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# FROM THE TABLE TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

FIVE STORIES OF SCHOLARSHIP,  
SERVICE AND A STUDY SPOT

BY SAMANTHA SNIVELY

**Y**ou wouldn't notice the table when you first walk into the Honors office. It's tucked away in the back room, down a hallway past the cheery administrative assistant, Maria Sanchez-Martinez, and Honors director Monique Pittman's office. It is small, round, unassuming and, on a good day, can accommodate four people, but usually two when it's being used as a study spot, which it often is.

Chances are you'll find someone at the table at any given time throughout the day. Whether it's a group of freshmen studying for Western Heritage, seniors discussing Miroslav Volf, or professors chatting between classes, there's bound to be something interesting going on, and someone interesting to talk to.

The table also has its regular occupants. Once the semester settles into a rhythm, a consistent group of students will gather to study at the table, chat over a cup of tea, or just say "Hi." They change with the passing years; as some graduate, others take their places. For the past few years, the scholars who convene around the table also have spent time away from it working as student missionaries, interns, researchers or teachers in other countries.

More than just a social and academic meeting place, the Honors table connects a series of stories that extend around the world. Some missions were first hatched at the table; others were the subject of many conversations around it. All of them embody what the table stands for: a commitment to service,



Stephen Erich poses with Briana Tumangkeng and some of the Benton Harbor children who gather every week for Kids' Zone. During the school year, Harbor of Hope reaches 100–150 children of all ages each week.

to learning, and to creating a community of the followers of God.

## STEVE ERICH

Steve Erich pops into the office regularly with a cheery smile, usually with a report on the latest book he's read or service project he's promoting. For the past five years — except one he spent as a student missionary in Thailand, Steve's been working at Harbor of Hope, a church in Benton Harbor, Michigan (see <http://www.harborofhopesda.org>). He first heard about the church, during his freshman year, from a poster advertising "urban ministry." "It sounded edgy and cool," Steve says, "and I was looking for something that would push me out a little." Since then, he's grown ever more involved. For the last year and a

half, Steve's worked as the administrative assistant to the lead pastor, first Walter Rogers and now Taurus Montgomery. He also teaches Kindergarten Sabbath school and helps out with Kids' Zone, an outreach project in the Benton Harbor neighborhoods. With Sabbath school and the afternoon programs, Harbor of Hope reaches 100–150 kids each week. Last spring,

the Harbor of Hope teens organized and performed a youth concert. “That concert showed me a side of the teens I hadn’t seen before,” Steve says. “It’s simply one more example of the many ways they keep proving to me their passion for Christ.”

Steve traces his desire to serve, wherever he is, to his time in Western Heritage, the freshman Honors history and philosophy course. “The class and the discussions with classmates that accompanied it stirred up an urge to live unimpeded by convention and to build something of value with my life,” he says. “Those friends have stayed with me through my entire college experience, and have been a source of strength and growth beyond compare. They are always ready to inspire me with a fresh perspective and, equally as important, I always feel welcome to share what I’m learning as well.” Steve continues to look for ways to serve; his time in Thailand introduced him to the terrible consequences of human trafficking, and he and several friends started The Stoplight Project as a result (see <http://www.thestoplightproject.org>). During the next several years, they will build a safe house for trafficked women in Cambodia.

credibility to these worthy causes,” she says. “A well-designed, well-crafted message can move the masses — directing attention and resources toward places in the world that need it most.”

## CAMDEN BOWMAN

Everyone knows Camden Bowman for his love of knowledge for knowledge’s sake and his determination to live in as many countries as possible. He was a constant fixture in the Honors office his last two years, and took an interest in everyone’s story, usually finding ways to help. Camden’s passion for people and travel took him to São Tomé three years ago, although he had planned to go to Peru. During his first year at Andrews, Camden decided to act on his longtime wish to be a student missionary as well as a place to practice his Spanish, and started looking for posts in Latin America. He’d already signed up for a post in Peru when Campus Ministries chaplain Japhet De Oliveira told him about an opening with ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) in São Tomé, a small island off the coast of West Africa. “I’d never heard of the place,” he says, “but the position was with ADRA and related to my major (international development), so I went for it.”

After brushing up on his Portuguese, Camden started working as an administrative assistant in the main ADRA office in São Tomé, the capital city. “I started out doing small tasks, such as writing project concept papers and grant proposals, and translating internal memos and manuals,” he says. Later on, Camden was appointed project director for several small projects, including a benefit marathon and several building projects. “I didn’t have a lot of expectations about the internship, but I certainly hadn’t expected to be a project director,” he says. “I felt like I was in over my head — which is a good place to be as far as learning is concerned.” One memorable mentor was the finance director, Ugo, an Igbo entrepreneur. “I’m not sure we saw eye-to-eye on anything, or at least not very much,” says Camden, “but despite our differences we got along quite well. His pride in his people, his faith, and his work ethic inspired me and held me up to a higher standard.”

