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THE GLOBAL IMPACT EXCHANGE

A Quarterly Publication of Diversity Abroad

WINTER 2023 EDITION

GETTING CAREER-READY: GLOBAL EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

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PUBLICATION **INFORMATION**

The Global Impact Exchange

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The Global Impact Exchange publication serves to advance domestic and international conversations around diversity, inclusion, and equity in global education with respect to the thematic focus identified in each edition.

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Winter 2023 Edition:

Getting Career-Ready: Global Education and the Workforce

Published February 2023

Research points to global education and other thoughtfully designed global experiences as high-impact practices correlated with positive outcomes for diverse student populations in higher education. How can educators and administrators more intentionally connect these high-impact practices with career planning and trajectory? How can we highlight the assets global education alumni bring to shaping a globally diverse and inclusive workforce, in all sectors and fields? What additional research/scholarship can be developed to inform university practices, as well as professional recruitment, hiring, and development opportunities that support diverse work environments?

INTRODUCTION

By **JINOUS KASRAVI, PH.D.**
Director of Membership & Community, Diversity Abroad

Employers define specific qualifications and skills in their job descriptions, and for new college graduates there is focus to exemplify experience in these areas. As professionals working with students who will soon graduate, we try to provide an opportunity for them to attain some of these skills through their formal curriculum as well as other opportunities offered during their higher education studies. As international educators, we promote global experiences as being a high impact practice which leads to positive outcomes on the personal, academic, and professional level for students.

Yet, how can we help our students who have participated in some form of global education experience to critically reflect on the benefits that they gained and the positive outcomes which can be relayed in their job applications and interviews? What are some of the transferable skills to their future career which are not often at the forefront when discussing international experiences? We need to help them effectively articulate to their future employers and move beyond the image that our diverse and underrepresented students had the opportunity to "travel overseas." Our efforts should also include international students in this conversation. While online learning and the pandemic were difficult for all students, this population in particular were not able to participate and engage in in-person conversations and activities which are essential in their navigation of a new language, culture, and curriculum.

The transformative experience of an overseas program greatly shapes our students personally and professionally and can additionally benefit their employer, colleagues, and their future work environment. One of NACE's Career Readiness Core Competencies has now been updated to Equity & Inclusion, and more employers are adding some form of this specifically into their desirable job qualifications. The assets that our global education alumni contribute to building diverse work environments are at the forefront now more than ever.

The following articles in the Winter 2023 edition of the Global Impact Exchange highlight some programs, strategies, and tips for helping our global education alumni in their career planning. This edition also includes several opinion pieces which provide insightful questions and issues that we as international educators should consider in the work that we do.

As you read the articles, if you are inspired to share how you or your office or organization is collaborating together to advance equity and inclusion in global education, I invite you to reach out and share a best practice with us. We would love to hear from you. Please share your reflections and ideas with us at members@diversityabroad.org. We also invite Diversity Abroad members to join the conversation on our online community forums.

U.S. Department of State

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is proud to offer these grant and scholarship opportunities for U.S. students and higher education institutions:

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program

- Provides up to $5,000 for outstanding U.S undergraduate students of limited financial means (Pell Grant recipients) to study or intern abroad on credit-bearing programs
- The spring 2023 closes March 7, 2023

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- Opportunities for graduate students, scholars, artists, higher education administrators, and professionals of all backgrounds to study, teach, and/or research overseas, and for foreign citizens to do the same in the United States
- Applications for the 2024-2025 Fulbright U.S. Student Program will open March 31, 2023 and close October 10, 2023

Gilman-McCain Scholarship

- Provides $5,000 for child and spousal dependents of active or activated United States military personnel receiving any form of need-based Title IV financial aid to study or intern abroad on credit-bearing programs
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CRITICAL LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Decolonizing Education for Professional Success: Building Cultural Agility Through DEI-Informed Global Learning

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The current debate about the value of a college degree for the future professional success of graduates has prompted an accelerated focus on the connection between a liberal arts education and career success. In addition to majoring in a particular subject area, students are expected to demonstrate their critical thinking, analytical skills, and global fluency also through more market-readable skills and competences (Gray, 2022).

As colleges put increasing emphasis on their students' career education, the terms "agile" and "agility" have become key to many curricular innovation discussions. Commonly defined as the ability to either bring about change or react to a changing environment in a nimble and flexible way (Ruz, 2021), agility is considered desirable for two reasons: First, students will need to develop and maintain an agile attitude toward their future career paths in a rapidly changing professional environment where uncertainty and frequent disruptions are the norm rather than the exception. Second, agility is also an important competence across a wide range of industry sectors that value "enhanced self-efficacy, confidence, and creativity" (Mourey, n.d.).

At first glance, the principles connected with agility appear to be well aligned with the goals of creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplaces. For instance, the agile manifesto, a document referenced by the software developing industry, lists as its first priority to "value individuals and interactions over processes and tools" (Beck et al., n.d.). However, recent research shows that the common approaches for developing agile mindsets and work habits frequently lack a focused and intentional awareness of racism, sexism, and ableism in organizations (Ruz). As the research indicates, the generally positive goal of agile approaches, namely to quickly amplify good results by casting aside traditional processes and circumvent real or perceived roadblocks inside an organization, often has the unintended side effect that one particular group's definition of success wins out over a more universal (and inclusive) version of success (Ruz).

Liberal arts learning is uniquely positioned to fill that gap. At Agnes Scott College, faculty and staff collaborate across curricular and co-curricular areas to align agile approaches and DEI concepts under the umbrella of "cultural agility." Defined by Paula Caligiuri as a "meta-competence," the concept of cultural agility connects the more common elements of agility such as resilience, adaptability, and curiosity with competencies that are at the heart of DEI approaches: humility, relationship building, cultural integration (Caligiuri 18-19). An emphasis on *cultural* agility is especially important

to engage with diverse students and tap their rich potential to be collaborators in the creation of equitable and inclusive learning spaces as an on-ramp to redesigned professional environments. With more than 60% of Agnes Scott's students identifying as students of color, 40% categorized as Pell Grant-eligible, and 32% as first-generation students, the college's student demographics anticipate the professional environments current and future generations want to be able to navigate. In response to these developments, the faculty created a unique general education curriculum along with co-curricular elements that enable all students to develop the relevant cultural agility competencies. As part of the college's SUMMIT Global Learning and Inclusive Leadership experience, all students participate in a series of required general education courses where they develop and also learn to apply cultural agility competencies in an interdisciplinary liberal arts context. Additionally, a group of professional advisors and career coaches reinforces these concepts in two distinct academic and career discovery labs during a student's first year.

