Education and Social Justice Project
INTERNATIONAL SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS 2015

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE CENTER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE RESEARCH, TEACHING, AND SERVICE AT GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
About the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University, created within the Office of the President in 2006, is dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of religion, ethics, and public life. Through research, teaching, and service, the center explores global challenges of democracy and human rights; economic and social development; international diplomacy; and interreligious understanding. Two premises guide the center’s work: that a deep examination of faith and values is critical to address these challenges, and that the open engagement of religious and cultural traditions with one another can promote peace.

About the Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching, and Service

The Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching, and Service (CSJ), founded in 2001, seeks to advance justice and the common good through promoting and integrating community-based research, teaching, and service by collaborating with diverse partners and communities. CSJ works in three key areas: community and public service, curriculum and pedagogy, and research. Through such critical and engaged work, Georgetown builds on its tradition of academic excellence and contributes in singular ways to the Jesuit ideal of justice education and action “for the glory of God and the well-being of humankind.”
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Canada
Overview.........................................5
Report..............................................5
Interview Excerpts............................12
List of Interviews..............................13

Guatemala
Overview.........................................14
Report.............................................14
Interview Excerpts............................22
List of Interviews..............................23

South Korea
Overview..........................................24
Report.............................................24
Interview Excerpts............................32
List of Interviews..............................33

Senegal
Overview..........................................34
Report.............................................34
Interview Excerpts............................44
List of Interviews..............................45
This report reflects on the sixth year of the Education and Social Justice Project, which provided four Georgetown University students with fellowships to travel to South Korea, Guatemala, Senegal, and Canada to conduct in-depth examinations of innovative educational initiatives, with a focus on the work of Jesuit institutions.

We are learning more every day about the deep connections between global challenges of poverty and education. Only through better access to education will the world’s poor be able to seize opportunities in an increasingly global economy. While policy analysts have documented the widespread failure of governments to meet this imperative, we still know relatively little about successful local efforts led by religious communities to advance economic and social development through education.

In order to engage Georgetown undergraduates and build knowledge in this critical area, two Georgetown University centers—the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs and the Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching, and Service—created the Education and Social Justice Project in early 2010.

During its sixth year, the project awarded fellowships to four students who spent three weeks with institutions engaged in efforts to promote social justice through education.

Caitlin Snell worked in Espanola, Ontario, Canada, with the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre to research how cultural education programs are being used by Canadian Indian and Catholic institutions to recover lost culture and foster student cultural engagement and identity formation. Dana Drecksel spent three weeks conducting research at the Republic of Korea’s Sogang University in Seoul and in Gangjeong Village on Jeju Island. There she interviewed members of the Sogang community, Gangjeong Village naval base protestors and Sewol Ferry activists as part of her investigation into how members of the Korean community respond to social injustices. In Dakar and Mbour, Senegal, Sabrina Khan researched the intersection of faith and education; particularly the role private Catholic schools play in the Muslim-majority country in developing concepts of pluralism and citizenship. In Guatemala, Nicolas “Nico” Lake worked with the Universidad Rafael Landívar to analyze the impact of the university’s “Development with Justice” scholarship program, which provides funds for indigenous and female Guatemalans, traditionally the most marginalized populations in Guatemalan society, to attend the university.

During the project’s first five years, students traveled to 18 countries to conduct research: Kenya, the Philippines, Chile, India, South Africa, El Salvador, Bolivia, Uruguay, Uganda, France, Argentina, Cambodia, Peru, Poland, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burkina Faso, and Nicaragua. Full reports and interview transcripts for all four years are available on the project website: berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/esj.

The Education and Social Justice Project is administered by Melody Fox Ahmed of the Berkley Center and faculty advisor Andria Wisler of the Center for Social Justice.
OVERVIEW

Caitlin Snell of San Diego, California, is a senior in the College majoring in Sociology and minoring in Education, Inquiry, and Justice. During June 2015, Caitlin spent three weeks in Espanola, Ontario, Canada, traveling to Manitoulin Island and the north shore to explore the impact of cultural education on student formation and development. She interviewed primary and secondary school teachers, principals, education directors, restorative justice program coordinators, and community members to explore First Nation culture in educational institutions on and off Native reservations. Through the work of several Jesuits at the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre in addition to public schools and programs available to First Nation students, Caitlin examined the use of cultural education, previously lost by the Canadian Indian residential school system, and how these programs foster the whole child through cultural education.

PARTNER INSTITUTION: ANISHINABE SPIRITUAL CENTRE, ESPANOLA, CANADA

The Anishinabe Spiritual Centre was built in 1984 at Anderson Lake in Espanola, Ontario to provide services and training to Native people. The Centre works with Jesuits to replace Native culture that was usurped by the residential schools system during the 1900s. The Centre’s main objectives are to nurture deeper spirituality within people, welcome and support the goodness of all, provide a space for education and discernment, encourage community building, and remain sensitive to social and cultural. Serving all members of the community, Native and non-Native, the Centre supports spiritual growth and, as a setting, is used for conferences, seminars, workshops, business meetings, and retreats.

With a beautiful chapel and multiple cabins on-site, the Centre fuses Catholic traditions with Native culture. Named Wassean-Dimi-Kaning or The Place of Enlightening by the Native people, the Centre conducts the Ministries Program through which members...
of First Nations can be trained to lead a church. This program works to bridge the gap between Christian and Anishinabe culture and rebuild the connections lost because of the residential school system, a network of assimilationist boarding schools during the 1900s. Partnering with other programs and cultural services in the area, the Centre provides a space for growth and acceptance of identities and traditions, while maintaining a strong Catholic faith tradition. The Anishinabe Spiritual Centre and its Ministries program work to encourage spiritual and cultural development for Native communities to become leaders and help others develop their spiritual or cultural personas.

INTRODUCTION

Manitoulin Island and the North Shore in Ontario, Canada lie on Lake Huron with immense natural beauty present in both the land and the people. Home to six First Nations on the island and several more on the nearby North Shore, the area is rich with culture and community within and between each tribe. 38 percent of people in this area identify as members of aboriginal communities, and evidence of Native culture is present both on and off reservations. Pow wows are common weekend occurrences in the summer; students participate in nature walks; spirit teachings; camp, fish, and celebrate many other traditions together. Spiritual and cultural influences intertwine to reflect a region full of life and spirit, often a form of rebuilding and recreating traditional practices lost during the time of the residential school system.

Residential schools were created to teach Native children to navigate mainstream Canadian life, and provided students with academic training and social skills by removing them from families and assimilating them into the dominant Canadian culture. The system became oppressive; placing students in unhealthy and overcrowded schools and preventing the cultural preservation of Canada’s First Nations. Although the last school was closed in 1996, the legacy of the system is still present in Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. Families are less comfortable practicing Native traditions because, for a time, people were not allowed to preserve these customs. Therefore, people live in conflict with a modern, mainstream lifestyle, and try to practice a culture that they were taught to forget.

PREVENTING A SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY

The residential school system, organized by the Canadian government and facilitated by Christian churches, began in 1831 as a means of assimilating Native children in mainstream Canadian culture by separating students from traditional Native families. Although the network of boarding schools closed in the 1990s after research and public testimony exposed the abuse and mistreatment of students, the school system perpetuated a stereotype of indigenous people as inferior to the rest of society. It also promoted the misguided directive that they should “act white” if they wanted to succeed. This image can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: individuals hear that they are not valuable or unimportant and begin to believe it themselves, in turn preventing their individual progress. Social and cultural reproduction theories express how such norms are passed generationally. Levi Southwind, who experienced the residential school system, claimed that he, “[…] never did receive many teachings in the way of culture from the family because it was taught by society and by the church to view it as heathen and that it was devil work. We were taught that it’s bad and our elders today even notice that we’re in a very confused state culturally, in terms of what was Indian and what was not Indian because of these problems.” Parents indoctrinated with the perspective that their lifestyles are destined to be less successful or healthy will likely pass on this view subconsciously to their children. Native communities have more at-risk youth with high rates of teen pregnancy, alcohol and substance abuse, families in poverty, and domestic violence. Despite formal closure in the 1990s, the system leaves a legacy that these communities must repair and reconcile with themselves and the rest of the population.

While cultural reproduction primarily occurs through social structures and power dynamics, education also plays a role in reinforcing culture. In Canada, educational institutions, spiritual centers, and restorative justice programs are now working to support Native communities by combatting the negative impacts of the residential school system through recreating lost culture. Teachers incorporate Native history into classrooms to ensure that students are aware of the cultural genocide that occurred and have a different understanding of Native identities. Early childhood education centers focus on Ojibwe language immersion so that children can grow up speaking the Native language that their parents may not know as these were banned in the residential schools. Adolescent judicial programs teach cultural practices to help young adults appreciate their heritage and focus on the strengths of their nation rather than perpetuate negative stereotypes. Catholic parishes use traditional Native exercises in religious services to help reconcile past differences and promote future collaboration and mutual growth.

The area of the North Shore and Manitoulin Island in Ontario continues to struggle with the negative effects of the residential school system of the twentieth century. However, various educational institutions are making a positive impact by disseminating the cultural traditions previously destroyed to encourage students to take pride in their heritage. Charles Shawanda of Whitefish River First Nation describes the impact of residential schools, saying it was “nothing short of cultural genocide. So now we’re getting to the point where we have Rainbow District [schools] trying to integrate cultural teachings and practices for students and the language is there for them to learn, the grandfather teachings, drum making,
smudging… all of these things are becoming more of the Canadian
history than when I was younger. We never really learned our own
culture.” These programs focus on teaching people their culture to
foster relationships between First Nations and non-Native members
of the communities. Spiritual institutions like the Anishinabe
Spiritual Centre are bridging the cultural gaps by incorporating
traditional First Nation practices into Catholic services to balance
between Western and Native culture. These connections help build
solidarity, reconcile the past, and teach people the importance of
accepting others. Additionally, the cultural education in Manitoulin
Island and the North Shore fosters student formation through
holistic development to ensure they develop the skills to better serve
their communities.

