Lauren Thomas

Honors Enrichment Award Write Up

Global Leadership Experience

As a first year student at Colorado State University coming into my first semester, I was worried on how I would find my place and be able to fit into the Fort Collins community. Currently, I am in both the University’s Honors Program and the President’s Leadership Program. In these spaces, I have been able to find a community of other students from diverse background to engage with. When I first saw the Global Leadership Experience advertised through PLP, I was immediately intrigued but had no expectations to be accepted to the trip. The trip was offered to travel to Todos Santos, Mexico and stay at the CSU Center to partner with local universities in the Baja California Sur state to discuss the water crisis. The next events occurred in quick succession. I applied, interviewed, and was accepted to the trip. We quickly began meeting weekly to plan and prepare for our five day journey to Mexico from November 15th, 2018 to November 20th, 2018. Before this trip, I had never been out of the country before. I quickly had to expedite and obtain a passport, and the funds provided from this award will help me cover the costs as well as the trip fee itself. This trip was truly life changing, and something I will remember forever.

Upon arriving in Mexico, I quickly developed genuine relationships with the other students on the trip, many of which are in the Honors Program. We were quickly immersed into Mexican culture, and we engaged in conversations with other students from other students from the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California Sur, and the Instituto Technologico de La Paz. We discussed the differences and similarities between the water distribution systems in Fort Collins
and Todos Santos and La Paz. We also were involved in many experiences we otherwise would have not been able to engage in if we had simply gone for vacation. We swam in rivers, waterfalls, sat through many enlightening presentations and ate amazing food. Below, I have included some pictures from the trip, and have attached a video of my experiences.