The SUMMIT Global Learning experience begins early in a student's academic career with a first-year course called "Global Journeys." This spring semester course taught from faculty across numerous disciplines features a week-long sojourn to one of many different locations both in and outside of the United States. During class meetings before and after the travel week, students across all sections of Journeys explore and analyze themes of globalization, imperialism/colonialism, the ethics of travel, and identity (self/culture/other) through a set of common readings. When on-site, faculty guide students through immersive community-engaged activities and experiential learning opportunities designed to give students real-world insight into diverse perspectives of complex problems. For instance, on the Global Journeys program to Belize, students are guided by local experts while snorkeling along coral reefs, exploring coral nurseries, and visiting marine tourism and wildlife education centers. During this exploration, students are exposed to both environmental and economic concerns in conversations with local students, fishermen, and environmentalists who represent diverse perspectives. Throughout the program, students are given time to reflect on the complicated and delicate connections between this society and its natural resources. Journeys is a framework for students to dig deep, and the experience lays the groundwork for the student to develop the core characteristics of a culturally agile individual who is at once curious, humble, resilient, and adept at navigating cultural differences.

The value of sending diverse student cohorts to unfamiliar places under the framework of the Journeys curriculum becomes apparent as students begin to develop curiosity about other places, cultures, and themselves. During the intensive week of travel, students will engage with host communities for conversations about history, politics, economics, environment, medicine, art, race, religion, culture, and more. Journeys provides the space and time for students to ask questions and understand different perspectives in the context of consequential global matters. As students are asked to reflect on their own values, ethics, and assumptions, there is also a unique opportunity for each traveler to arrive at a point of cultural humility. That is, an opportunity to realize the limits of one's own knowledge and to learn the power of asking good questions to understand local context. The Journeys experience is designed to demonstrate that when we are willing to learn from those with a different cultural lens, we'll see problems and solutions in a new way. In developing curiosity and humility, students become more creative problem solvers and more nimble at building relationships, skills that will serve them well throughout their academic careers and beyond into professional landscapes.

A student's collective collegiate experiences build upon each other to develop and strengthen specific skill sets. In the sophomore year as students transition into a more nuanced focus in an academic discipline, it is critical to balance the academic experience with a co-curricular experience that prepares students to integrate their developing cultural agility skill sets alongside their academic growth. Of particular note are opportunities to further develop agility in relationship building/networking, self-leadership, and adaptability.

With the intentional deeper exploration of leadership development and practices being emphasized in the sophomore year via the Sophomore Class Atlanta Leadership Experience (SCALE) program, students have the opportunity to utilize the context of their global exploration and education (introduced in their first year via Global Journeys) to a global-local context. During SCALE students engage with organizations from a diverse array of industry locales and types including local, regional, state, national, and international organizations. The SCALE program provides a complementary leadership co-curricular experience akin to a laboratory course whereby students engage in the exploration of real-world leadership issues and challenges. Students enroll in a one-credit-hour course offered during the spring of their sophomore year via an interdisciplinary course model taught by an array of faculty from a variety of disciplines. Students participate in on-site leadership experiences in teams. During their onsite experience, they engage with and interview organization members and leaders about their respective leadership philosophies and experiences. This immersive experience allows students to leverage and practice elements of leadership and cultural agility as their learning is scaffolded via the college's signature SUMMIT curriculum.

Students are introduced to the importance and impact of relationship building and networking in advance of their junior and senior years when they may opt to seek internships in their focused academic disciplines. This introductory opportunity to explore a leadership-based industry experience allows students to engage more richly and deeply in future skills-based experiences. Students develop transferable skills such as leadership self-efficacy that equip them to be agile in the navigation of a variety of organization types as they engage with a wide array of individuals who employ varied leadership styles.

In addition to developing their abilities to engage in relationship building and networking, students are also provided with an opportunity to further develop self-leadership. Through their engagement with industry leaders, students begin to foster self-leadership skills such as autonomy and curiosity. Through the evolution of their SCALE experience, students develop an appreciation for a variety of organization types that they may not have previously considered. An excellent example of this agility is realized when a student with a major in the humanities, for example, lauds their experience of working with a financial management firm. In the aforementioned example, this student has the ability to make connections between transferable leadership skills that are prevalent regardless of organizational make-up and industry.

Conclusion

The creative integration of cultural agility competencies and skills into a liberal arts general education curriculum delivered by an interdisciplinary faculty also offers a solution to the protracted but ultimately unproductive debate as to whether a focus on skills undermines liberal arts learning. The experiential learning formats around inclusive leadership and global learning enable our students to see the liberal arts "in action." Being confronted with real-world problems in a scaffolded learning environment inspires the very interdisciplinary thinking, that combination of knowing and doing, that has been at the heart of liberal curricula from their inception. Similarly, the cultural agility framework provides faculty with the opportunity to highlight their respective areas of expertise as well as their interdisciplinary perspectives outside of the proverbial (and actual) classroom walls.

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Career Readiness Through Intentional Reflection of Cultural Intelligence

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Abstract:

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) describes Career Readiness Core Competencies that higher education students need to be successful in the workplace. Previously titled Cultural Competence, one of the eight competencies was recently renamed to Equity and Inclusion. Research shows increased cultural intelligence leads to better career and team performance. Partnering with the Cultural Intelligence Center (CQC), Dr. Maggie Mahoney and the CQC created a tool for students and those in career transitions to identify and understand both their cultural intelligence and unconscious bias and apply this knowledge to improve their careers. The CQ Credential: An Equity and Inclusion Masterclass Reflection Journal guides participants through the discovery of their own cultural intelligence including their CQ Drive, CQ Knowledge, CQ Strategy, and CQ Action. Participants learn how to apply these capabilities to the workplace in ways that facilitate a successful career using equity and inclusion principles and their own cultural intelligence. They also practice transferring these newly acquired skills to important organizational issues such as unconscious bias and imposter syndrome. Overall, the Masterclass guides participants step by step to inclusive career success seen by NACE and other research as essential for success in the global workforce.

