

# **INCREASING ACCESS TO GLOBAL SERVICE-LEARNING FOR UNDERREPRESENTED YOUTH**



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# Goals for this Session:

- Outline benefits of GSL for **youth** and **college students**.
- Identify disparities of access to GSL for underrepresented youth and college students (racial and ethnic minority, first gen, low income).
- Suggest strategies for increasing access to GSL for both groups.
- Provide case study of reciprocal GSL programs for at-risk youth in the US and Northern Ireland:
  - Benefits and outcomes for youth participants.
  - Programs are community-driven, reciprocal, and sustainable.
- Discuss how to export and expand this model of GSL for underrepresented youth.

# The Plan:

1. Introduce the facilitators. (2 minutes)
2. Who's in the room? (5 minutes)
3. Consider 3 perspectives on how to make access to GSL more equitable (35 min.):
  - a. Current academic research,
  - b. GSL nonprofit Amizade's innovative program development for at-risk youth,
  - c. St. Peters Immaculata Youth Centre in Divis, Northern Ireland becomes a GSL community partner, bringing at risk youth to the Hill District, Pittsburgh.
4. See the Northern Irish movement to make GSL more equitable. (8 minute video)
5. Brainstorm GSL equity interventions with neighbors in the room (15 minutes)
6. Whole room discussion (10 minutes)

# Introductions:

1. Stephen Hughes - St. Peters Youth Centre, Northern Ireland
2. Gwen Bergner - West Virginia University, USA
3. Brandon Blache-Cohen - Amizade, USA

# Who's in the room?

1. What sectors do we represent?
2. What are our GSL equity needs and interests?
3. Do we have experience working to increase access to GSL?
4. What do we hope to do in/get from this session?

# What is Global Service-Learning?

- GSL programs are **intentionally designed** cross-cultural experiences that can help students understand and manage community issues through collaborative work and solution-based efforts.\*
- GSL programs create **more educated and informed students** who can use their experience to think critically about real-world issues, evaluate solutions, and effect change through hands-on practice.\*
- GSL programs motivate students to **reflect** on their own humanity and **inspire personal growth**, while significantly aiding the global community in its quest for a better tomorrow.\*

\*Cornell Engaged Learning Definition

# How Do College Students Benefit From GSL?

- Considered “high impact” educational practice (Kuh 2008):
  - Increases student engagement.
  - Improves academic performance
  - Raises graduation rates.
  - Increases knowledge of cultural practices and contexts.
- Increases global literacy:
  - Considered crucial for competitive workforce (NEA, 2010).
- Creates pipeline to majoring in international studies:
  - Increases diversity in international fields post-graduation.

(Belyavina & Bhandari, 2011; Richer & Hamburger, 2010)

# How Do College Students Benefit from Short-Term GSL?

- Increases cultural intelligence (Whitehead, 2015; Hovland, 2014; Bringle & Hatcher, 2011).
- Facilitates close mentoring relationships with faculty leaders (Kuh, 2008).
- Experiential learning enhances job and education prospects (Kuh, 2008).
- Provides transformational experience that reshapes views of travel, the world, and the structural forces underlying social problems (Whitehead, 2015; Bowman, et al., 2010).



## How Do Youth Benefit From GSL?

- Increases likelihood of voting and volunteering.
- Increases student participation and commitment in school.
- Increases grades and performance.
- Improves inter-cultural competence.
- Decreases likelihood of arrest and pregnancy.
- Improves ability to interact positively with adults.
- Increases concern for others/empathy.
- Decreases likelihood to be radicalized.
- Clarifies career goals.
- Increases conscience consumption.
- MUCH MORE.

# Who Has Access to GSL? The American Context:

- There is a historic “pay to play” model for global education.
- Minority and first-generation college students are underrepresented in Global Service Learning (GSL) study abroad courses.
- GSL is overwhelmingly designed, marketed, and utilized by white college-age women (Amizade numbers = 70%+).
- Most out-of-classroom enrichment spending for K-12 students goes to wealthier children.