HISTORY OF NATIVE CULTURAL EDUCATION IN
CANADA

Beginning in the mid-1800s, residential schools were established
by the Canadian government to assimilate aboriginal children into
Canadian society by removing the influences of Native culture. The
institutions followed an “aggressive civilization” strategy within a
boarding school model, separating children from their families and
communities to fully immerse them in the academic and social
norms attributed with modern Canadian life. The government set
up this network of boarding schools, and Anglican, Presbyterian,
and Roman Catholic churches managed the schools to teach
students the Euro-Canadian and Christian ways of life.12

The Indian Act of 1876 is a federal Canadian law that governs all
affairs of Native populations including Indian status, bands, and
reserves. When passed, it consolidated previous legislation dating
to the colonial era and authorized the Canadian government to
intervene and regulate daily life for registered Indians. At the time,
First Nations were not allowed to participate in electing who wrote
the laws. This piece of legislation gave the Canadian government
a method to ensure gradual and forced assimilation of all Natives,
starting with severing ties between children and Native culture.13

In 1879, Nicholas Flood Davin drafted the Report on Industrial
Schools for Indians and Half-breeds, recommending that the
Canadian government follow United States’ assimilation strategies
by creating a system of boarding schools since, “the day-school did
not work, because the influence of the wigwam was stronger than
the influence of the school.” By 1880, nearly a dozen schools were
flourishing in Canada.14
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Residential schools grew rapidly across the country, reaching 45 schools by 1896, becoming mandatory in 1920 for children between the ages of 7 and 15, and reaching 60 residential schools in 1960. The increasing number of residential schools was accompanied by the growing concerns from parents and Aboriginal advocacy groups of abuse or neglect committed by teachers, insufficient programming, and lack of funding. The government’s per capita funding formula was insufficient with the rapid increase in schools; children lacked adequate food, clothing, and shelter and were susceptible to disease, sexual abuse, and corporal punishment. Lack of funding usually prevented schools from hiring qualified teachers, leaving children in unsanitary conditions with frustrated, incompetent, and often-dangerous staff members. Children were punished for practicing their culture or speaking their Native language which was psychologically damaging. Over 150,000 First Nation, Metis, and Inuit students attended these schools, often against the will of their families.

LASTING IMPLICATIONS OF FORCED ASSIMILATION

One long lasting effect is the cultural genocide of First Nation traditions and spirituality. “The whole idea of residential schools was to get rid of the Indian people and the indigenous peoples, not only here, but all over the world, to get rid of the peoples so they could access the land and its resources for the capitalist economy. So, in that way there was no culture and there continues to be very much a lack of the culture, the real culture,” explained Levi Southwind, a student of the residential school system. The Indian Residential Schools Settlement was signed in 2006 by the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives, and churches to begin repairing the harm of the residential schools by providing compensation to former residents and establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Though reparations were paid and apologies were given, the harm caused by residential schools can never be undone or forgotten. First Nations recognize the social ills that plague their communities such as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse and alcoholism, depression, and anxiety. They attribute these to the suffering imposed by the residential school system, reproduced as intergenerational trauma.

Southwind reflected on his residential school experience: “You have multiple generations who’ve been exposed to the residential school systems who’ve been brainwashed into being white people and to believing that you’re just nothing but a drunken Indian which is what I was taught so a lot of people even in my generation have that self-fulfilling prophecy mentality.”

This system left an emotional scar on the First Nation, Inuit, and Metis people, breaking self-esteem and causing them shame over their Native identities. For First Nations of Manitoulin Island and the North Shore, engaging with the community in cultural ceremonies and teachings, embracing Anishinabek culture while reconciling its history helps rebuild what was lost and encourages individual and collective growth for the future.

Religious institutions like the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre are working to foster community development and spiritual progress by integrating more First Nation traditions, using the Ojibwe language, and training Native people to be leaders in their church. It is difficult for some members of First Nations to trust religious leaders from the churches that facilitated the residential schools, causing spiritual leaders to actively look for ways to reconcile the past and create more inclusive churches. Father Gerald McDougall, S.J. claims that, “Our Jesuits did almost everything with the people in their own language. It was only really in the last century that got lost, but it was coming back again, and being revived. There was a real focus on the way that God was calling us -- to help the people establish a true Aboriginal Catholic Church.” His words express the work of the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre and other religious institutions in the region that emphasize collaboration and building cultural understanding to rebuild the trust lost by the residential school system.

In addition to supporting survivors and their family members, First Nations and the greater Canadian population now encourage children to practice their culture. This allows students to recognize their cultural identity and overcome adversity. It’s important that our children know how to integrate into the larger society. They need their three Rs: to read, write, and know how to count, but at the same time we want to do it in our way, recognizing our culture and our traditions,” explained Charles Shawanda of Whitefish River First Nation. Cultural education promotes, as known in Jesuit education, care of the whole person and student formation through community engagement, reconciling the past and promoting
resilience. Therefore, these communities are trying to rebuild their culture to help students become more resilient.

**STUDENT FORMATION AND CULTURAL EDUCATION**

Communities can be distributors of culture, and schools also serve as places where children learn to navigate the world through a specific lens. Focusing on educating the whole child rather than simple academic study teaches students the social and emotional skills to overcome adversity, work hard, persevere, and collaborate with others. Educating the whole person can be aided through culturally relevant pedagogy that enables students to become more comfortable, confident learners. Cultural foundations are necessary to ensure holistic development so that students embrace their identity and feel empowered by the community with which they identify.

The Jesuit principles of *Cura Personalis*, the Latin phrase meaning “Care of the Person,” and “Educating the Whole Person” involves caring for an individual’s unique gifts, challenges, needs, and possibilities to encourage growth in every aspect of life. For example: Father Gerald McDougall, S.J. of the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre discusses how he listens to the needs of others and learns about their background before serving his community so that he can find the best way to guide people spiritually. This perspective promotes inclusive learning as well as spiritual, artistic, mental, emotional, social, and physical development. People must feel welcome and that every aspect of them is acknowledged, appreciated, and nurtured as such. Students can be better equipped to handle challenges and overcome adversity when they have been educated using methods of holistic development. Fostering inclusion and holistic development can create well-rounded and engaged individuals who can positively impact their community.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Inclusion helps individuals develop a sense of belonging and instills personal confidence so students can succeed in future endeavors. Participation in ceremonies and traditional practices can help students feel part of a collective and greater cause. Manitoulin Island and the North Shore house several First Nations dozens of kilometers apart. The connections between First Nations foster community engagement that encourages inclusion. For the rebirth of Native culture in the region, diverse people must work together to recognize the value of indigenous people.

Because of a need to reclaim their culture, many First Nations organize annual pow wows with traditional dance, food, and spiritual cleansing. Children dance with elders and are able to experience a traditional activity with their families. For example, Lakeview School in M’Chigeeng First Nation Reserve organizes an annual pow wow at the end of their school year to celebrate student achievements as well as teach them about the traditional rituals and their spiritual significance.

Similarly, Shawanosowe School in Whitefish River First Nation does a morning circle everyday where students and staff participate in a morning smudge, a cleansing and purification practice that burns the four medicines (cedar, sweet grass, sage, and tobacco). Students rotate this responsibility each morning and when the smudge is complete, everyone sings the Canadian National Anthem in the Native Ojibwe language. The students and staff also learn the Native language together, fostering relationships through cultural programs. For example: Gloria Oshkabewisens-McGregor described, “…on the first day [of school] all the children come…to the language classroom…and they look at me and they say, ‘Are you the language teacher? You’re teaching Ojibwe?’ ‘Yeah!’ and they said, ‘Do you know Ojibwe?’ and I said, ‘No. Do you know Ojibwe?’ and they said, ‘No’, and I said, ‘Good, let’s learn together, OK?’ ‘OK’! so then at that point we could learn together.” This teacher was able to teach her students by building strong connections with them and encouraging them to become lifelong learners.

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES WITH ELDERS**

Kejgewin Teg Educational Institute (KTEI) similarly engages the M’Chigeeng First Nation community to encourage inclusion and cultural education. Executive Director Stephanie Roy, expresses that the program’s values originated to encourage students to honor their heritage. She states that, “When we look at the values that guide us in delivering all of the services that we do that surround education and training, we know that we’ve come up with those values as a community.” The early childhood language immersion program at KTEI also partners with elders to offer different teachings to children. Early Childhood Educator Debbie Ense explains that, “We bring in our elders, to help us plant. We have on that is, teaching the language teacher? You’re teaching Ojibwe? ‘Yeah!’ and they said, ‘Do you know Ojibwe?’ and I said, ‘Good, let’s learn together, OK?’ ‘OK!’ so then at that point we could learn together.” This teacher was able to teach her students by building strong connections with them and encouraging them to become lifelong learners.

Zoongaabwe-od Eshniig-jik is a restorative justice program for youth involved in the criminal justice program throughout the six First Nations on Manitoulin Island. The program coordinator discusses how community engagement with elders...
can help people who have made poor choices in the past, claiming that, “Sometimes it’s just making a bad choice, or being in the wrong place at the wrong time, with the wrong person. Then, having our elders explain that in the circle process, it gives them time to think about it.” Elders also offer teachings based on the culture that can aid personal development such as healthy communication, fasting, fire teachings, medicine bundles, healthy relationships, and anger. These programs offer children to participate in a culture that was lost for so long.

