

Grace Elizabeth Groner Foundation

The Grace Elizabeth Groner Foundation's mission is to preserve Grace Groner's legacy by encouraging Lake Forest College students to prepare for their careers and to serve their communities.



Meet the Director

Dear Friends and Partners of the Grace E. Groner Foundation,

I am so thankful for the privilege of joining the GEGF as the new director and look forward to continuing the partnerships with students and organizations that were so thoughtfully cultivated by Daniela Resendiz. From my own time as a Groner Recipient, I recognize the amount of effort and consideration that goes into supporting each student and hope that I can live up to the great precedent that has been set before me.

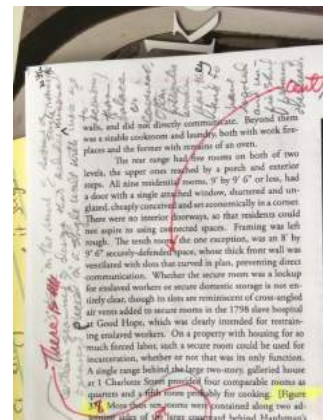
As a member of the Lake Forest College Class of 2015, I first started my journey with the Groner Foundation during the second semester of my junior year. I began by volunteering in Ms. Julie's room in the Gorton Drop-in Center, which was followed by a summer in Falmouth, a semester at the Montessori School of Lake Forest and an absolutely life changing Bridge Program at The Prince's Regeneration Trust in London and at Dumfries House near the west coast of Scotland. Now, I am happy to have returned home to accept this position and begin graduate school at the University of Chicago.

From my past experiences with the GEGF, my time at the college, and my first few weeks with the Foundation in this new capacity, I have already had the pleasure of becoming well acquainted with so many truly special individuals and organizations. I am now thoroughly looking forward to continuing to make and strengthen these connections as I learn more about each recipient and organization. Through the gift given by Grace as well the dedication of the trustees, Daniela and site supervisors, I know that I have gained invaluable experiences that would have otherwise been far out of my reach, and for those opportunities, I will be ever grateful. I am now excited to become part of making similar opportunities a possibility for others.

Most sincerely yours,
Elizabeth Bully

Pages of History

After finishing another summer at the Falmouth Field School of Tangible Heritage, Stefanie Turza '14 and KeVaughn Harding, Director of Falmouth Heritage Renewal, were surprised by an invitation to help with the edits to Ed Chappell's book on historical architecture across Jamaica. Upon arriving in Colonial Williamsburg, Stefanie received two large volumes of text with pages full of required edits as well as notes to type up, and KeVaughn was immediately recruited to help review facts for a separate nearly completed volume. The two joked that over the course of the summer they became "Ed's hieroglyphics experts," as they worked to interpret and carryout the numerous markings that Ed had recorded on each page. Thanks to her hours upon hours of work, Stefanie was able to combine her knowledge from her personal experiences at the Field School and her extensive InDesign skills to complete the edits for the 2015 and 2016 editions of Ed's project. She is now continuing on with additional edits from home. The work completed by both KeVaughn and Stefanie this summer was vital in bringing to life Ed Chappell's record of built heritage, a project that aims to preserve the stories of Jamaica's historic buildings before they are lost forever.



Pursuing Dreams

Since graduation, Heather Heitkotter '16 has been tirelessly spending her days at Have Dreams, an organization that runs a variety of programs for children, teens and young adults affected by autism. She has always been passionate about learning about autism and sought an opportunity where she could be involved with individuals impacted by the condition. While at Have Dreams, she supports young adults at Have Dreams Academy, where students are learning the skills needed to join the job market, and works with younger children to facilitate programs ranging from playing games to building robots. Each day Heather spends quality time with the students to build rapport and to do what she can to give them the best experiences possible. She also accompanies them on their outings to provide both assistance and companionship. Moving into the fall, Heather is currently creating a set of calming sensory projects that she can lead with the students as she continues her work with the organization in the coming months.



Viva la Vida



The Monteverde Institute is a prestigious international education and research center located in the Tilaran Mountains of Costa Rica, part of the famous 65,000 acre area of natural preserves known as the Monteverde Reserve Complex. The Institute is committed to providing students with opportunities to study abroad, conduct research and engage in community service. The programs focus on sustainable development, ecotourism, Spanish language and culture, conservation biology, community health, land use planning, integrated water resources and social justice. This summer, the Monteverde Institute welcomed our fifth returning group of GEGF recipients comprised of Luis Beltran '15, Yulia Zayats '18, Jacqueline Zamudio '18, Krista Meuli '18, and Isabelle Cadrot '19 for an eight-week program.

