

## Travel Grant Report

**Prepared for:** The Study Abroad Grant Committee  
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**Re:** Indonesian Project

My purpose for going to Indonesia was two-fold: to gain leadership experience in managing a field school and to assess practicum sites for future social service students. These goals were compatible with those outlined in the Action Plan that was created in response to a recent program review in the Social Services program.

In terms of the first goal, my participation in the Indonesia project was invaluable for the insight and experience it provided in regards to leading a field school in the future. In that context, I was involved in every aspect of the Indonesia project including assisting students, managing project finances and liaising with faculty at Widya Mandala University in Surabaya, VIU's partner in this project. I met with faculty members both formally and informally which presented numerous opportunities to engage in discussions and dialogue, resulting in an expansion of my knowledge regarding the history, development and funding of the project. Prior to my month-long stay in Indonesia, I attended pre-departure meetings with students, instructors and others from Education Abroad and gleaned further insight into the orientation process. During my time in Indonesia, I helped to pilot a project with students that involved the use of cross-cultural exercises in promoting discussion and self-reflection in the area of cultural awareness.

The second goal during my stay in Indonesia involved assessment and recruitment of placement sites for social service students. To that end, I assessed current placement sites for practicum suitability and also visited three new potential sites for future social service practicum placements. The first site was the Bhakti Luhur home for children and adults with special needs. The home accommodates approximately 95 residents and during our visit, we noticed a number of students from secondary institutions assisting the children with daily activities. The only drawback to this site is that it is quite a distance from the guest house where VIU students typically stay during their time in Indonesia. The second program I visited was Pusat Pelayanan Sosial Anak, a program for homeless youth and boys who have recently come out of juvenile detention. As a government-run residential program, Pusat Pelyanan houses some 35 adolescent boys and assists them in transitioning back into society. As part of their daily activities, youth are involved in education, recreation and extra-curricular endeavours. The program accommodates practicum students from post-secondary institutions and would be willing to consider potential social service students from VIU. The last agency I visited was Hotlines Surabaya which deals with prostitution, HIV/Aids, trafficking and exploitation. This is a non-profit organization that relies heavily on international funding sources. Given the fragmentation of social services in Surabaya, their dedication and work is remarkable. In discussions with staff, I found close parallels in philosophical approaches to that of social work. Their activist stance and commitment to anti-oppression is closely aligned with social work ideals and values. Their ecological focus and advocacy work on behalf of youth makes this particular placement very suitable for future social service students.

During my stay in Indonesia, I presented in a *Working with Families* training curriculum for the community and also provided a workshop on *Narrative Approaches to Practice* for teachers and workers. The rich discussions stemming from these presentations allowed me to gain a deeper insight into the common issues that unite us and the wider cultural issues inherent in Indonesian society that influence practice with children and families.

In summary, my involvement in the Indonesian project has helped to advance the international goals resulting from our program review action plan in the Social Services program. I am grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate in such a meaningful endeavour.