Career readiness is key to holistic student success because it is the "foundation upon which a successful career is launched" and thrives (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2022). NACE describes eight Career Readiness Core Competencies higher education students need to succeed as they transition into the workplace. One of the competencies, previously titled Cultural Competence, is Equity and Inclusion. NACE argues that working in a dynamic, global workforce requires students and professionals to grasp and demonstrate cultural intelligence in their collaborations and interactions with colleagues, clients, and suppliers.

NACE illustrates these career readiness competencies with sample behaviors that help explain their goals. The Equity and Inclusion competency is exemplified by demonstrating "the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures" and to "engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism" (Gray, 2021). This explanation highlights the importance of global learning as well as equity and inclusion and requires coordination across higher education institution departments.

High-impact practices like education abroad and internships are common in higher education, and research shows that these practices are more effective when they include reflection (Kuh, et al., 2013). To ensure these effects, Kuh and colleagues (2013) make a case for the value of "self-reflection as a necessary component in career readiness." This connection between cultural competence with equity and inclusion, combined with self-reflection, should bolster career readiness. In professional settings cultural competence may be nebulous or challenging to define; however, the SHRM Foundation (2015), an affiliate of the Society for Human Resource Management, notes these skills can be both clearly defined and developed using tools like the Cultural Intelligence model.

The Cultural Intelligence Center is a research-based training and consulting firm that helps organizations and individuals around the world assess and improve Cultural Intelligence (CQ®). Cultural Intelligence, or CQ, is a globally recognized way of assessing and improving effectiveness in culturally diverse situations and is rooted in decades of research showing CQ predicts a wide range of intercultural outcomes such as cultural adaptation, job performance, global leadership, and team processes (Van Dyne, et al., 2012). CQ strengthens the relationship between diversity and effectiveness by helping individuals understand and apply the four CQ capabilities: CQ Drive, CQ Knowledge, CQ Strategy, and CQ Action, thus allowing them to detect, assimilate, reason, and act on cultural cues appropriately (Van Dyne et al., 2012).

Furthermore, CQ can be enhanced and developed by "active engagement in education, travel, international assignments, and other intercultural experiences" (Van Dyne et al., 2012, p. 297). This research notes international travel is not the only way to develop this competency, and intentional engagement with intercultural persons and environments can be developmental. In addition, CQ facilitates equitable and inclusive behaviors such as those outlined by NACE. Without cultural intelligence diverse teams tend not to work as effectively as homogenous teams (Livermore, 2016). In contrast, when CQ levels are high, diverse team members are more likely to trust each other, share ideas, and come up with more innovative solutions than homogenous teams (SHRM Foundation, 2015). Students entering the global workforce need to have a deep understanding of their own cultural intelligence and bias as key components of their career readiness.

A tool to support intentional reflection for career readiness is the Equity and Inclusion Masterclass Reflection Journal. This tool guides students through a step-by-step reflection process that gives them insights for how to explain their capabilities to employers as well as how to apply their CQ skills on the job to support equity and inclusion. Drawing on cultural intelligence and student development research, and focusing on the core competencies of culture, equity, and inclusion, the tool emphasizes intentional reflective journaling. Using results from completing the CQ assessment, MyCQ e-Learning, and MyUB e-Learning focused on unconscious bias, participants use the guided journal to reflect on ways to apply their knowledge and capabilities during job search and early career stages, with the overall objective to apply CQ capabilities to support equity and inclusion in the workplace. This reflection journal provides students near to graduation as well as transitioning career professionals the opportunity to intentionally review their levels of CQ, their career preparation, and a holistic understanding of how that fits into an inclusive workplace and career.

The intersectional demands of global and local career readiness require collaborative solutions across campus departments and stakeholders. These engagement opportunities and spaces for reflection can be sponsored jointly by education abroad, DEI offices, international student offices, career services, and academic advising, to name a few.

Further engaging our woven focus of equity and inclusion creates a dynamic tapestry of developed competencies that "can be used in career services and across campus to boost students' development and help them make a successful transition to the workforce" (Gray, 2021).

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Candid Testimonies: Historically Marginalized Alumni Promote Study Abroad and Global Careers

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TRACY RIDLEY	The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Contemporary European Studies and German Major

At UNC-CH's Center for European Studies (CES), we focus on global-career development both at the graduate and undergraduate levels. We actively confront barriers to student awareness and success. Our focus on issues of equity, as it relates to internship and job seekers, reveals that some students remain ill at ease. Our historically marginalized student populations feel excluded from professional opportunities; students from rural areas are dissuaded from pursuing international opportunities by their home-town teachers and family members who fear students may come to harm in larger U.S. cities and overseas. These students often lack professional networks and the financial means to intern for free or move to a new place without a job in hand. In addition, our students and alumni of color talk to us about the effects of missing representation abroad and in their careers. It is vital to listen to and share these alumni accounts.

A new avenue of communication through which students access candid accounts of overseas study and global careers involves our Europe: Consider It All! conference. Launched last year, this annual event makes a space for students and graduates to discuss under-examined aspects of European Studies. Last year, as three graduates shared their stories of study abroad and international career paths, they explicitly discussed their identities as those who are frequently under-represented in both. One woman of color discussed the shrinking presence of minorities in her work as a scholar and top-level international education administrator. Another graduate talked about his path to employment as a first-generation, rural student from a low-income background. Finally, a third individual spoke about her experience as a woman from a mixed-race family in the United States and Germany. These talks were the most memorable and favorably reviewed parts of our conference. The candid alumni remarks inspired students who may face and overcome some of the same challenges referenced. Conference organizers obtained permission from all participants to record and maintain the talks on the conference website. Thus, a lasting record remains for other students to digest.