BUILDING SOLIDARITY AND RECONCILING DIFFERENCES

These programs on Manitoulin Island and the North Shore are also working to build solidarity among their First Nations and non-Native communities. Holistic development requires finding culturally appropriate ways to reconcile the past and move forward by appreciating diversity. Father Gerald McDougall, S.J. of the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre notes that a challenge is “…not to force what I interpret as the right way to do things on the churches. So for instance I’d go to one church and they have a very strong identity as being both aboriginal and Catholic and that’s great, I’ll embrace that,” representing the challenge of serving different communities in the area. Father McDougall recognizes the problematic history of Catholicism for Native people, therefore, he focuses on “getting to know the people, that’s the first thing you’ve got to do. Get to know the people. It might take a year, it might take two, but trying to find out what their lives are like and how I can serve them, what they want, what kind of a church do they want to have.” Father McDougall’s perspective enables him to build relationships and combine Catholicism with First Nation culture. For example, he uses smudging at mass, has Native deacons in the church, and utilizes the Native Ojibwe language in the services. Father McDougall’s emphasis on finding connections between Catholic and Native spirituality helps him build relationships with different communities and encourages people to embrace their cultural and spiritual identity.

Similarly, Lynn MacDonell, a principal of a public school on the North Shore, has discussions at school for children to talk about diversity in a respectful manner. She emphasizes that a “…fairly high number of folks in our community have not completed high school, and I think that’s primarily because for most of them school was not a positive experience and so those parents come to school and they bring that sense of failure or sense of school not being a positive or safe place…so you have to work really hard with those parents to assure them that things have changed.” Principal MacDonell focuses on inclusion between First Nations and outside communities, like the public school she administers, to give parents a voice and build community within and outside of the school. Although the school she manages is not on a reservation, she recognizes that Native communities have a negative view of school because of the history of the residential school system. They focus on building relationships so that they can appropriately serve families by embracing their culture. Developing strong connections helps to reconcile differences and fosters cross-cultural awareness and understanding.

Some schools represent the history of Native culture by the symbols hanging in the hallways or classrooms. For example, KTEI hangs the United Nations Rights Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on large tapestry-like panels in the hallway. Presenting this declaration affirms that, “…indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such.” The executive director supports this symbolic affirmation with the perspective that, “If we look at our history, our history says that we’ve been marginalized and we’ve been oppressed and how are we going to move forward and advance in a way that we feel we’re able to be proud and own that.” KTEI is dedicated to teaching students their so they can flourish in the future.

LANGUAGE AND HISTORY

Learning the histories of First Nation cultures can teach people to recognize their cultural identity and reconcile differences. Teachers that take this approach enable their students to “honor our families and our history,” as Charles Shawanda claims helps non-Native students to understand the hardships endured by indigenous populations. Mary Balfe experienced this when she participated in a blanket exercise during a retreat at the Anishinabe Spiritual Centre an activity that traces the hardships of Native people. Ms. Balfe expresses: “It opens people, not only their eyes, but their hearts to recognize what Native people lived and what they suffered. I think it’s well written now that those issues were denied of the people, they were ignored, and that can only last so long before it will break open.” Balfe conveys the impact of cultural education and the importance of understanding the history of all communities.
Similarly, Father Gerald McDougall, S.J. experiences the challenge of reconciling the history of Catholicism and Native communities when he conducts religious services in the region. He recognizes the importance of embracing cultures especially in education. For example, Father McDougall explained that “The use of Native Ojibwe language in the masses and prayers was becoming common again, not more prominent, because in the past, our Jesuit ancestors did almost everything with the people in their own language. It was only really in the last century that got lost, but it was coming back again, and being revived.” Holistic development gives students the skills to recognize that other cultures are important, while being proud of their community.

The early childhood immersion program at KTEI in M’Chigeeng, as well as language instruction supports students the lost Ojibwe. Debbie Ense, an Early Childhood Educator for the immersion program, reflects that parents were, “…worried at first, but we told them if they’re coming to our program they have to be committed… And right now, most of the kids understand what you’re saying to them and they can answer back.” As such, cultural education allows students to take pride in their heritage.

Shawanoswe School in Whitefish River First Nation, Lakeview School in M’Chigeeng First Nation, and Rainbow District Schools in Southern Ontario also provide students with the opportunity to learn Ojibwe. Lisa McGregor, an Ojibwe language teacher spends an entire unit on different cultures and encourages students to be open-minded. Students in her classroom learn about, “Christian baptisms and Hindu naming ceremonies, Hebrew naming ceremonies… After we discuss, I’m hoping their minds are a little more open to the idea that not everything is the same, not everyone is the same, so that when I introduce how Anishinabek people do it, it’s not just some weird thing.” She teaches students that they do not have to view different cultures as incompatible, emphasizing the beauty of all languages, especially Ojibwe and the importance of recognizing its significance in Native culture.

BUILDING A PERSONAL TOOLBOX

One pattern evident among different cultural education programs was the importance of student development. Cultural education gives students confidence to evaluate the internalized shame felt between members of First Nation communities affected by the residential schools.9 With an intention of educating the whole child, cultural education can develop students’ social and emotional skills to help create more resilient individuals.

The KTEI language immersion programs help students develop skills and become culturally grounded, lifelong learners. The school emphasizes following nontraditional learning models to better serve their students. Debbie Ense recognizes changes in her students when they learn Ojibwe, claiming that, “There’s more self-identity, I think they’re proud of who they are, and they know they are different. And they know more than their parents and I think that makes them blossom more …and I see the difference from working in the daycare because they’re calmer too. I think they know that their school is different, because they’re immersed in the language, they know that, and they feel it.” The vision of KTEI and the specific models they employ such as early learning language immersion enables students to make a positive impact in their community.

Similarly, children at Lakeview School in M’Chigeeng find their voice by following the Seven Grandfather Teachings the school uses as their own values. The school works to create a safe environment for students by encouraging them to learn from mistakes. Students and staff are taught to relate current experiences to the Grandfather Teaching to learn from their experiences. This helps students foster their social and emotional skills to be aware of themselves and how they impact others.

CONCLUSION

This study shows the importance of employing culturally relevant pedagogy and fostering inclusion and holistic development in educational institutions whether spiritual, academic, or extracurricular. The residential school system in Canada left a lasting impact on the hearts and minds of the First Nations of Manitoulin Island and the North Shore. Programs in the area are working to rebuild the culture lost during the time of residential schools by focusing on cultural education. This approach, present in restorative justice programs, public schools, First Nation schools, and spiritual institutions, supports individuals attempting to reconnect with their traditional practices. The programs are empowering people to become more engaged in their communities, reconcile differences, and become resilient lifelong learners.
KAREN CORBIERE-GENEREUX, PROGRAM COORDINATOR OF ZOONGAABWE-OD ESHNIIG-JIK YOUTH JUSTICE PROGRAM, UNITED CHIEF AND COUNCILS OF MNIDOO MNISING

Why involve culture in this restorative justice system?

It’s because a lot of our culture hasn’t been passed on. I myself am just learning these things and I’m 46. I have a pretty good mentor, Mary Elliot, she’s an elder and she’s very patient with me asking questions. We learn that incorporating culture into our programs is key because most kids, in the younger generation have lost touch with that, I feel. With my own children, we don’t participate in regalia making or pow wows, it isn’t something that we follow, but learning about the different ceremonies is something that I’m interested in, so passing that on is important, and we have very few people who are resources for this knowledge.

STEPHANIE ROY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF KENJGIEWIN TEG EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE, M’CHIGEENG FIRST NATION

What is the mission of Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute?

I think we here at KTEI are in a unique organization because we really look and approach learning in a different way. I think our viewpoint that makes us unique is we look at lifelong learning and what lifelong learning means as indigenous people in the whole spectrum, from infants to 80 year olds. We never stop learning, so we say from cradle to grave, and that’s really what we believe here at KTEI.

FATHER GERALD MCDougall, S.J., SERVING SAGAMOK, M’CHIGEENG, AND SHESHEGWANING FIRST NATIONS, ANISHINABE SPIRITUAL CENTRE

What cultural influences do you notice in your work in this region?

Vestments and religious articles were done in the style of Native art, there were introductions to the mass for instance with the use of smudging in the mass is something that we still use in some places here. Deacons and their wives were ordained and mandated to serve as leaders in the church in quite good numbers. The use of Native Ojibwe language in the masses and prayers was becoming common again, not more prominent, because our ancestors in the Jesuits did almost everything with the people in their own language. It was only really in the last century that that got lost, but it was coming back again, and being revived. There was a real focus on the way that God was calling us to help the people establish a true Aboriginal Catholic Church. Coming back now, I still see that a lot of those things have been carried on, they seem to have waned in some places, but they’re strong in others.

CRAIG ABOTASSAWAY, NATIVE ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE PROGRAM WORKER, AUNDECK OMNI KANING FIRST NATION

What do you enjoy most about your position?

There is always that one success that sticks with you through time. I was the drug and alcohol counselor in my community, and in 18 years there’s probably 5 kids that I can count that stand out with success, and you never know that in the moment. When you work that long, you see them at 25 years old when they’re young parents themselves and they talk about what it was like for them and the work that they did, and about that one thing that they did that kept them away from drugs or alcohol. Them sharing just that one story with you, that reflection on their success, is what stands out.

LEVI SOUTHWIND, LANDS & ENVIRONMENT DIRECTOR, SAGAMOK FIRST NATION

What role should culture play in education? How should culture be taught?