Camden will begin a master’s in international development at the University of Denver this fall, and he credits the Honors program with fostering the skills necessary to his career. “Honors helped prepare me to look at life through other people’s perspectives, and living in São Tomé really tested that knowledge,” he says. “Working as a project director made me work independently and attempt things I had never done before and had little knowledge about, a skill that came in handy for my Honors research.”



Lindsey Weigley stands by a poster displaying her Honors thesis, “A Visual Exploration of Christological Pacifism.” Lindsey’s thesis combined a multimedia installation meditating on the Beatitudes with an examination of modern Christian pacifist thinkers such as Miroslav Volf.

## LINDSEY WEIGLEY

Lindsey Weigley, recent BFA graduate and freelance graphic and web designer, is a deep thinker and avid tea drinker. She interned at Thesis Inc., a design studio in Three Oaks, Michigan, assisting on projects for clients like Herman Miller, Johnson & Johnson, and many others. Lindsey also puts her talents to good use designing for various churches, charities and non-profit organizations, including One Place, The Stoplight Project, and her friends’ volunteer and/or fundraising efforts. In August, she’ll be accompanying Steve Erich and Tyler Cantrell, founders of The Stoplight Project, to Cambodia as a photographer. As the coordinators raise funds, gather support, and scope out locations, Lindsey will document their travels and design their website. “Strong design gives presence, voice and



Kylynda Bauer is hard at work in the Turnbaugh Lab at the Faculty of Arts & Sciences Center for Systems Biology at Harvard University. Kylynda worked as an intern at Turnbaugh in the summer of 2013, researching the effects of diet and antibiotics on digestive bacteria.

## KYLYNDA BAUER

Kylynda Bauer spends her time in the office leading a Western Heritage study group, developing in her mentees the same love of research she exhibits. For the past two summers, she has pursued her own research interests in a virology lab at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases in Fort Detrick, Maryland. A portion of the USAMRIID project became her Honors project; this summer, she wanted to “try out research in different fields of biology.” Kylynda applied and was accepted to the Systems Biology Internship at Harvard University. She spent her summer at the Turnbaugh Lab at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Center for Systems Biology at Harvard, Turnbaugh, as it’s commonly called, studying the digestive microbiome — the world of 10–100 trillion bacteria living in your gut. Her particular research focuses on the effects of antibiotics and diet in bacteria in the digestive tract, and could provide much-needed information for nutritional guidelines and the development of drugs with fewer negative side effects.

As a dedicated Adventist researcher in a largely non-Adventist scientific community, Kylynda sees her role as a unique opportunity. “My goal is to represent Christ through my interactions with others and in my research endeavors. I want to break the stereotype of a Christian afraid to engage in science,” she says. “Ellen White wrote that, ‘Everyone who names the name of Christ should work so that others, by seeing his good works, may be led to glorify their Creator and Redeemer,’ and I guess that is what I am trying to accomplish — daily good works in the name of Christ” (*Steps to Christ*, p. 82).



Matthew Chacko poses with a group of Zambian children he befriended while working at Mwami Adventist Hospital and School of Nursing in Chipata, Zambia.

## MATTHEW CHACKO

Matthew Chacko is Monique’s reader and research assistant, and can always be counted on for a cheery greeting and an interest in everyone who stops in. He combined his love of travel with a humanitarian drive and spent a year at Mwami Adventist Hospital and School of Nursing in Chipata, Zambia. “The prospect of living abroad in a developing country was exciting and offered a chance for me to explore new cultures, create friendships, help in whatever capacity I could, and consider my future career,” he says. Matthew did a little bit of everything: taught Anatomy and Physiology, worked as an office assistant for the medical director, created the hospital website, taught piano lessons and Sabbath school, and taught Psychology to the nursing students. The Honors program was a large influence on Matthew’s decision to spend a year abroad, he says. “Being a part of a faith community that serves through scholarship helped motivate me to do student missions, and the things I learned as part of the program were invaluable in my year abroad.”

For each of the travelers whose stories trace back to the table, the Honors experience and a desire to serve are inextricably linked. “An important part of the Honors experience is service and fostering a love for others. While it may seem indirect, the role of a scholar is to supply society with new insights into the world, which have profound potential to shape and aid culture,” says Matthew.

The English poet William Blake once penned the lines, “And we are put on earth a little space, That we may learn to bear the beams of love.” The Honors table provides such a little space for many students as they begin their journeys of service, bearing the beams of love to whatever corner of the world they happen to visit.