

Brianne L. Overton: Henry Mitchell Scholarship Report

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research project as a doctoral counseling student to assist in the facilitation of interviews and active participation in this mixed methods research project. The project was much larger than I initially thought. I was so excited to be involved in an international project and to learn from Dr. Tom Meuser, Dr. Nicci Roman, and Thuli Mthembu. As a Thanatologist, I have studied death,



explored the neighborhood and drove down to the ocean. It was a beautiful day and a wonderful way explore the city.

On Monday, we traveled to the University of the Western Cape to continue our work with our colleagues. We made it to the UWC and were now embarking on a new journey in the



During the trip, I had the opportunity to visit several museums and historical sites Robben Island, Stellenbosch museums/churches/community, Cape of Good Hope, Peninsula tour to Kirstenbosch and Hout Bay, Table Mountain, District Six Museum, and a safari. Cape Town is absolutely beautiful. Engaging with community members and tourists at each place was an enriching experience. Early in the trip I visited a doctor for symptoms of a sinus infection. During the visit, the doctor and I discussed my reason for the visit to South Africa. After discussing the Legacy Project with him, he inquired about my career path. We talked about grief counseling and how I want to continue educating others about death and dying through a counseling lens. Before leaving his office, he bid me farewell and collaboration to offer grief counseling to his patients. This is just one of many examples of the discussions and conversations that I engaged in while in South Africa.

Visiting Robben Island, for me, was another highlight of my trip. Today I cried. I was moved to tears listening to a former prisoner tell his story and the story of #466/64 Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. I was thankful for the tourist that hurried to keep up with the tour guide as I sat in front of the door to his cell in silence to reflect on his story and his legacy. This moment in time I will forever cherish.

This moment in time stood still. As a person who identifies as an African American female, I reflected upon my place in this world. What does it mean to be me at this very moment in time? Which aspects of the trip will I recall when teaching or educating others about diversity and cultural awareness and competence in the field of counseling? How do I describe my time in Cape Town, South Africa as more than an enriching experience?

During my time in South Africa I was afforded an opportunity of a lifetime. Through this enriching opportunity I meet new people and built life-long relationships with a group of extraordinary people. I am extremely grateful to the UM UWC partnership and the Henry Mitchell Scholarship fund for making this experience possible. Thank you Dr. Meuser, for allowing me to join this project and for valuing my skills and my voice. This trip has helped me grow beyond what I could have ever imagined in terms of educational experience, cultural immersion and competency, and awareness of the self and others. My life is forever changed by my experience in South Africa. I am grateful to all involved that made this possible.

Visiting Cape of Good Hope

Working away on a beautiful day outside

Aquila Game Reserve

Aquila Game Reserve

Research meeting with Dr. Roman and Thuli