I think in our own societies, different nations or tribes had our own internal ways of teaching, mostly through the family. But if you have multiple generations of people who through the residential school systems have been brainwashed into being white people and to believing that you’re just nothing but a drunken Indian, which is what I was taught, a lot of people have that self-fulfilling prophecy mentality. There has to be a
community movement, and I was involved in a community movement. Not to convert people on the basis of religion, but to teach each other how to be good human beings. If you choose to worship in the Catholic way, that's fine, but at the same time you shouldn't call my sweat lodge ceremony pagan, you should respect it and you're welcome to join me. So I think there has to be a development of that curriculum, we have it here and there but we need to be sharing it within families too. It's not just about that “you’re a student there and I’m the teacher here”, but that we sit in these learning circles together and we talk about these things, that’s how the culture needs to be taught, so that when you come home it becomes a part of your way of life, not just something that you do on Sunday like going to church.

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Craig Abotassaway
Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program Coordinator

Mary Balfe
Retired Elementary School Teacher

Karen Corbiere-Genereux
Zoongaabwe-Od Eshniig-jik Youth Program Coordinator

Neil Debassige
Elementary School Principal

Debbie Ense
Early Childhood Education Teacher

Dave Gallant
High School Teacher and Native Studies Program Coordinator

Lynn MacDonell
Elementary School Principal

Gerald McDougall, S.J.
Serves Anishinabe Spiritual Centre and several First Nation Communities

Lissa McGregor
Ojibwe Language Teacher

Gloria Oshkabewisens-McGregor
Ojibwe Language and Culture Teacher

Stephanie Roy
Executive Director of kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute

Charles Shawanda
Whitefish River First Nation Education Director

Levi Southwind
Sagamok Anishinawbek Lands & Environment Director

Joyce Toulouse
Homemaker
OVERVIEW

In June 2015, Nico Lake, a senior in the School of Foreign Service pursuing a degree in International Politics with a concentration in International Development, spent three weeks in Guatemala at the Universidad Rafael Landívar (URL). There, he analyzed the impact of the university’s “Development with Justice” scholarship program. The program provides funds specifically for poor, indigenous, and female Guatemalans, traditionally the most marginalized populations in society, who live in rural areas to attend the university. Nico conducted interviews across the country at the URL’s central and rural campuses with about thirty scholarship students, tutors, and university officials to understand the impact of the program.

PARTNER INSTITUTION: UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR

The Universidad Rafael Landívar is the only Jesuit university in Guatemala. Founded in 1951, the university seeks to bring Jesuit values to Guatemala and promote justice throughout the country. Its central, and largest, campus is located in Guatemala City. It also has nine regional campuses throughout the country, including in Quetzaltenango, Huehuetenango, Santa Cruz del Quiché, Zacapa, and Cobán. The university is recognized for the high quality level of its education and for providing access to those who normally would not have the opportunity.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the indigenous peoples of Guatemala have suffered from racial discrimination from much of the rest of Guatemalan society. This marginalization of indigenous groups continues today. Indigenous populations comprise 40 percent of Guatemala’s population, the largest in Central America, yet they are underrepresented in the government and other positions of power. Similarly, women in Guatemala have consistently been subjugated by their male counterparts.
through a culture of machismo. The discrimination starts from
colhood as male children are often better fed than their
isters. It continues through adulthood as men have more
opportunities for jobs in the work force. These two forms of
subjugation—against the indigenous and against women—are
compounded by poverty and lack of development in rural
Guatemala. Various programs exist in Guatemala to provide
primary education for the rural poor, but many still lack access
to education at the university level.

Werner Lopez, Director of Financial Resources at the
Universidad Rafael Landivar argues, “Historically this country
hasn’t given many opportunities to women and indigenous
peoples. In the history of the country, access to universities has
been very difficult for women and indigenous peoples. Severe
discrimination and racism exists. The woman is always seen as
the person of the house. The man works and the woman stays
in the house. [This program] gives access to women who have
discriminated [against]...it gives opportunity to people
who have been marginalized.”

In 2004, in order to aid the most marginalized groups in
Guatemalan society, a German bank, KfW, created the
“Support for Regional Development” program with the
Universidad Rafael Landivar. In this program, which ran from
2006 until 2011, the German bank financed the construction
of regional campuses for the Universidad Rafael Landivar in
eight locations across Guatemala. The university could now
reach potential students who previously had no access to
higher education. The program provided funds to primarily
indigenous and female Guatemalans who were classified as
living in poverty to attend the URL. It paid for their travel,
overnight stay, food, books and administrative costs. Thus,
Guatemalans who needed to work throughout the week were
able to attend university classes on Fridays and Saturdays and
earn a degree in a major of their choice.

Given the success during the first phase of the program, KfW
allocated additional funding to the university for 2011 to 2016.
This second phase—called “Development with Justice”—
specifically encourages students to study issues relating to
justice, such as law and criminal forensics. KfW provides extra
scholarships, and requires that the majority of the recipients be
indigenous and female.

The Universidad Rafael Landivar has a number of scholarship
opportunities, but the “Development with Justice” program is
the only one catered specifically towards the indigenous and
female populations. Currently, 600 students receive support
from the scholarship program, up from 78 when the program
first started in 2006.

MARGINALIZATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN
GUATEMALA

The indigenous population in Guatemala has a history filled
with repression and subjugation.

There are three main ethnic groups in Guatemala: the
Europeans, the mestizos (mixed European and Amerindian)
and the Amerindians (the indigenous). About 40 percent
of Guatemalans identify as Amerindian. This is a higher
percentage than other Central American countries, such as
Mexico (28%), Honduras (7%), Nicaragua (5%), and El
Salvador (0.2%). Similarly, 40 percent of Guatemalans speak
a language other than Spanish, and while Spanish is the country’s
official language, there are twenty-three recognized Amerindian
languages. The largest Amerindian ethnic groups are K’iche
(9.1%), Kaqchikel (8.4%), Mam (7.9%), Q’eqchi (6.3%) and
other Mayan (8.6%).

The civil war in Guatemala was a time of repression and
attacks against the indigenous population. The civil war, which
lasted from 1960 until 1996, was fought between leftist rebel
groups and Guatemala’s government. The leftist rebel groups
represented many of the indigenous ethnic groups and rural
peasants, and in the politically charged era, the government
thus associated many indigenous groups as communist
conspirators. In order to spread fear among the people, the
government imposed a terror campaign that included death
squads, commonly known for the “disappearances” they
caused, and forced dislocations. In the early 1980s, the most
violent period of the civil war, the army destroyed hundreds of
rural settlements, forcing their occupants into exile.

In 1999, charges of genocide for the army’s actions during
the early 1980s were filed against General Efrain Rios Montt,
Guatemala’s president at the time. According to the U.N.
sponsored report,

The Army’s perception of Mayan communities as
natural allies of the guerrillas contributed to increasing
and aggravating the human rights violations perpetrated against them, demonstrating an aggressive
racist component of extreme cruelty that led to
the extermination en masse, of defenseless Mayan
communities purportedly linked to the guerrillas –
including children, women and the elderly – through
methods whose cruelty has outraged the moral
conscience of the civilized world.

The massacres, the report continues, “resulted in the complete
extermination of many Mayan communities…[and involved]
particularly serious cruelty in many acts committed by agents of
the State, especially members of the Army, in their operations
against Mayan communities." The atrocities committed by
the army—extreme torture, mutilation, and sexual violence
were commonplace before the killings—left a profound scar
in the relations between the indigenous communities and
Guatemalan authority.

Although Guatemala has had peace for two decades, indigenous
peoples continue to be marginalized. The municipalities in
Guatemala with the highest rates of extreme poverty strongly
correlate with areas with a higher indigenous population. As
well, even though the indigenous represent a large percentage
of the population, they are underrepresented in positions of
importance and power. As noted in the 2014 Country Reports
on Human Rights Practices for Guatemala:

While the indigenous population constituted 44
percent of the population according to a government
census, indigenous representation in national
government was minimal. There were no indigenous
cabinet members and no indigenous members of the
Constitutional Court. The president of the Supreme
Court was indigenous—the only indigenous member
among the 13 magistrates on the bench. [Out of 158
total members of Congress], there were 20 indigenous
members of Congress.

Services to the indigenous population are often not provided at
the same level as for the mestizo population. This is partly due
to cultural and linguistic barriers that exist in many areas, such as
reproductive health care. A lack of culturally sensitive reproductive
and healthcare services, as well as a discriminatory attitude from
healthcare providers, has deterred indigenous women from
accessing potential services. The impunity of security forces is still
high, and the national police force is understaffed, inadequately
trained, and insufficiently funded. Thus, security forces are still
viewed with distrust by many indigenous.
EDUCATION IN RURAL AREAS

While the indigenous populations have historically been the most marginalized, all of the rural poor suffer from insufficient educational resources and opportunities.

The rural areas in Guatemala have much higher rates of poverty than urban areas. A study done in 2006 found that 83.2 percent of the extreme poverty in Guatemala is found in rural areas, as well as 71.7 percent of general poverty.9 Unsurprisingly, the indigenous are the most affected by poverty. Although only 40 percent of the general population, in 2006 the indigenous population accounted for 68.7 percent of the extreme poor population, and 56.3 percent of general poverty.40 These numbers have remained relatively static since 2000, showing little improvement for the indigenous in that time span.

The importance of education for poverty reduction is clearly visible in Guatemalan society. In 2000, 60 percent of children with parents who had not completed primary education lived in extreme poverty, and another 47.5 percent lived in non-extreme poverty.41 The likelihood of a family living in poverty declines with more education. For families with parents that have completed primary education, the extreme poverty rate drops to 11.2 percent and non-extreme rate to 18.9 percent. For those that reach the level of superior (or university) education—the level of education that KfW’s “Development with Justice” scholarship seeks to provide, there stands a mere 0.3 percent chance of extreme poverty and 0.4 percent chance of non-extreme poverty.42 Of course, as shown earlier, the relationship goes both ways, as many in extreme poverty lack the opportunities to reach the higher levels of education that are more readily accessible for the better-off.

