Program: The U.S., Europe and the Second World War - Intersections in 20th Century History
Location: Berlin, London, Normandy, Paris, Krakow
Rank: Junior
Major: Neuroscience

“I chose the U.S., Europe and the Second World War - Intersections in 20th Century History program because I wanted to expand my knowledge from my scientific discipline. I have always had a sense of exploration into different parts of the world. I also have a strong connection to the history of World War II, as some of my older family members served in the war and also emigrated from Europe to America during this time. I wanted to experience European life, while also studying something I love, which for me was World War II history; the weapons, tactics of each army, and how the entire landscape of the world was affected by this conflict.

Studying Abroad was honestly the most rewarding and beneficial experience I could have as a college student. I was reluctant at first because of the difficult history curriculum that conflicted with my physician assistant course load, but the transition from my science classes to my history and European culture classes was seamless.
This experience abroad allowed me to absorb much of my heritage. I come from a multicultural background, (Guatemalan and Spanish on my father's side; German, Hungarian and Irish on my Mother's side) so for me, it was special and sentimental to be in Germany where my ancestors came from and finally experience what it meant to be a German. The time I spent with my comrades in the study abroad program, both students and professors, allowed me to develop long lasting connections that I never truly found just from studying domestically.

My favorite memory from my study abroad experience was standing on top of the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile in Pairs, France right before sunset. After scaling numerous flights of stairs, the reward of my laborious climbing was unimaginable. Standing on top of a historical landmark as significant as the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile was awe inspiring for me as a history student. Not only did this place signify the fall of Paris when Hitler and the Nazi invasion force began their occupation of Paris, but it also signified the rise of Paris from the liberation of the French forces led by Charles de Gaulle. From the top of this point, I could see all of Paris in my line of vision. The Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Notre Dame, the Panthéon and all of Paris stood before me with the radiant sun beating down on the horizon as it fell into darkness. Then when night came and the rise of the moon was at its peak, the Eiffel Tower and entire city lit up like Christmas. For me, this was the most memorable experience on the trip and caught my eye almost instantly.”