One of our undergraduate conference organizers, Tracy Ridley, networked with one of the graduate participants and now pursues his international plans with greater insight and confidence. He explains,

> *Not only did I have the pleasure of co-organizing the Consider It All! event but I was also able to present my own research and engage with the other conference participants. As a senior*

> *in college, who has been planning the next stages of my life with little idea of what exact path I want to pursue, my interaction with one conference participant in particular has been very illuminating.*
>
> *This conference participant and I have several similar interests and backgrounds, for example both of us have an interest in Black European Studies, and we are both individuals from mixed-race families who grew up in the US with German mothers. After completing her Bachelor's and Master's degrees, she is now living and working in Berlin, a dream that I hope to realize soon. Her work focuses on facilitating educational and employment opportunities for individuals in Germany with a forced-migration background. Through our interactions, she shared some of her experiences, recommendations, and thoughts about the transition of moving to and working in Europe. Having met her and learned about her path, both the ups and the downs, it gives me a more realistic and hopeful idea of what my future will look like.*

At CES, we have spent more than two decades building a network of dedicated program alumni. Through these external connections, we link our graduates in global professions to our students. Our alumni provide a rich resource. As they relate their stories and offer guidance, students feel reassured that success is possible, they learn about the wealth of opportunities available, and their minds are opened to a diverse array of options ahead. Our alumni-driven programming is designed to reduce student anxiety, increase awareness of professional paths, and offer multiple strategies to help secure global employment.

Effective Tools and Practices:

- ◊ Maintain alumni contacts and actively engage with this population of former students through surveys, events, and informal discussions.
- ◊ Foster an environment in which graduates and students feel they are heard.
- ◊ Demonstrate that alumni feedback has an impact on the program's offerings and student career paths.
- ◊ Make sure students have formal and informal opportunities to communicate with historically marginalized graduates who serve as examples and provide guidance.
- ◊ Put students and graduates in charge of event organization. Avoid overburdening staff members.
- ◊ Maintain event websites to house alumni testimonies.

Building Career Readiness for International Students Through Demystifying Small Talk

YIFAN (BRIAN) LI | New York University Shanghai, Academic Advisor

Abstract:

Creating equitable access to career and professional development opportunities for international students has always been an important part of international education. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, many institutions were forced to transition online, depriving many students of precious opportunities to engage with in-person initiatives. While many other essential skills for building career readiness, such as resume editing and mock interviewing, can potentially be delivered online, the fact that small talks are often spontaneous and cannot be pre-scheduled makes it hard for online students to engage in such experiences. On top of that, as many international students return to their institutions after starting online, the cultural differences further impact how international students understand and utilize small talks in professional settings. Cultural backgrounds, social capital, and language confidence are all important factors in building more equitable and inclusive access to career development for international students. This article will discuss the importance of small talk, factors impacting the perception of small talk, and call for more inclusive support in international students' career readiness as they navigate their journey in another country and culture.

International students are an integral part of the U.S. higher education system. While international student enrollment had been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, it has rebounded as the world enters the post-pandemic era and institutions move back to in-person instruction (Martel & Baer, 2022). The number of enrolled international students at U.S. colleges and universities has increased by 9% as of Fall 2022, making 2022 the second year with increased enrollment after two years of decline in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 (Martel & Baer, 2022). While in Fall 2020, only 47% of international students were pursuing in-person study, this number had gone up to 90% in Fall 2021, and 94% in Fall 2022 (Martel & Baer, 2022). As many universities just resumed in-person instruction in 2021 or 2022, many students either spent the last years of high school online and just started college in person, or took a few semesters of online college courses and just "returned" to their college for the first time.

Career planning makes up an increasingly significant portion of international student needs (Lee, Kim, & Su, 2021). There has been an increase of more than 6% in the population of international students utilizing Optional Practical Training (OPT), which enables international students on F-1 visa to pursue temporary employment opportunities during/after their academic studies (Martel & Baer, 2022; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2022). Building equitable career readiness for international students requires higher education practitioners to think critically and holistically about international student experiences, especially when many international students have just transitioned from online to being immersed in a different culture. Many initiatives on

career readiness including advising appointments, resume and cover letter workshops, and platforms for job posting and searching have been successfully delivered online (Ezarik, 2021). However, the small talks taking place in career contexts is an important experience for international students that should not be neglected. Small talk is referred to as the exchanges carrying important functions of constructing social interactions, and may easily take place as one shares the space with others (Coupland, 2003). It prevails social settings, such as waiting in line together, sharing the elevator, or talking with strangers at social events. It is also heavily applicable in international students' career settings. For example, it could be the chat with the receptionist as they wait to be guided to their interview room, or if they wish to break the ice with someone they do not know at a networking event.

We must recognize the unique challenges international students confront around small talks. Small talk may not be a familiar concept for many international students for many reasons such as how different cultures perceive and facilitate small talks differently (Molinsky & Hahn, 2015). Many domestic students grew up immersed in the U.S. culture and are already familiar with small talk, yet this familiarity is indeed a form of social and cultural capital that is not shared uniformly across the international student population. For example, certain cultures discourage small talks or have different definitions of what constitutes appropriate topics for small talk in the United States (Molinsky & Hahn, 2015). While there are no superior or inferior definitions of small talk, the unequal distribution of such social capital may lead to a mystified representation of small talk for international students who are not familiar with the context, length, or subject of a typical U.S. small talk. Further, because small talks usually entail social interactions that are spontaneous and happen in everyday settings naturally, they may not be easily replicated in online initiatives that have been delivered. The following strategies may construct a more equitable approach towards demystifying small talks for international students and increasing their career readiness in the post-pandemic world of higher education:

1. Create safe spaces for international students to navigate, practice, and connect

A "safe space" is defined as a space where students can feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts and thinking and feel secure in exploring knowledge and taking risks (Sweeney, 2021). Small Talk sessions can be set up for international students as a safe space for them to navigate, practice, and connect. In these events students may navigate small talks together with other international students who may also not be as familiar with this concept under guidance from facilitators. While practicing together with domestic students who already possess high levels of familiarity may lead to pressure for international students, this safe space with exclusively international students enables them to practice with their peers who share this learning experience. Additionally, these events may invite upper-class international students or international alumni to share their experiences and connect with students.