The illiteracy rate for all of Guatemala was 34 percent in 2011, an increase of 10 percent from 2006.43 The illiteracy rates in many of the indigenous-heavy municipalities are even higher. The municipalities with the highest measures of illiteracy are Quiché (47 percent), Alta Verapaz (44 percent), and Huehuetenango (43 percent).44 All three areas are heavily indigenous, and all three are locations where the Universidad Rafael Landívar has constructed campuses through KfW.

The same issues are revealed when looking at matriculation rates across Guatemala, defined as the percentage of enrollment of Guatemalans in primary or basic public or private schools. While the national rate in 2011 stood at 52 percent, the municipalities with the lowest rates of matriculation were Huehuetenango (42 percent), Jalapa (42 percent) and Quiché (44 percent).45 Huehuetenango and Quiché are two of the municipalities that also ranked at the bottom for illiteracy rates, and are both areas specifically targeted by the “Development with Justice” scholarship.

DESIGN OF THE UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR

As the only Jesuit university in Guatemala, the Universidad Rafael Landívar actively promotes Jesuit values and social justice. Two ways the university seeks to achieve those goals is through campus design and its scholarship programs.

The URL’s central, and highest attended, campus is located in Guatemala City. Since the greatest need for education is in rural areas, the URL has also created regional campuses in a number of rural locations to provide the opportunity for university education. However, the regional campuses do not have sufficient student demand to be self-sustaining. Thus, to keep running, the central campus subsidizes the regional campuses. One way this occurs is through students paying more at the central campus. For instance, a student studying social work at the central campus may pay 400 Quetzals per semester (about 50 USD), compared to 150 Quetzals per semester at a regional campus (about 20 USD). Students at the central campus have greater financial resources than the students at the rural campuses, who are often poor.

The largest regional campus, located in Quetzaltenango, has 6,000 students and is the only regional campus that
is self-sustaining. The other regional campuses, where the “Development with Justice” scholarship students attend, all serve less than 2,000 students and rely on subsidies from the central campus to operate. Ariel Rivera, Vice Administrative Dean of the URL, spoke about the difficulties inherent to the regional campus system: “There [in the regional campuses] the students only study on Fridays and Saturdays, and the rest of the week, there’s nothing. Obviously, then, it’s difficult to achieve sustainability.”

Another manner the URL seeks to improve access to education for regional students is by providing them with scholarships. The URL has nineteen different scholarship programs, delivered to approximately 4,700 students every year, given out for reasons ranging from academic or artistic excellence to economic need. The majority of scholarships are given to students at regional campuses, as is the case with the “Development with Justice” scholarship.

**“DEVELOPMENT WITH JUSTICE” SCHOLARSHIP**

The partnership between the Universidad Rafael Landívar and KfW began in 2006 with the “Support to Regional Development” program. When creating the second phase of the program, “Development with Justice”, KfW set the goal of the program, “to better educational offering, legal advice and capabilities, benefitting the indigenous and poor populations.” To achieve that goal, KfW created four necessary results for the program:

1. **Infrastructure**: The construction of regional campuses with all the necessary buildings, classrooms, and equipment.
2. **Students**: Students of indigenous and poor families study at the regional campuses.
3. **Professors**: Professors at the regional campuses are trained with the right techniques and materials.
4. **Legal Advice**: The poor and indigenous receive legal advice and members of the URL are trained in legal and human rights capacities.

The second phase of the cooperation between the URL and KfW, the “Development with Justice” scholarship, began in 2011 and will run through December 2016. The plan originally called for 200 scholarships for “indigenous youth and/or indigenous people with scarce resources (with an income less than $4.50 per day),” 50 of which must be for students studying a field related to justice. Additionally, at least 50 percent of the scholarship recipients must be female. The URL selected four of its regional campuses for program implementation: La Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Quiché, and Zacapa.

The URL has now given out 405 scholarships, 62 of which are in a field related to justice. 77 percent of the scholarship recipients are indigenous, 62 percent are female, and all live under the $4.50 per day threshold. The scholarships are spread evenly across the four campuses: La Verapaz has 122 of the scholarship students; Quiché has 106, Huehuetenango 103, and Zacapa 75. At each campus, the scholarship students range from accounting for 10 percent (in Zacapa) to 15 percent (in Quiché) of the entire student population. The Development with Justice scholarship students also range from 34 percent of the total scholarship population (in Zacapa) to 59 percent of the scholarship population (in Quiché).

The URL has provided scholarships for students in eight different academic fields. The largest number of scholarships, 105, has been given out for degrees in Health Services. Other most popular areas of study are Social Work, Humanities, Law and Criminal Forensics (which count as a field related to justice), and Economics. 127 of the 405 scholarship students have already completed their studies. From 2011 to 2014, the program has spent over 4.3 million Quetzals on academic costs, including matriculation and resource costs. The Development with Justice scholarship seeks to provide opportunities for students by covering all of their expenses.

For students that need to travel to the campus site, the program pays for transportation, food, and housing expenses. The fund also covers all academic costs, such as matriculation, books, uniforms, and any supplies needed for their major. Without this support, many students would be unable to attend the university. Faculty that assist the students, such as their tutors and medical personnel also have their salaries covered by the scholarship fund. The total cost of the Development with Justice program through KfW since 2011 has been 688,756 Euros.
The scholarship also works to ensure that students complete their studies. At the start of their time with the URL, the students take a placement test to confirm they are placed at the right level. The program has seen the highest dropout rate during the first year of study, when students find themselves unable to keep up with the demands of the coursework or become disinterested in studying. Thus, each campus also has two “tutors” who work full-time to support and accompany the scholarship students. The tutors provide advice and help to students. Finally, the program also has offered medical evaluations for every student in 2012, 2013, and 2014, as well as psychological support for depression or psychological trauma.

**IMPACT OF SCHOLARSHIPS**

The “Development with Justice” scholarships have had a profoundly positive impact on the students. The main sentiment expressed by the scholarship students covered in this report is of gratitude to the Universidad Rafael Landivar and to KfW for providing this meaningful opportunity.

One student, described his scholarship experience:

I’m very thankful because the scholarship has provided plenty of help to me, so I can continue with a major that I like, which is criminal forensics. I chose the major because I’m interested in it, and seeing the need for it in my community. There, people have the need for justice, but sometimes their rights are violated, so I chose this major.

When asked if they see the scholarship program as social justice or charity by the university, the majority of the students said it was social justice. The program provides opportunities for students without sufficient money to attend the university. It is thus, in a sense, leveling the playing field and providing an opportunity that many other Guatemalans, especially from the
cities, already have. Yet, the students must complete the classes and spend weekends in classes. The scholarship students also work during the weekdays and with classes all day on Saturdays, few have free time.

Many students also expressed interest in applying their new skills and education to their communities. Many were clearly influenced by their community when declaring majors. One student, when asked about her goals for the future, responded, “Graduate from the university, [and] work in a job related to health in a community with scarce resources.”

The students also exhibited a capacity for critical analysis. One of the hallmarks of Jesuit education is the emphasis on reflection, the “way to discover and compose the meaning of our experience.” In discussions with the scholarship students, they showed an ability to reflect on their experiences with the URL, as well as being capable of analyzing the causes and effects of Guatemala’s main social problems. They specifically focused on discrimination, racism, inequality, and poverty.

The term “agents of change” often came up in the discussions. Many scholarship students believe that as one of the only, or the only, person from their community to attend university they are responsible for spreading the values of the URL. In so doing, they seek to change the problems in Guatemalan society; problems such as a mindset that sees women as useless outside of the house, and indigenous people as secondary citizens.

Many believe this mentality of machismo and discrimination comes from families themselves. For one female scholarship student it begins in the household at birth:

“When a girl is born, the father says the girl will grow up to cook, to make food for the men, the inequality begins then. They say, ‘you can’t’... The dad is the first one. It’s in everything I have seen; for example, when
you’re eating, the first that gets served is the man…the mom can exhibit machismo also.”

Many scholarship recipients view the government as unrepresentative of the people, corrupt, and a contributing factor to many of Guatemala’s problems. Although a large percentage of Guatemala’s population is indigenous, as one student noted:

“I haven’t seen a minister of education who is indigenous. The government and power is centralized, so indigenous people don’t have positions and are lacking in most areas…the government, beginning from the executive branch discriminates against the indigenous, so there isn’t room for us.”

With the recent corruption scandals, even more distrust has been aimed at the government, as witnessed by weekly demonstrations against President Otto Pérez Molina over the summer. Further, many think the government has not been doing enough to combat the persistent social problems in Guatemala. Social and educational programs are few, and rarely target the most needy: the rural and indigenous populations. The 2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for Guatemala states, “While the government provided access to family planning information and sex education through the public health system, provision of health services in remote areas and in indigenous languages was limited.”

Many scholarship recipients viewed education as the primary solution to the social problems afflicting Guatemala. One scholarship recipient said, “More than anything it’s education. It’s fundamental for development.” Education is a means of changing the culture, by bringing awareness to the people of the problems in their society. One cannot attend the Universidad Rafael Landívar, or other similar institutions, without being exposed to new ways of thinking and diverse groups of people. Education, and discussion of the problems that exist, can engender changes in culture.