# Let's Do the Numbers: GSL

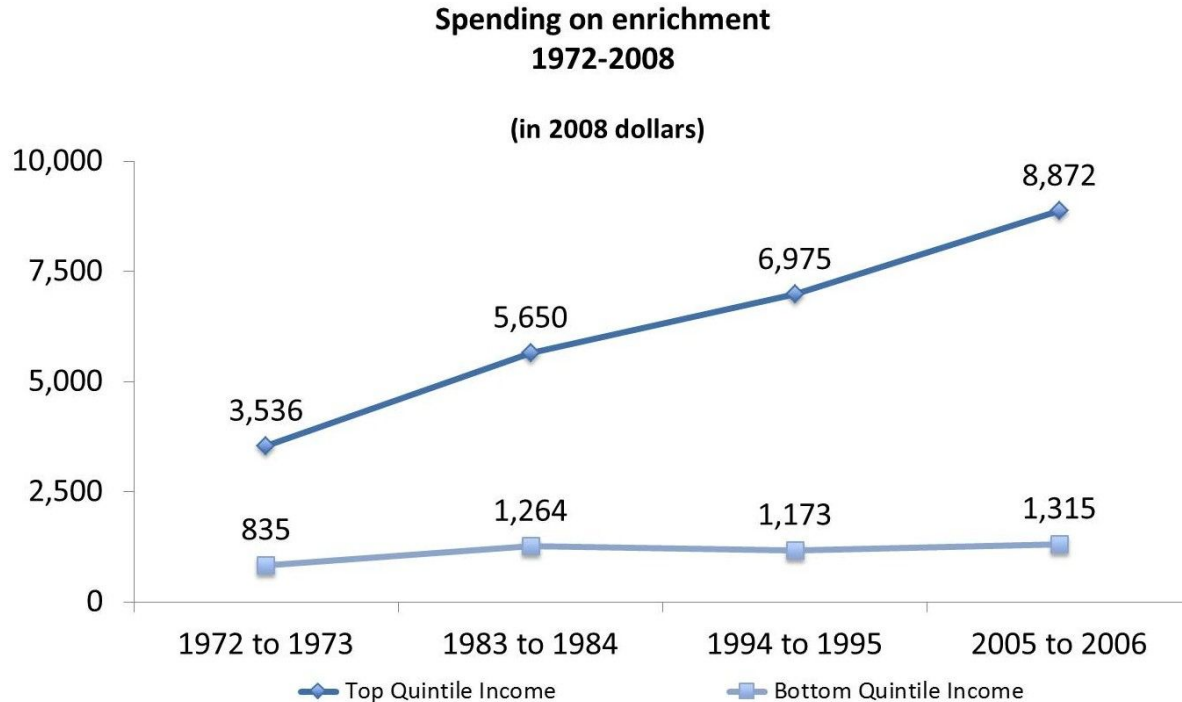
## GSL Participation

- 80% are white.
- 20% are students of color.
- 6% are black.



- Disproportionate to racial makeup of college students:
  - 65% of college students are white.
  - 35% are students of color.
  - 14% of college students are black.

# Out of Classroom Education Spending:



GLOBAL EDUCATION  
ACCOUNTS FOR A LARGE  
SHARE OF THIS INEQUITY..

Source: Duncan and Murnane, "Whither Opportunity" 2011

# What are the barriers for underrepresented college students and youth?

- Financial
- Institutional
- Academic
- Cultural

(Redden, 2015)

## How can we bridge these barriers?

# Some Big Challenges (2011 - 2018)



# Addressing the Financial Barrier:

(University Context)

- Benjamin Gilman Scholarship for Pell Grant recipients.
- UT-Austin: “First Abroad Scholarship” for first generation college students.
- UNC Chapel Hill and Fayetteville State: “Global Take Off” for first-time study abroad experience based on financial need.
- UNC Chapel Hill: “Passport to GO!” pays for passports for incoming students with financial need.
- Georgia State University: Small grants to cover funding shortfalls without application bureaucracy.