2. Cultural competency training for staff/administrators

Professional staff contributes uniquely to the success of students, and interactions with staff members may increase students' social integration and career progression (Roberts, 2018; Chambers & Paul, 2008). Therefore, it is crucial for administrators to continuously build their cultural competency. Interactions with international students should be guided by the awareness that all students come from different social and cultural backgrounds. As practitioners, we should first acknowledge and understand how small

talks could be an unfamiliar concept for many students, and then take active steps to not only share relevant information and knowledge, but also deliver the content in a way that takes into account the diverse cultural identities (Kruse, Rakha, & Calderone, 2017). For example, there may be significant cultural differences between how small talks are perceived, what content is considered appropriate, and the context small talks are embedded in. Trainings may focus on increasing cultural competency for staff and administrators through active listening, staying respectful of students' identities and cultural backgrounds, recognizing the differences and avoiding any assumptions, and also inviting participating international students to share their experiences if comfortable. While "international students" is usually used as an umbrella term, we should recognize the individual student experiences and not make generalized assumptions.

3. Incorporate strength-based theories to replace deficit-based theories

Acculturation stress has been steadily studied as an important part of international student experience (Yakunina et al., 2013). It should be noted that initiatives to support international students should not come from deficit-based theory, which assumes that they "lack" the language skills and need support to "make up" for their deficits, and we should not phrase small talk as an additional deficit they need to "overcome" (Dovchin, 2020). In addition to providing relevant and appropriate language support for some students, we should also be intentional with providing students with reassurance of their language skills to fight the deficit-based linguistic racism against international English as a Second Language students based on ethnic accents and linguistic stereotypes (Dovchin, 2020). Rather, strength-based theory invites students to recognize and rely on their multicultural strengths, and may thus promote adjustment and reduce acculturation stress (Yakunina et al., 2013). In addition, mobilizing international students' cultural capital may allow students to combat culture shock (Bai & Wang, 2022). Sessions can be planned as opportunities for students to not only learn about the U.S. small talk culture, but also learn about how small talks are perceived and delivered in other cultures, as well as share their own thoughts and experiences.

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Together We Fly Higher—Advancing Equity in Global Education and the Workforce: A Case for Academy and Industry Partnerships

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Abstract: Global engagement among Black students remains low across American college campuses. The disparity is troubling because Black students may be excluded from gaining the necessary skills and experiences needed for post-graduation success. Colleges and universities must commit to approaches that center equity and innovation. Grounded in a whole systems approach and sense of belonging literature, the article offers a promising practice for engaging Black students in global education at home and abroad and supporting global education leaders who support those students. The article offers insight into a multi-institutional project with Delta Air Lines that connects academy, industry, and career development.

Introduction and Framework

Ample research exists detailing the transformative effects of study abroad on college student development (Bell, Bhatt, Rubin, & Shiflet, 2021; Lee & Green, 2016). However, for Black students, low participation persists. These statistics are troubling because 1) Black students are excluded from the academic and social benefits of this experience and 2) the lack of global experience could limit employability. AAC&U's 2021 workforce report revealed that 44% of employers indicated their ratings of college graduates with global learning experiences are typically higher (Finley, 2021). The authors of this article are members of a grant team that partnered with Delta Air Lines (Delta) to start a multi-institutional initiative aiming to increase Black students' study abroad engagement. The article will discuss Phase I of the project by detailing the evolution of the partnership, program model for students and professionals, and community impact of industry and academia partnerships.

The project is grounded in a whole systems approach and sense of belonging literature. Buck, Baylis, and Dougall (2018) define a whole systems approach as "responding to complexity through a dynamic way of working, bringing stakeholders, including communities, together to develop a shared understanding of the challenge and integrate action to bring about sustainable, long-term systems change" (p. 17). The issue of universities and colleges failing to engage Black students in study abroad is complex, which led the authors to create an initiative that considered stakeholders

and systems present in study abroad. In taking a comprehensive approach, the team relied heavily on sense of belonging literature to foster a welcoming and judgment-free programming environment. Toward this goal we focused on centering participant voices in the forming of learning spaces (Dirshe, 2019) and providing own-race representation (Egalite, Kisida, & Winters, 2015). Additionally, the team incorporated conversations focused on career readiness to better facilitate the ability of students to connect their global experience to their prospective fields.

Evolution of the Partnership

The authors have experienced racism or witnessed students experience racism during education abroad programs and longed for training to help maneuver identity-based biases in global education. This lack of training can lead to negative global experiences for everyone involved. Study abroad statistics support these unfortunate outcomes. Only 4.1% of Black students study abroad, compared to 68.3% of white students (Institute of International Education, 2022). The disparity is grossly unbalanced considering that among students enrolled in college, aged 18-24, 41% are white and 36% are Black (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). These percentages speak to the lack of resources needed to provide Black students with global experiences (Lee & Green, 2016; Tensley, 2015) and highlight the gaps in creating a sense of belonging for Black students in these global spaces (Blake, Gasman, Esmieu, Castro Samayoa, & Cener, 2020).

The Atlanta Global Research and Education Collaborative (AGREC), dedicated to strengthening a network of scholars in Atlanta to support global initiatives, manages a grant competition that allowed the team to productively address concerns and discourse about approaching these issues holistically. AGREC requires that grant recipients represent at least two different universities and collaborate with a community partner.

Delta was our partner of choice because of the alignment in priorities (see Figure 1). Delta has a proven record of supporting education and student development as evidenced by its various community engagement efforts. Additionally, Delta has an equity-focused DEI strategy that looks to create talent pipelines for historically underserved groups. This partnership allowed the authors to leverage skills in education programming and mentoring, and Delta's breadth of DEI knowledge to effectively support the priorities of this initiative.

Priority 1

Establish culturally relevant global engagement programming for Black students.

Priority 2

Create and nurture a community of equity-minded global education leaders.

Priority 3

Guide students and professionals in making strong connections between study abroad experiences and careers.

Priority 4

Collaborate with community partners to build infrastructure to sustain programming and community.

Promising Practice

For Phase I of the project, the team developed a discussion series with key groups entitled "Woke Wednesday." This was selected because the term 'woke' is defined as the awareness of and actively attentive to important societal facts and issues, especially discrimination and racism; and events were held on Wednesdays.

◊ Woke Wednesday Welcome Event

The virtual welcome event sought to share program plans with stakeholders, obtain buy-in, and identify programmatic blind spots. The welcome event was intentionally distanced from the student and culminating events to allow sufficient time to incorporate stakeholder feedback into the program. The grant team invited representatives from several universities and organizations (e.g., HBCUs in the metro Atlanta area, University System of Georgia African American Male Initiative staff, and Atlanta-based study abroad directors and advisors).