CONCLUSION

The partnership between the Universidad Rafael Landívar and KfW has led to the opportunities for indigenous and poor Guatemalans that previously did not have access to education at the university level. Through rural campuses and full scholarships for students, these two institutions have sought to help improve education in Guatemala. Designed specifically for women and indigenous peoples, the program targets the two most historically marginalized groups in Guatemalan society. The rural campuses are not economically self-sustaining because scholarship recipients need to work full time during the week, necessitating subsidies from the central campus of the URL and KfW to fund their services. Yet, the program has had a profoundly positive impact on students, who have benefitted greatly. All students interviewed for this project expressed gratitude and displayed an increased capacity for critical analysis of Guatemala’s entrenched social and economic problems. Many also plan to use their education to benefit their own, or other marginalized communities. This suggests that the program will have a lasting positive effect on Guatemala’s culture.
INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

WERNER LOPEZ, DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES, UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR, CENTRAL CAMPUS

How does the URL's Jesuit identity influence the [Development with Justice] project and your work?

There isn’t much publicity about what we do, but it is powerful work. With projects like Development with Justice, we’re able to seek the goals of the university, and try to reach justice, and a social equality. We’re really seeking access for the people who don’t have opportunities, and to strengthen their educational and other resources.

Do you believe the university should do more in the name of its Jesuit mission or tradition?

I believe the university is completing its mission as a Jesuit university. We do work that focuses on social protection. The university always gets more and more focused on the politics of the country, for instance the university has been very attentive to the present crisis. We’re watching to see how our democracy works. Guatemala is missing a lot of things but this university has prestige, is well-known, and carries weight with its viewpoints and actions.

Why does the Development with Justice scholarship work in the locations it does?

Along with KfW, we prioritized the west, because it’s an area where the poverty level is very high and there’s a large indigenous population, so we thought that our work could have a lot of impact in that section of the country. The other places we work have the highest levels of malnutrition, along with high rates of indigenous population and poverty.

ARIEL RIVERA, VICE DEAN OF ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR, COBÁN CAMPUS

Do you think the structure of the university, with a central campus and regional sites is designed as an act of charity or as social justice?

After KfW financed and equipped the campuses, they told us to maintain them. All the buildings, gardens, security features, land need to be taken care of. There [in the regional campuses] the students only study on Fridays and Saturdays, and the rest of the week, there’s nothing. Obviously, then, it’s difficult to achieve sustainability. But, here’s what we’re trying to do. As Christians, we seek a society that doesn’t exclude anyone, without discrimination and racism. And through this project, we’re trying to include everyone in society, including people who are discriminated against.

Is it possible for the regional campuses to become financially sustainable?

That’s what we’re working on. It’s not possible in an economic sense with them only being used on weekends. One way we’re trying to sustain them is through high schools. We started high schools in Huehuetenango, Cobán, Zacapa, and Quiché to fill the campus during the week. But because of our identity and external limits, the fees are controlled, so we can’t cover more than a certain level through that. We want to achieve co-sustainability, where the regional campuses cover their own costs.

ANGELINA, TUTOR, UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR, COBÁN CAMPUS

The scholarship recipients all have work during the week, and then come here on weekends. Do they have enough time to do everything?

I think the students we have work during the day and study at night. Yes, it’s something that is difficult, but from my point of view these are the students that can do the most, they work and they come here, they have a house and maintain a family. They know this is an opportunity they cannot let go.

What’s the role of justice in the project?

The project seeks to help the people who don’t have the opportunity to get an education. The focus is on women, and why on women? Because here there are problems of machismo, people here say that poverty has the face of a woman. Through this project many women have benefitted. Obviously there are
men in our program, but the majority are indigenous and have scarce resources.

Through this project, women will receive education, but why will their husbands or children adopt a different attitude than machismo?

Really, I think this project is about giving the opportunity for someone to say, “things are not that good, we need to relearn.” The place of the woman in society is a social construct. I think the first point is to empower women; we need to know our rights. Even in primary education we have problems with “the boys do this and the girls do that,” we always teach the girls how to cook and other things for the boys. We’re not going to achieve all the changes we want, but most importantly we want to change the way people think.

LUIS, SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT, UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR, COBÁN CAMPUS

Do you think the scholarship is an act of charity or an act of social justice?

For me, to receive the scholarship is a privilege, and also just. The help that it has given me lets me keep going. For everyone that receives it, it motivates them to keep going with their lives and professions, and because of that it’s an act of social justice.

Do you think the discrimination present in Guatemalan society comes from the government’s actions or from the communities and individual families? Is there discrimination here at the URL?

In the past there’s been discrimination against indigenous movements, against an indigenous group or town. But, presently that doesn’t exist. The state has committed discrimination against the indigenous by not giving them participation. I don’t think, though, that the URL has the same discrimination, they’ve been true to their values.

ICET, SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT, UNIVERSIDAD RAFAEL LANDÍVAR, ZACAPA CAMPUS

What is the cause of machismo?

The cause is the difference between men and women. For example, in schools they take different classes, like cooking classes for women and electrical work for men. Also it comes from the family. Men get a larger portion of food. When moms cook dinner they give more to the men and boys because they work and will earn money, so the others have malnutrition.

What can we do to resolve issues with discrimination and poverty in Guatemala?

Social projects from the government would help, something to generate income. Also through education and the schools we can work towards improving those problems.

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Analy Paredes Camas
Loyola Scholarship Recipient

Angelina
Tutor at Cobán Campus

Ariel Rivera
Vice Dean of Administration

Enma Noemi Garcia Godinez
Assistant to the Director of the Department of Economic and Financial Assistance

Ingrid Morjan
Director of the Department of Economic and Financial Assistance

Osmar Velasco
Scholarship Program Implementation Coordinator

Ovidio David Parra Lima
Assistant to the Director of the Department of Economic and Financial Assistance

Paco Iznardo
Director of Puente Belice High School

Werner Lopez
Director of Financial Resources

Groups of Scholarship Recipient Students in Quiché (1), Huehuetenango (2), Cobán (2), and Zacapa (3)
Dana Drecksel, originally from Salt Lake City, Utah, is a junior majoring in International Health in Georgetown’s school of Nursing and Health Studies. During May 2015, Dana spent three weeks visiting the Republic of Korea’s Sogang University (Seoul) and Gangjeong Village (Jeju Island). She conducted interviews with members of the Sogang community, including professors, students, administrators, clergy, and the Executive Director of Sogang University’s Board of Trustees. Dana also interviewed Gangjeong Village protestors and Sewol Ferry activists, thereby discovering how members of the Korean community respond to social injustices. Dana’s interviews revealed that Sogang University offers many opportunities for students to learn about social justice and participate in related programs aimed at improving public welfare. She also learned that outside the university, religious organizations are actively engaged in social justice activism that challenges governmental action. Such protests are sometimes met with opposition and harsh penalties by the South Korean government, including the imprisonment of peaceful protestors.

PARTNER INSTITUTION: SOGANG UNIVERSITY, SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

The conclusion of World War II brought many changes to a Korean nation previously occupied by Japan. As the Republic of Korea (or “South Korea”) sought to reestablish an independent government in 1948, Pope Pius XII affirmed that a Catholic institution of higher learning must be founded within the nation.51 Twelve years later, the Korean Ministry of Education granted a charter for Sogang University, founded by members of the Society of Jesus. Kenneth E. Killoren, S.J. was installed as the first president, and ten of the subsequent thirteen presidents have similarly been ordained Jesuits. In keeping with the school’s Jesuit foundation, Sogang University’s goal is to
Korea, DPRK) adopted a communist-style government, while the north (the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, DPRK) began a transition from dictatorship to a democratic-based government. This divide was not peaceful, and a civil war ensued beginning in 1950, with Soviet and Chinese troops aiding the DPRK, and United Nations and United States troops aiding the ROK.

Though both the ROK and DPRK were fighting to achieve their own form of reunification, neither side was successful and the two regions’ starkly divergent political ideologies were never reconciled into a single functioning government. Armed conflict ceased in 1953 with the introduction of an armistice, signed by military personnel from North Korea, China, and the United States (on behalf of the United Nations). This ceasefire agreement established a demarcation line to divide North and South Korea near the 38th parallel. In addition, the armistice established a “demilitarized zone” (DMZ) around the demarcation line, where both sides maintain a military presence to this day.

The Korean civil war left the country decimated, and its people weary of the heavy price associated with military battles. Despite intentions to modernize in the direction of a democratic government, the ROK faced numerous obstacles as it began to rebuild itself from the ashes of war. A series of dictators took command of the country, enforcing strict laws in order to maintain power and control. These Korean leaders were principally concerned with instituting strong economic policy, despite the fact that some of their policies collided with human rights. Father Munsu Park, an American Jesuit who has lived in Korea since 1969, recounted that one of the key points of former president Park Chung-hee’s administration (1961-1979) was to “keep labor cheap for quick development…development in the sense of the government making a lot of money and making a lot of things. That was the concept of development — not a human concept.” Korean citizens often echo this sentiment, emphasizing that the Korean government sacrificed individual rights while seeking to rebuild the country and its economy.

In the drive to develop the ROK’s economy, Korean leaders recognized the necessity of developing a well-educated citizen base. After gaining independence, the number of tertiary education institutions — defined as four- or five-year universities, two- or three- year technical / vocational colleges, or licensure programs — skyrocketed in Korea. The first surge in tertiary education institutions came in 1960 under the presidency of Park Chung-hee, with an additional surge in the 1980s that increased the tertiary education student population by 30 percent. To meet the educational demand, the government insisted that existing tertiary education institutions increase enrollment. As a result, universities like

Sogang is centrally located in the Mapo District of downtown Seoul, giving students convenient access to renowned professional development opportunities that lie within Korea’s expansive capital city. With nine diverse undergraduate programs, six professional graduate schools, and five special graduate programs, Sogang prepares students for a variety of vocations, trades, and professions, helping to meet the demand of Korea’s rapidly developing economy and society. Moreover, Sogang stresses the value of quality education, and is consistently ranked among the best institutions of higher education in Korea.

