

HPI Student Spotlight: Emma Newby

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Emma Newby is a senior studying Applied Economics with an emphasis in Global Peacebuilding. She is also working toward the Global Peacebuilding and Conflict Management HPI certificates and will be a Conversational Space-Maker this Fall. Emma spent the Fall 2023 semester in the Philippines with USU's SEED Program. This Summer, Emma will complete an internship with the US Department of State, working in the Office of the Secretary in Washington, DC, where she hopes to connect with the Office of Global Women's Issues.

How did you get involved with the HPI?

The class that introduced to peacebuilding was Patrick Mason's "Religion, Violence and Peace." It blew my mind,

and it was exactly what I needed to put the things that I'm passionate about into words, and into something I can actually study and follow as a career.

The next semester, the Heravi Peace Institute was established, and I took the Global Peacebuilding Capstone class and learned so much more about peacebuilding. I still remember meeting peace builders [from around] the world and seeing how they're using peacebuilding in careers and changing the world in different ways.

Tell me about your recent trip to the Philippines. What Kind of experiences did you have there?

While I was in the Philippines, we were teaching small business principles to help people who wanted to start a business or grow a business; things like, how do you track your finances? Or how do you price and market your products?

It was really special to be able to teach and to have people show up with so much humility. If I had shown up to teach classes and work with people in the Philippines believing that I was smarter or better than they were, I would have failed. If they had showed up to our lessons believing similar things, they also would not have grown. I was younger than most of them, but they saw me as a friend and listened with humility, which in turn, humbled me. Raising ourselves and those around us is not about a hierarchy of knowledge; it is about showing up with humility and wonder, then getting to work.



How do you feel your time abroad influenced your perspectives on peacebuilding?

One of the biggest principles in peacebuilding is that it starts with you. It's tough to share peace without feeling peace, or understanding peace for yourself. The next step is recognizing how far that reach goes. Light spreads quickly...but in the end, no matter how hard you try, or how

badly you want something you perceive as good to come forth, you have no control over that.

I saw that a lot in the Philippines. Oftentimes we would offer things to people, and sometimes they would use them, sometimes they wouldn't. You can try really hard to build peace and to stop a certain group from doing a certain thing or to encourage a group to do a specific thing, but in the end, they get to choose. That's not the fight that I'm fighting--I'm fighting the fight of spreading light, then people can choose what to do with that light. We change ourselves and build up those around us, then the world changes with us. Not the other way around.

What have you gained from the HPI?

The most priceless things that I've gained from the HPI are the community, the experiences and the mentors. I have found that even though the HPI has no physical address on campus, it's become a home for me. When I show up to events and I see my fellow HPI students, I feel like I'm home. We have these conversations that stimulate my mind and excite my soul. I love being in a space surrounded by people who also want to change the world by using peace.

The professors have also become very treasured mentors to me. I would not be where I am without them. I can tell you moments with each of the HPI professors that I've worked with where they have changed me, shaped me, and helped give me a direction that I am so excited to follow. I know I would not have been able to get that at any other university or in any other group, and I will always be grateful for that.

What does peace mean to you?

Peace is a way of being. The process of studying peace is also the process of becoming someone who can help build peace in the world. Spreading peace is recognizing the incredible worth and potential of each person around us and employing principles to help them reach that potential. It's creating a home where people don't have that home--and I don't mean home in the physical sense of the word, but in the in the sense that home is a state of being and wherever I am, I can provide it for you by acting in powerful ways of love and community.

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