◊ Woke Wednesday Student Series

The 90-minute student sessions focused on four topics and were presented as two virtual workshops using a discussion format (two topics per workshop). The workshops featured a global education leader, and the discussion was moderated by a member of the grant team. Each session was held in the morning and afternoon to accommodate student schedules. Insights gained helped shape the culminating symposium.

- **Workshop One**
  - » **Topic 1 - How to Secure the Bag:** Connecting global education to career success
  - » **Topic 2 - Navigating your Racial Identity Abroad:** Navigating global education while Black

◊ Workshop Two

- » **Topic 1 - How It Started, How It's Going:** Leveraging global education to advance academic and professional success
- » **Topic 2 - Financing Your Global Education Experience:** Available funding for global education

◊ Culminating Symposium

We convened a professional development symposium for global leaders at the Delta Flight Museum focused on (1) helping students navigate intersectional Black identities abroad, (2) creating inclusive study abroad environments for Black students at home and globally, and (3) transitioning education abroad experiences to post-graduate opportunities. The day included three morning panels: 1) Global Careers, 2) Supporting Students of Color Abroad, and 3) What We Wish You Knew: Student Panel. The afternoon sessions started with a keynote address focused on study abroad as a tool for leadership development. The day concluded with "Table Talks," which the grant team organized into four 20-minute interactive speed-share discussions (Table 1 - Global Education and National Awards, Table 2 - Supporting Students of Color Abroad, Table 3 - Global Careers, and Table 4 - What We Wish You Knew). The speed-share discussions allowed attendees to engage more deeply with topics covered in the morning sessions.

Discussion

Our work is significant since it builds upon recent scholarship on engaging underrepresented students in education abroad programs and elevates the discussion by centering Black student and professional voices to enact change. The project also serves as a promising practice to address career readiness, offers a possible model for collaborating with industry partners, and provides insight into equity and high-impact practices.

For years schools have introduced high-impact practices in learning spaces, ostensibly to prepare students for post-graduation success. However, it is not enough for students to participate in research, internships, or study abroad. Practitioners must intentionally and explicitly help make those connections with their students. This is particularly the case with Black students because universities and colleges have failed them for hundreds of years. To reverse the damage caused by systemic oppression in universities and colleges, we must approach the issue of participation in high-impact practices and connecting those experiences to careers holistically and innovatively. Our students cannot afford for practitioners to limit their access to resources available at their respective institutions. Practitioners must search beyond the campus walls, think strategically, and move intentionally to identify partners that have the capacity, interest, and audacity to help make a change.

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No Way Forward Without Us: Doctoral Student Reflections on the Future of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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We believe the Winter 2023 Global Impact Exchange (GIE) theme "Getting Career-Ready: Global Education and the Workforce" creates space for a timely discussion on both historical and contemporary topics related to higher education. From a historical perspective, critical scholars acknowledge White supremacy's influence within higher education as largely uncontested (Patton, 2016); however, current racial injustices have led many organizations, particularly within international education, to consider the role their institutions play in upholding oppressive systems of the past. To that end, we argue in this article that more action-oriented racial justice strategies are needed to ensure the core tenets of diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice are achieved for students' career readiness as well as at the professional level and hiring practices. Such efforts can only be sustained through transparent acknowledgement about how racism is cultivated and reproduced. To accelerate movement towards democratizing access to international educational experiences, the field of international education needs future leaders who can address critical issues, create new knowledge, and implement innovative and inclusive approaches to learning.

It is beyond the scope of this article to fully unpack these needs. Nevertheless, in the spirit of recognizing the unique voice of people of color (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002), this article introduces our reflections of the field as three Black PhD students who aspire to assume senior-level faculty and administrator roles in international education and beyond. Ashley is a Black woman and PhD candidate in organizational leadership, policy, and development. Stemming from her decade-long career in international education, her research examines issues of multicultural and intercultural solidarity. Neal identifies as a Black queer man who is a third-year PhD candidate studying higher education and student affairs. His previous background in education abroad advising has sparked his interest in studying the role of education abroad advisers as a barrier to participation in education abroad programs by students of color. Charis identifies as a Black woman who is a third-year PhD student majoring in business with a specialization in hospitality and tourism management. Her extensive experience working in education and tourism related fields has helped to shape her research agenda designed to advance theory and practice in both areas.

International Education has a diversity issue, a serious one. In the United States, there is an absence of representation across various identity intersections, such as gender, race, and sexual orientation. Since 2018, Diversity Abroad has published an annual survey of the field as it relates to diversity and inclusion. Self-reported

data from the 2020 survey indicates that 78% of U.S. international educators are female, 80% are heterosexual, 76% are temporarily able-bodied or do not have a disability or impairment, and 68% are White. The second largest racial group among international educators is Black. However, only Black and Hispanic international educators faced significant reductions between 2019 and 2020. In 2019, Hispanic/Latinx represented 8.3% of the field, which decreased to 7.8% in 2020. Black international educators underwent the greatest change in workforce representation, declining at nearly 32%, adding to the homogeneity of the international education field (Lopez-McGee, 2019, 2020). These changes occurred as organizations "doubled-down" on DEI rhetoric in the wake of the highly visible murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, and the astronomical increase of anti-Asian attacks. Although Black international educators make the second largest population of international educators, this data suggests their standing might be the most tenuous. As emergent researchers and accomplished practitioners, we recognize the dearth of literature which centers the role of race not only in international education, but also in the experiences of international education administrators in the United States and abroad. We advocate for increased exploration into the ways in which this work addresses and challenges the dominant ideology associated with power and privilege. Therefore, in addition to the discussions raised by Diversity Abroad, we ask of the field:

- What additional research/scholarship can be developed to inform university practices, as well as professional recruitment, hiring, and development opportunities that support diverse work environments?
- Are Black international educators exiting the field or are they being pushed out?
- What needs to be done to make Black professionals, in particular, feel safe in the field?
- What expansions are necessary to make international education truly inclusive?

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When Gray Area Is a Good Thing: Developing Global Readiness Through Ambiguity

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As global educators we have the tremendous opportunity to prepare young people for how they act—and interact—in the world. Intercultural experiences can help broaden students' perspectives so that they are better prepared to enter the workforce and collaborate in a globalized economy. But are we preparing students to deal with the cultural ambiguity that they will inevitably encounter?