Beyond academic excellence, Sogang distinguishes itself among Korean universities by ascribing to the Jesuit ideal of “educating the whole person.” With a particular interest in fostering “students for and with others,” Sogang encourages students to promote welfare within their communities. The university’s self-proclaimed mission is “to cultivate people of talent who will devote their lives to the development of a humanistic culture and the union of all mankind,” clearly demonstrating its appraisal of traditional Jesuit values.

BACKGROUND

To understand the context of social justice and education within Korean culture, it is necessary to consider the contemporary history of the Korean Peninsula. Japan formally annexed the peninsula following the Russo-Japanese War in 1910, supplanting centuries of independent Korean dynasties. Korea did not regain independence until after Japan surrendered to the United States at the conclusion of World War II in 1945. At that time, the Korean Peninsula split both ideologically and militaristically: the north (the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, DPRK) adopted a communist-style government, while

“educate the whole human person on foundations of love and faith, encouraging all its members to be intent on the pursuit of learning in a sincere quest for truth.”

Over 11,500 undergraduate students and nearly 4,000 graduate students attend Sogang University. Nearly a tenth of these students hail from foreign countries, including some North Korean refugees. Sogang strives to welcome foreign students by providing peer mentorship programs, excursions throughout the Korean peninsula, and dinners hosted by Jesuits and the university’s President. This atmosphere of inclusion radiates throughout campus: graduate student Seng Thera, originally from Cambodia, noted that after three and a half years at Sogang, he feels “very friendly to Korea and Korean society. I can say that Korea is my second home now. Every time I go home, I want to come back to Korea.”

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Sogang faced many challenges as they frantically sought to hire competent faculty, develop adequate courses, and construct necessary facilities.

Simultaneously, under the presidency of Chun Doo-hwan (1979-1988), universities were required to fail 30 percent of their student population by graduation in order to receive funding from the Korean Ministry of Education. The government rationalized the graduation quota system by asserting that it placed pressure on students to perform well in their studies, as failure to achieve would result in expulsion. According to Father Park, who taught undergraduate and graduate courses at Sogang for over twenty years, even Sogang was not immune to these requirements: “[In the early 1980s,] Sogang had an entry class of 650 [students]… The government demanded that we increase the incoming class to . . . 1750. To jump, in one year, from 650 to 1750.” As you can imagine, the quality of our education went down dramatically.” Though the nearly 270 percent increase in student population placed tremendous functional strain on the university, and the 30 percent fail rate quota challenged ideals encompassed within the school’s Jesuit identity, Sogang continued to adhere to these policies in order to obtain funding and remain in operation.

Beginning in the 1960s, some citizens of Korea became more assertive and sought to expand democratic values. Mincheol Kim, a graduate student at Sogang University, describes this era: “In the 60s and 70s we had a so-called ‘democratization’ period… During that time, people started to recognize that yes, we need democratic value and yes, we need to have a democratic country — not like this.” Kim went on to describe how Koreans began to view religious affiliates, in particular the Catholic Church, as agents for social justice during this same period of time: “In the way of democratization, especially the Catholic Church showed [its] own concern for that matter, and raised up [its] voice for the people. So that is why many people in Korea still remember the Catholic Church as being for justice. You can trust it. People still have this kind of sentiment. And that is why many Catholic Priests are still engaging in these types of issues very actively.”

Father John Kim Jong-su, rector of the Pontifical Korean College in Rome, emphasized the same theme during Pope Francis’ visit to Korea in 2014: “The Catholic Church in South Korea is strong on social justice and human rights, so many Koreans, Catholic and non-Catholic, naturally favor Catholicism.” Although Catholics comprise only 7.6 percent of the Korean population, they are renowned as leaders in social activism, including many who were key to the democratization movement. For example, throughout sixty-three “Prayer Meetings for the Nation,” nearly 100,000 priests and believers gathered throughout Korea in 1974 to pray and participate in street demonstrations, protesting the authoritarian government.

The ROK government has made tremendous strides throughout recent decades, electing increasingly democratic government officials and allowing citizens to express their voices more freely. Still traumatized by the events of the mid-twentieth century, however, Korean citizens remain divided on several contemporary political issues. One such division is tied to the changes that have emerged in Korea over past decades. Given the cultural, societal, and historical context, these differences are not surprising: The older generation actually lived in a quasi-unified Korea, endured the hardships of the Korean War, and experienced the authoritarianism that followed. Mincheol Kim astutely captured this point, stating: “[T]he older generation has sort of an allergic response to the socialism and communism. They hate socialism, and they hate communism. And they even hate social justice, because it is their trauma, it is their experience from the Korean War. They argue that it was caused from socialism or communism, so they hate social justice issues…” The older generation’s skepticism is understandable in context, since communist regimes like South Korea point to “social justice” as one of the fundamental principles purportedly advanced by their form of government. As a result, programs aimed at promoting social justice are tainted in the minds of some South Koreans, who lump such programs together with the communist style of government practiced by the enemy.

While the younger generation may feel inclined to actively promote social justice, the older generation dominates positions of authority within the government and law enforcement. This point was lucidly illustrated throughout the 1980s, as university officials— including those at Sogang— actually discouraged students from participating in social justice demonstrations, which challenged governmental action. As Father Park recalled,
“at that time, that’s not all bad, because it was a dictatorship. There was strong police presence. So, the police would know about any planned demonstration, and the police would come and block the gates. And a demonstration turned out to be rallying, and then pushing and shoving with the police, and throwing stones, and the police firing tear gas. So it was, by and large, unproductive. It was letting off steam, so on that score, it’s not necessarily to be against justice for the school to be against students being involved with demonstrations. They were largely futile.”

With this background, it is apparent that contemporary Korean citizens, education institutions, and religious groups face challenges as they attempt to promote social justice within their society. It is vital to consider this vibrant, dynamic history when analyzing recent and current practices of these groups, as the cultural context remains relevant to the interplay between members of the Korean community and governmental attitudes.

SOGANG UNIVERSITY: EDUCATING THE WHOLE PERSON

With this historical backdrop, Sogang University offers a wide range of programs aimed at educating students about and providing opportunities to promote social justice by improving public welfare. Through many of these programs, students are offered the opportunity to serve the marginalized, embrace diversity, and increase awareness of social justice issues. Such programs are not actively engaged in challenging governmental action, which is unsurprising given the ROK government’s sometimes harsh treatment of activists, and the university’s mission. According to Father Benedict Jung, the Executive Director of the Board of Trustees for Sogang University, that mission is the practice of “justice and respect of human rights and respect [for] the values of life. I think whereby we are trying to incorporate the whole person education across campus.” Education about such issues begins in the classroom: describing the curriculum at Sogang, Father Jung, noted, “we wanted to increase the awareness of social justice and the concern for the underprivileged. That is the first goal. The second goal is that we wanted to endorse civic awareness, mature civic awareness, that embraces diversity.” Sogang ascribes to these goals on the individual, community, national, and international level.

In the Classroom: Educating the Whole Person

One way Sogang seeks to educate students about social justice is an annual Ignatian Lecture and various classes, which Father Benedict reports are aimed “at making students and alumni aware of the problems of poverty, discrimination, and importance of service.” The Lecture is founded on six key values: affirming the world; acceptance of self; individual or personal concern; faith that does justice; independent learner; and value-oriented. One class offered in this context is the “Age of Empathy,” which is based on the long-standing Jesuit ideal that one must live in the world to bring about social justice. A second class recognizes that the humanities are now emphasized in Korea, and seeks enable students to create their own classes in the humanities titled “Humanities Designed by Students.” Future classes will include “Learning from Within,” which will be devoted to service learning, self-acceptance, and self-awareness; and “Preferential Option for the Poor,” which will emphasize the need to have personal concern for the poor.

Ignatius Center for Human Development: Creating Students For Others and With Others

The Ignatius Center for Human Development at Sogang is another way the University educates students and provides opportunities to improve public welfare. The Ignatius Center housed under Campus Ministry has a Jesuit director and offers a range of social justice programs. Professor Hye Yoon Park from the Ignatius Center described its mission as follows: “[O]ur center has the ideal that is ‘A person for others and with
The Ignatius Center for Human Development provides students with information and resources on community service events, offers guidance on social clubs, and classes for students. The Ignatius Center for Human Development is actually supported by the ROK government, being the product of the Korean Ministry of Education’s Advancement of College Education program, commonly referred to as “ACE.” Through ACE, the Korean Ministry of Education provides funding to tertiary education institutions to advance college education in the curriculum and within a broader context. This, according to Professor Park, helps students, “better understand the world.”

After receiving ACE funding in 2008, Sogang transformed its former “Community Service Center” into the “Ignatian Center for Human Development.” Since that time, Sogang has instituted a variety of programs and hosted numerous events that enable students to participate in social service and relevant career opportunities. For example, Sogang used ACE funding to sponsor presentations by Jesuit Priests and Monks who discussed their experience overseas with community service, and artists and businessmen who taught lectures of their respective careers.

In the classroom, the Ignatius Center offers “Social Service Class,” which meets eight times and requires participants to undertake thirty hours of social service activities. Students perform such services through five different organizations, including a Catholic childcare center, a District juvenile center, tutoring underprivileged children, volunteering at a large hospital known as the “Severance Hospital,” and working at the District welfare center. A second class called the “Practicum of Social Participation and Practice” meets eight times, and holds activities eight times outside of class. In this class, Father Benedict reports that students “are cooperating with local government and university institutions in order to find out problems, in order to correct structural problems, and finally, to see what roles and responsibilities they can do to eradicate these problems.” Participants in the program can voluntarily earn a “Social Service Certificate” that documents a student’s commitment to social service; some 360 students have earned some level of the Certificate, which comes in four graduated forms depending upon the level of service provided by the student – “Social Service Master” Beginner and Advanced, and “Social Service Leader” Beginner and Advanced.