This intensive program combines internships, research and home-stays to create a unique opportunity for students to work on projects that impact the Monteverde community. This year, Isabelle Cadrot published a marketing magazine on the local *fincas* and described her overall experience as “an unforgettable journey that

has fostered my personal growth academically, physically, mentally, and spiritually, as well as stimulated rich cultural exchange and allowed me to provide meaningful service to the community of San Luis.” Thank you to the MVI staff, LFC professors, staffs, and students for making this another successful year!

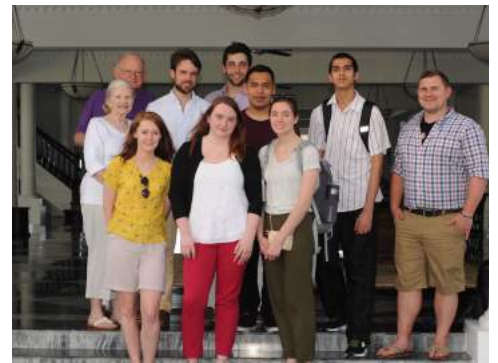
Digging On

When reflecting upon his arrival in Jamaica, Ridwaan Ismail '19 recalled thinking, “This Island has so much,” a statement he later expanded to “Jamaica offers more than a single lifetime’s worth of knowledge and experiences.” Ridwaan was one of three current LFC students to attend the Falmouth Field School Tangible of Heritage during the summer of 2015. The other students included Brittany Schweiger '17 and Eric Avila '17. This year, the current LFC students were joined by Stefanie Turza '14, James Dunnigan '12 and Mikayla Warner '12 to help with the summer’s projects.

The aim of the Field School is to provide participants with an opportunity to better understand the relationships between sustainability, built heritage and community service. Through gathering oral history records, excavating and preserving built heritage through architectural drawing, students at the Field School gain valuable insights into the culture and history of Jamaica.

One of this year’s projects involved excavating the Tharpe House in Falmouth, a critically-timed venture that took place within a three-week window before the site went under renovations. This project follows previous years of excavation on two slave villages on Tharpe’s Good Hope Plantation.

The goal of this series of excavations is to allow for an in-depth study of how enslaved workers lived throughout Jamaica. Most of the students who attend the Field School have no experience with archaeology or architecture, but thanks to the expertise and dedication of Ed Chappell, Brent Fortenberry, KeVaughn Harding, and Hayden Basset, students are quickly instructed in the skills they need. Brittany admitted that she “came into the field school not knowing any architectural or archeological techniques,” and expressed great relief that “everyone was very patient and made sure all three of us completely understood the what, why, and how of our tasks.” By the end of the four weeks, students are totally immersed in a hands-on exploration and preservation of history and its relationship to the now, a learning experience many students claim they could never even have imagined.



Continuing Research

Each year, the Grace Elizabeth Groner Foundation works with Doctor Westley and Doctor DebBurman to select first-year and returning students to pursue research at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. This summer’s first-year students included Cade Brittain '19, Tariq Aldaas '19 and Philip Ofosu-Amaah '19, who were joined by returning students Trevor Buhr '18, Zachary Weinstein '18, Brittany Avonts, Kaitlyn Woodman '17 and Yusuf Ismail '16.

Yusuf Ismail '16—“I am ever grateful to the Grace Elizabeth Groner Foundation for providing me with generous funding and of course to Dr. Westley for providing me the opportunity to get exposed to scientific research.”

Kaitlyn Woodman '17—“I spent my summer generating data for a senior thesis about T-cell development. Even in my third summer at RFUMS, I still find new techniques to learn every week.”

Brittany Avonts '17—“Overall, I could not have asked for a better experience this summer. I was able to gain more knowledge in lab techniques, the relationship between behavior and mechanisms of the brain, and a different perspective on research all while building relationships that will benefit me as I pursue my future in medicine.”

Trevor Buhr '18—“It is important, I think, to understand at a young age that science isn’t perfect and things just do not work as planned. What is even more important to understand, is that if something is not working properly, there is almost always another angle at which one can approach the problem.”

Zachary Weinstein '18—“The exposure to various laboratory techniques and journal club presentations advanced my understanding of microbiology and immunology... [and] provided me with a greater respect and appreciation for researchers and the work that they do.”

Tariq Aldaas '19—“On a personal level, I have benefitted greatly from building up confidence in myself for carrying out experiments that I may not have known anything about beforehand. I also benefitted by being reminded through errors that if you do not make mistakes, then you will not learn.”

Cade Brittain '19—“What I love about the research is that there is a feeling that you are attempting to contribute to the world.”