We argue that global education should prepare students to navigate intercultural "gray areas"—the ambiguous moments where one must face discomfort, navigate conflict, express curiosity, or practice flexibility—with an understanding of DEI and a toolkit of global competence skills.

The principles of DEI (ideally) enable our institutions to create opportunities to address systems of power and privilege around the world. In practice, however, an institution's commitment to DEI may be limited to certain resources, geographies, or communities. Our peers at SPARK and the ISDC, for example, observe that programs serving refugee and displaced communities are tasked not only with delivering on imposed metrics, but also with significantly influencing participants' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors toward their "new" host societies. "Us-versus-them" approaches like this limit global education from leaning into intercultural ambiguity and nuance.

The following are four reflections on how navigating ambiguity develops global readiness, and why global educators should lean into it. These reflections emerged from our own practices as well as our partnerships with NGOs, higher education institutions, and organizations working toward global competence development.

1. Discomfort can be used as a tool.

When students are challenged to navigate uncomfortable or new situations—like studying abroad or working abroad—they may experience confusion, pain, or judgment about the culture or program. Unpacking these situations can further exacerbate discomfort and exhaustion, especially when there isn't one clear solution to the issue at hand. How can we encourage students to be reflective about their own interpretations, behaviors, and coping skills, and to pause during conflict or discomfort? When we help our learners view ambiguity and discomfort as an opportunity to practice different actions, consider multiple approaches, or examine power and privilege, we're not only setting them up for success on their program—we're setting them up with an essential skill for life.

2. Coalition building is not black and white.

Showing up strong in the world requires building networks and communities we can turn to when navigating life's gray areas. At the same time, we must break down silos and address inequitable barriers that we see in our communities. This is true not only for our students, but for ourselves

as educators. Are we working together across departments on our campuses and at our institutions? Are we empowering students to engage thoughtfully and build connections with their new community? We need to embrace differences in order to explore and develop our understanding of ourselves, inequalities, and different perspectives of DEI around the world. We know that emotional intelligence and global competence start with one's self-understanding, and that that practice is never fully complete.

3. Societies are rapidly changing.

Cultures, communities, and people that once existed worlds apart exist now just down the road from one another, or just a few clicks away on social media. The world's boundaries and borders (both literal and figurative) are changing, and we must prepare students to thrive in a world where they can cope with change and difference. To that end, global learning programs should be goals-based and include self-reflection, peer learning, active experimentation, guidance, and support along the way. Global competence development, such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, intercultural awareness, and teamwork, can equip students to navigate the world effectively and adaptively as societies evolve.

4. The world demands action.

Governments, corporations, and institutions around the world are calling on a new generation of people to solve the world's problems collaboratively—and we have the opportunity to urge and inspire our students to act. Through global competence development, we can integrate real concerns around political and social conflict, human rights, climate change, and the environment into our programs, without compromising the "fun stuff." Students need to be prepared to tackle challenges together with their global peers, despite language barriers or cultural differences that may arise. They should learn to approach problems, practice tolerance, navigate ambiguity, and consider multiple perspectives while suspending judgment. When we incorporate these practices into our programs, we equip our students to make a positive impact on their future careers and industries, engage with social causes, and contribute meaningfully to their communities—whether at home, abroad, or online.

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Developing T-Shaped Professionals Through Expanded International Experiences

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According to the Job Outlook 2022 survey, which is a "forecast of hiring intentions of employers as they relate to new college graduates" collected by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), we see that employers are looking for evidence of problem-solving, analytical, and written communication skills in new employees (NACE, 2022). Beyond providing information from the Job Outlook survey, NACE also provides eight career readiness competencies (NACE, 2021) that "provide a framework for addressing career-related goals and outcomes of curricular and extracurricular activities [and] offers employers a framework for developing talent through internship and other experiential education programs" (NACE, 2022). The NACE career readiness competencies are career & self-development, communication, critical thinking, equity & inclusion, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and technology. These NACE competencies and corresponding survey results are closely watched by higher education institutions and have become a guidepost for experiential activities as colleges and universities focus more on career readiness and workforce development.

While the main focus and connection to NACE skills and workforce development in higher education has long been realized through incubators and creative partnerships with businesses, the core development of these needed skills has been crafted through numerous classes, internships, and practicums. Despite this, an unaccounted-for hub, the international education department, has been honing these skills in students for years. In a study conducted by IIE (Farrugia & Sanger, 2017), it was shown "that study abroad has a positive effect on the development of many employment-related skills [and students] who intentionally sought to develop work-related skills through study abroad … reported more positive employment outcomes" (p. 19).

In 2020 NACE created additional competencies that "embrace diversity, equity and inclusion … and outcomes for diverse student populations" (NACE, 2022). Unfortunately, it is well documented (Martel et al., 2021) that underserved populations participate in international activities at far lower rates than well-served populations. Further, through the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how fragile some international programs can be due to uncontrollable factors. So, if we assume that international-based experiential experiences help develop the key skills as identified by NACE, how do we obtain higher participation from underserved students to take advantage of and capitalize on these experiences?

First, more attention should be placed within higher education on not just workforce development but on *how* to develop the needed skills in students in an accessible and equitable way. Higher education can easily adapt curriculums to focus more on "T-shaped" student development, rather than the current focus on I-shaped

development. Colleges and universities are very good at creating I-shaped professionals—those with deep discipline knowledge. But, to create T-shaped professionals, we need to add another dimension to our students' learning. A T-shaped professional is someone who possesses "deep disciplinary specialization and breadth across several areas that equip them to engage in deep problem-solving in their discipline, culture, and/or system … and communicate and collaborate using skills that cross many areas" (Bierema, 2019, p. 4). Students with these traits are the types of graduates that employers are looking to hire. So, beyond creating graduates with the deep discipline knowledge that higher education is already very good at, they need to also concentrate on teamwork, resilience, global thinking, and curiosity (the horizontal part of the "T"). The traits that make up the horizontal part of the "T" align well with the NACE career competencies. Some, such as communication, critical thinking, and teamwork, are a few that are naturally obtained through international experiences. As an international educator, I see the path to creating these types of graduates easily attainable through internationalization. Through internationalization our students can gain many of the personal benefits that international student mobility and an internationalized curriculum can provide, as well as professional.