# Overcoming Institutional and Academic Barriers: (University Context)

- Institute for International Education (IIE): “Generation Study Abroad”
  - Five-year campaign launched in 2014.
  - 350 member institutions.
  - Initiative to set funding and curricular priorities to advance study abroad for first-gen and racial minority students:
    - Fund study abroad scholarships.
    - Expand international program offerings.
    - Develop academic programs that include/require study abroad.
    - Increase short-term, faculty-led, and volunteer study abroad programs.



# Rates of Success:

Addressing the financial, institutional, and academic barriers to study abroad increases access...

...a little bit:

- 2007--17% of students in study abroad = minority.
- 2016--20-25% of students = minority.
- Rate of increase has been slow.
- Particularly for black students.

# Rate-limiting Barrier: Cultural

- Increased funding alone is not enough to bring in underrepresented students.
- Cultural barriers are as significant as financial ones:
  - Concern about encountering discrimination abroad.
  - Concern about isolation--leaving family and friends.
  - Parents' concern for child's safety.
  - Lack of experience with or model for international travel.
  - Lack of relationship with faculty travel leaders.
  - Assumption that study abroad is "elite" activity for privileged.
  - Lack of information about educational and career benefits.

(Woodruff, et al., 2004; Tensley, 2015; Blache-Cohen, 2017; Redden, 2007, 2008, 2015, 2016; Belyavina and Bhandari, 2011)

# Targeted Solutions:

- We need a “**perception shift.**” –Brandon Tinsley, “What’s Keeping Black Students From Studying Abroad?” (*The Atlantic*, 2015).
- Need to **market** GSL study abroad to underrepresented students who might lack information or assume that they are barred by:
  - Prohibitive cost.
  - Irrelevant location or curriculum.
  - Potential racial or gender discrimination.
  - Little long-term utility or benefit.
  - Inexperience with foreign travel.
  - No role models.

# Marketing Study Abroad:

(University Context, mostly)

- SUNY Oswego: “I, Too, Am Study Abroad” info. panels.
- UT-Austin: Study-abroad receptions for Pell Grant sophomores led to more Gilman Scholarships.
- *Travel Noire*: Digital publishing platform for “black travel movement.”
- Collaborative for Diversity in Education Abroad:
  - Consortium of three non-profit organizations provides:
    - Scholarships
    - Pre-immersion orientation
    - Post-immersion semester-long leadership institute
    - For college and high school students of African American, Hispanic American, and Native American descent.

# “We thought we’d won the lottery.”

- Amizade received State Department grant to fund the Youth Ambassadors Program in South America.  
(<https://amizade.org/yapsa/>)
- Went to community centers in Pittsburgh’s Hill District:
  - 40% residents live below poverty level; 15% have college degree.
  - Presented program directly to community.
  - Offered full scholarships for high school students.
- Not one family agreed to let their child participate and travel.



One country is trying to make  
**GLOBAL SERVICE-LEARNING.**  
for everyone.



# Benchmarking Others - Middle/High School Level

- Austin Public High School
  - The Academy for Global Studies (2008)
  - 9th - 12th Grade Programs
  - Still very much a luxury
- Thrival Academy: Oakland and Indianapolis Charter School in Thailand (2016)
  - Very small numbers
  - Promising opportunities
- Washington, DC (2017)
  - Designed for middle schoolers
  - Lacks rigorous curriculum or serious education outcomes
- Pittsburgh Global Equity Project (2019)
  - 7 years in the making
  - Community-based, rather than school based

**We have choices.**





# Considerations and Questions

- With those nearby discuss what peaked your interest, what questions you have, and what ideas were sparked during the presentation.
- Consider:
  - What is your community (those around you) doing to increase access for all young people to global experiences?
  - Why does this matter?
  - Who are your partners? Who is helping to make this a reality?
  - What/who are the major barriers?
  - What is working? Where is the hope?



We require a more **relevant**  
**practical**  
**responsible** classroom.

# **OBSERVATIONS and QUESTIONS?**