneurship and non-profit development experiences. Spain is the second largest investor in Latin America and is promoting trade and small business growth with the Middle East. This fits with my academic background and the community engagement project that I would implement as an ETA. My academic background—in Latin American, Islamic & Arabic, and International Security & Conflict Resolution studies—will help me organize lesson plans for English language learners and promote global citizenship. I will draw upon my professional, academic, and personal experiences to engage students with lessons in English proficiency development, as well as connect students to local entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofits in Spain.

My unique background as a social entrepreneur and a U.S. Border Patrol Agent will help to maintain students' engagement as they learn English through traditional lessons (e.g. grammar) and interactive activities, such as Model United Nations (UN) simulations and debates. Having participated in Model UN as the Vice President of my club and served in various leadership roles in the workplace and through my university, I am positioned well to engage students with lesson plans about interesting issues, such as migration, that help students to connect the local to the global. Dialoguing with students about my own global entrepreneurship and collaboration across borders. I will engage students in learning English through practical activities and discussions. Also, I will incorporate guest speakers to have question and answer sessions with the students, and I will include educational fieldtrips for students to visit and dialogue with staff at the U.S Embassy in Madrid, various local organizations, such as Impact Hub, nonprofits, and businesses.

In my community engagement project, I will offer English learning support to students through a digital platform that I have designed for them to engage their peers in over 20 countries. Through this platform, students will practice their English skills by speaking with others, using their role-playing skills learned in the Model UN exercises, and learning about professional development experiences that support actual multi-national connections. Students will learn about entrepreneurial problem solving, innovation, and economic growth; students will learn multiple perspective analysis and intelligent design research skills to collect, process, analyze, and distribute research information. This English language platform will create a culture of dialogue about global affairs and social entrepreneurship. Additionally, students will be partnered with professional mentors to introduce students to diverse career paths, with global citizenship in mind. This will give the students a significant and necessary edge as global citizens, prepared to enter a dynamic and international work environment. I have successfully implemented this platform through my activities in the San Diego World Affairs Council, SDSU international business society, the Transfer Student Outreach Alliance, and Model UN.

As a multi-lingual Latino American, I have long desired to experience living and working in Spain. Having spoken Polish as my first language, then Spanish, I am excited about teaching English as an ETA in Spain. I will draw from my experiences working for two years as a Teacher's Aide, an After School Care Aide, and a Tutor, as well as my Summer Camp Aide work experience and my co-teaching experience with the SDSU Olive Tree Initiative. An ETA position in Spain will not only allow me to achieve my goal of teaching English language skills to students abroad, but it will also further develop my skills as I plan to pursue a graduate degree in public policy and international relations and work to empower youth throughout my career.

STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

Brazil, ETA

There is concern over “the historical disjuncture and lack of alignment between K-12 and higher education” (*EdWeek*, April 2015). While K-12 schools are attempting to ensure future student success by adopting up-to-date standards, these efforts are in vain because colleges and universities have not followed suit. Thus, higher education needs to be transformed.

Currently, I teach at Excellence and Justice in Education (EJE) Academies where we exclusively implement research-informed practices. I lead both the sixth grade team and the middle school English Department at our Spanish-English dual-immersion school, which serves primarily low-income students of color. In the U.S., there is a slowly increasing number of bilingual K-12 schools, but not a single bilingual university. Ironically, most universities around the world are inherently bilingual; they require students to learn in their local language(s) and in the dominant language(s) of power. However, In the U.S., the local language is the same as the dominant language, which means diverse languages lose value once students enter university.

This discrepancy drives me: I hope to transition to working in a university setting, under English professors in Brazil so I can continuously reconstruct my pedagogical vision and practices, with the ultimate goal of reimagining the U.S. system of (higher) education.

The practices that I can bring to my Brazilian placement are derived from the student-centered practices I currently use, that have paved the way for my students to achieve proficient/exceeding levels, more than double the national average. I follow a pre-, during, and post- structure so students can gain background knowledge before learning about new topics through reading or listening/watching authentic texts. My students are always producing oral language (i.e. think-pair-shares, share alouds, group presentations, etc.). They regularly produce purposeful writing to demonstrate high-level mastery of the learning objectives. I analyze student performance and identify where each student requires support. I use this data to drive instruction.

My moldable practices reflect the ever-changing demands of my school administration, which shows my openness to flexibility, and my ability to adapt to diverse expectations.

Additionally, I make learning culturally responsive because identity is the core of our being. Therefore, outside of my ETA responsibilities, I plan to engage with the community by joining a dance team to continue learning Brazilian musical genres and dance styles, while sharing my own expertise of dance. In college, I was on a Bollywood dance team, and during my year abroad, I learned *salsa* and *merengue* in Ecuador. These experiences both allowed me to express my South Asian heritage and the new culture I was immersed in. Although I am part of a Samba team in the U.S., being in Brazil will give me the most authentic dance opportunities.

Following the Fulbright ETA, I plan broaden my understanding of international education by applying for Peace Corps Mozambique, where I hope to volunteer as an English teacher. The ETA in Brazil will give me the opportunity to strengthen my Portuguese through interacting with diverse Portuguese speakers to ensure my future success in reimagining education.