Creating T-shaped graduates that can "take on real-world challenges, including any combination of economic challenges, personal issues, and political transitions" (Eady et al., 2021, p. 263) is now an essential driver of undergraduate education as workforce development becomes a major focus of higher education (Holzer, 2021) and a logical connection to developing the NACE competencies. Efforts to create a curriculum in higher education that focuses on T-shaped learning are emerging (Eady, 2021), but one could argue that studying abroad, international virtual exchange, and other international experiences already provide a venue within our curriculums to help create T-shaped professionals, and institutions of higher education should make this connection more visible.

Further, while much more work needs to be done to diversify study abroad participants, a recruitment base for more diverse students to participate in study abroad and other globalized experiences should focus on the fast-track attainment of skills living in the cross-section of the "T" such as flexibility, cultural adeptness, and problem solving, which mirror the NACE competency skills. With fewer than 300,000 students in the United States participating in study abroad each year (Martel et al., 2021), viewing the outcomes of other internationalized experiences through the lens of creating highly desirable T-shaped graduates through international experiences could generate interest in higher administration as well as underserved student groups.

Lee et al. (2021) present a study that shows that students who participated in international virtual exchange were twice as likely to study abroad than those who didn't participate. While this study was unable to show an effect across demographics, more research in this area should be pursued. While the purpose of the study was to show a direct connection between international virtual exchange and building capacity for study abroad, what if the lens focused solely on students participating in international virtual exchange and the development of T-shaped attributes and career outcomes? Applying the same logic to international virtual exchange as it applied to study abroad could propel the field of international education to consider enhanced internationalized experiences that allow for more participation from underserved populations to develop the same skills "at home" that can be developed abroad, thus opening up an accessible link to career competencies.

Finally, since the majority of higher education students are not engaging in international student mobility, then internationalization at home efforts that are directly tied to the NACE career competencies, such as international virtual exchange, could be a route that not only attracts underserved students due to accessibility and costs but also generates interest in global education careers. As indicated in the IIE study regarding study abroad's impact on careers, it was noted that study abroad participation opened up "unanticipated career pathways" (Farrugia & Sanger, 2017) for returning students. Since this study in 2017, much has changed in the world of international education, but if these same outcomes apply to international virtual exchange and other internationalization at-home ventures, then not only is international education contributing to the creation of T-shaped professionals, but also the diversification of career options. Students can have transformative experiences regarding global interest from any location, as long as the experience provides a personalized global connection and develops key skills.

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Global Educators Encouraging Participants to Find Their Unique Voice to Speak Their Absolute Truth

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Cultural exchange provides its participants with a glimpse into seeing the world in a different light. Perhaps even more importantly, however, it gives that person the ability to see themselves in a clearer light so that they enter their chosen career with their authentic voice defined and ready to be heard. A self-realized participant can not only enjoy these rich global diversities, but with active, empathetic guidance and intentional support from the global educators, they can add their own voice to the world's choir, exploring their unconscious bias, values, and truths, making the journey as deep within themselves as it is far.

As practitioners in the field, *best practices for getting a participant career ready to speak their truth can be boiled down into three foci. Being curious ourselves, passing the mic often, and locating the opportunities within your organization*:

1. Being Curious Ourselves

First, practitioners must go on our own journey of discovery and learn how our approach to the work affects others. As a white, female, cisgender person I continue to do my own work on my unconscious bias, understanding perspectives that differ from my own. Learn, study, and then learn and study more. There is a wealth of information we can absorb on diverse perspectives and it is imperative we do. From those in leadership positions to those in support divisions to those working directly with participants, everyone must practice humility to ensure they are properly representing what every participant needs for success. The practitioner must listen through nonverbal cues—eye gazes and body language—in order to gently draw out those participants unaccustomed to taking the space in a conversation. Be brave enough to not talk, but just listen.

2. Passing the Mic Often

As a global educator, when you actively listen to participants, you give them the courage to continue. Repeat what is heard, highlight its importance back to that participant and group. We as practitioners carry power through what we highlight. It is said that public speaking only gets easier with practice, so passing the microphone will allow that participant the practice to use their voice, to understand how to successfully cross-culturally communicate with the confidence to speak in a crowd, and to tell their story, influencing those around them toward more empathy. Design meetings throughout the global journey in which the participants share what they have learned and how they have grown. Create a safe space for sharing by starting off with something simple but meaningful. For example, suggest they bring an object from home and discuss how that object represents them. Maintain an open agenda that can go where participants' minds and passions flow.

As a waitress in Japan, I recall when my chef instructed me to make green tea every day with

slight variations. It helped to teach me patience, effort, and grit. We as practitioners can also prepare a young adult to enter into the workforce with these skills behind them. Micro-adjustments can be made in the telling of one's own story, choosing diction, recognizing the differences in communication styles across the cultures—more or less direct—and selecting non-verbal cues that will resonate with one's audience. Practitioners can coach participants on these important global workforce skills. Working within the au pair population for the last decade (au pair translates to "on par" from the French), the (perhaps reluctant) au pair must meet in the middle, knowing and understanding their own truth first and then having the confidence (and support) to share it.

3. Locating the Opportunities Within Your Institution

When participants are ready to tell their story to larger audiences in your institution, and your institution is ready to get messy, having discussions around diversity, find allies within leadership to give them the platforms.

- Allow the participant to write a blog post.
- Let them take over your social media accounts to share.
- Invite them to speak at your conferences.
- Create a podcast that highlights voices preparing for the workforce.

Passing that mic to those who are ready to speak and then moving out of the way becomes our role and will also aid in their career readiness.

In summary, preparing a cross-cultural exchange participant to be career ready in this global world starts from understanding how to communicate the core of who they are. From many reports soft skills such as interpersonal and cross-cultural communication skills, and team building when coming together on projects, will be what the workforce most needs now. Our world will only be made better when all can live and share authentic lives, when participants can identify their unique gifts and have the courage to share them.

Reflecting again on my own global adventure, I learned that in flower arranging in Japan, it is not the flowers themselves, but the positioning that matters—the space created between them. The unseen holds the beauty. The same is true for cross-cultural exchanges. It is the space between people where the magic happens on an exchange. When practitioners nurture these confident new voices to speak in a quickly evolving world, the world too will discover an unrevealed beauty.

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