Social Service Corps: Reaching the Marginalized

The university also offers students the opportunity to advance public welfare through many different “Social Service Corps.” One such Corps focuses on social service for disabled students. As a result, Sogang has received the highest rating for accommodating students with disabilities for consecutive nine years. Younggwon Kim, a paralyzed student elected to attend Sogang precisely because “the service offered at Sogang University for students with disabilities is one of the best in Korea.” Student volunteers take notes for Younggwon Kim and transport him from class to class. Sogang takes this program seriously: University administrators send a letter to each professor in advance of any class which will include a disabled student, incorporate questions in end-of-semester evaluations about how well each professor accommodated the needs of disabled students, and assess student volunteers and quality of the services they provide. The program involves about eighty student volunteers per semester, who are chosen through a rigorous application process.

As explained by Gyoulee “Camille” Choi, an undergraduate student who has volunteered to take notes for disabled students, such programs are aimed at promoting an atmosphere of inclusiveness: “The services for the handicapped students here at Sogang are really organized, and I think that is because it is a Jesuit community. They try to provide education for all students.” And the Social Service Corps do not just impact the service recipient; Camille reflected upon the benefits she received through her volunteer activities: “It was a good experience to have the class with [the disabled student], and it was a really good opportunity to [get to] know each other, and what handicapped students really need, and the difficulties they have during the classes.”

Other Social Service Corps improve public welfare by providing mentoring. Here, students volunteer to visit, tutor, and mentor children from poor and single parent families. Students also have an opportunity to volunteer with the Sogang Broadcasting Service Corps, which produces sixty-minute programs about and for low-income families. Another Service Corps available to Sogang students is Alpha Sigma Nu, which currently is assisting with programs for low-income students and interracial families. Finally, the Ignatius Center enables students to participate in a Service Corps known as “Campus Greener,” which is focused on programs that enhance Sogang’s promotion of an environmentally friendly campus.

Opportunities for social service at Sogang extend beyond the Service Corps. One day every year, approximately 100 Sogang students participate in service work within the Mapo District where the school is located. This is another example of a social justice program supported by the government; in this case collaboration between the Ignatius Center and the District’s local government, focused on meeting needs in the community.
Javier Overseas Service Corps and Global Solidarity Program: Service without Bounds

Sogang students also have the opportunity to participate in social justice programs abroad through the Javier Overseas Service Corps. For the past 11 years, Sogang has sent students to Cambodia to assist at a technical center for disabled people, an aging center, and to work on issues related to education. Students spend approximately three weeks in Cambodia and have a first-hand opportunity to see how the Jesuits care for underprivileged people. One student who recently participated in this program noted that it provided an opportunity to “go to hospitals, which [are] run by Jesuits. There are mentally handicapped people, and also people afflicted with AIDS, so we played with them during the daytime, and helped to feed them.” Other students are offered the opportunity to serve abroad in the Philippines, in cooperation with the Ateneo de Naga University in Manila, also a Jesuit institution. Ten Sogang students go to each location annually, accompanied by several faculty members.

One final method of social justice education is through taking professors and staff members abroad to Nepal in connection with Sogang’s Global Solidarity Program. Last year, Father Benedict led five Sogang professors from different disciplines to St. Xavier College in Nepal, where they taught classes for five days, and visited social apostolates for Jesuits, such as center for drug addicts, center for orphanages, and a union sponsored institute, which cares for women forced into prostitution. Father Benedict remarked that along their journey, they met with several Jesuits and non-Jesuits, and spent time analyzing how Jesuits are implementing social justice within their communities. Father Benedict views the Global Solidarity Program as an important opportunity for professors and staff to learn about the challenges of the real world, and to bring those experiences back and incorporate them as they teach Sogang students.

KOREAN CITIZENS: EDUCATING THE WORLD THROUGH SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVISM

Stepping outside the university setting, Korean citizens, including Jesuits and the Catholic Church, are actively engaged in social justice. In contrast to the programs offered at Sogang, some of these activities aim at challenging governmental actions, often at great cost to the activists who participate in such movements.

Gangjeong Village

One example of such activism that has resulted in harsh treatment of peaceful protestors relates to the ROK’s construction of a naval base at Gangjeong Village on Jeju Island. The construction of the base is highly controversial, starting with the process used to “approve” it by local villagers. A Jesuit Brother, Dohyun Park, was arrested for peacefully protesting the naval base. In an excerpt from a letter that he wrote in prison, Brother Park related how construction of the base was “approved” by local villagers:

The naval base construction project in Gangjeong village began in 2007, when a sudden ad-hoc village meeting was held without proper notification. There, 87 villagers, at least half of whom had been bribed by the navy with exaggerated compensation and rainbow promises of economic development, voted yes to the naval base plan via clapping. On hearing this surprising news, another special village general meeting was held. This time 725 out of 1000 voting villagers participated and 680 (94% of those that voted) voted against the naval base construction. Since that time, for the 7 years, the villagers and supporting peace activists have struggled against the navy and its dishonest troublemaking, promise breaking, and media control.

Opposition to the base goes far beyond the manner in which construction was approved, however. The construction site of the naval base is sacred to villagers, who hold a deep reverence for the earth and their ancestral land. Brother Park describes Gangjeong as “a place where many can be inspired in spirit by the beauty of God’s creation.” Furthermore, the construction of the base threatens a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and
Korean Marine Park, and Gangjeong’s temperate soft coral forest — the world’s largest soft coral reserve. According to the villagers, the naval base construction “is almost certain to end the agricultural lifestyle we have practiced for generations.”

The military presence in Gangjeong has also revived painful memories about thousands of Jeju Islanders being slaughtered shortly after the end of World War II based on allegations that they were communist sympathizers. It was not until 2003 that the ROK government acknowledged the government-sponsored massacre. Anxious to pay grievances to neighbors and loved ones lost in the massacre, thousands of Jeju villagers flocked to the national cemetery to hear former South Korean president Noh Moo-Hyun offer the first official comments on the tragedy. In this address, he designated Jeju as a shining beacon of human rights and an “Island of Peace.”

With this historical backdrop, it is not surprising that villagers are staunchly opposed to the base; in the words of Father Kim, S.J., who has lived and protested in Gangjeong village since 2008, the construction of a military base under these circumstances is considered evil:

That is our belief. Our belief. We think this naval base is evil actually. This is wrong. This naval base must not be here. We don’t accept this naval base. This is evil. We don’t allow evil to stay here. We don’t allow evil, that’s why we continue [to protest]. We don’t want the naval base. We want to stop the naval base, even though they almost finished building this naval base. Our action comes from our belief.

Construction of the naval base is now 60 to 70 percent complete, but protests continue. Catholic clergy regularly visit the site and protest, holding Catholic mass every day—and sometimes twice daily—adjacent to the construction site. These peaceful protests include praying the Rosary, chanting, singing, and acts of civil disobedience such as priests sitting on plastic chairs placed just over a line demarking the base. A large contingent of ROK police stands by to ensure that the protests do not interfere with construction, and on occasion, policemen actually lift the priests while they are seated in the chairs and push them back over the line. In other cases, harsh measures taken by the ROK government in response to such peaceful protests demonstrate that such social activism can carry a heavy price when it displeases ROK authorities.

Brother Park first moved to Gangjeong in 2011 to engage in protest activities. In 2013, he was arrested and placed in an ROK prison for over six months, being held in a cell measuring one and a half by two meters. And this all occurred without finding him guilty of a crime, or even a clear explanation of the charges that justified such a lengthy prison stay. In fact, Brother Park described that he was not informed why he was imprisoned, and “Still, the trial is still going on. So almost two years, still, it is not finished… The maximum sentence is around 6 months, so that’s why I was released after 6 months.” Brother Park was not the only one incarcerated for the peaceful protests; in fact, he noted, “There were many put in prison before me. Around 30 people.” The vast majority of those incarcerated were affiliates of the Catholic Church, including priests, nuns, and laity.

While the protests have not stopped the construction, nor the government’s harsh treatment of protestors, they have garnered significant media attention, including Regis Tremblay’s production of the movie, “The Ghosts of Jeju.” In addition, the Jeju Catholic Diocese and Korea Province Society of Jesus are in the process of organizing the second annual International Peace Conference in Gangjeong village, with the goal of “stimulating local villager support, spurring activism, and drawing media attention.” Bishop Peter Kang (bishop of the Jeju Diocese), Michele Naar-Obed, (a member of the plowshares group of faith based peace activists of the United States), and Bishop Tani Daiji (a retired bishop from Okinawa, Japan) presented at the first International Peace Conference in Gangjeong village, attended by over 500 individuals from the village, Korean mainland, and around the globe. Through these efforts, the protestors believe they are educating the world about a social injustice they view to be fundamentally wrongful.

Sewol Ferry Tragedy

Another example of social justice activism challenging ROK governmental action relates to the tragic sinking of the Sewol
ferry. On April 16, 2014, a ferry carrying 476 people capsized en route from Incheon to Jeju, killing 245 students on a field trip from Danwon High School. Nine people are still missing, including four students, two teachers, and a six-year-old boy. The Captain, Lee Joon-Seok, was sentenced to 36 years in prison for being one of the first to jump ship to safety, despite ordering the students and passengers to remain in their cabins while the ferry sank. Several passengers sent video recordings and messages to their loved ones in their final moments; hopeful tones turned into anguished goodbyes as they gradually realized that help would not arrive in time.

Many protestors cite government deregulation and neoliberal policies as causes for the Sewol tragedy. Though the Sewol ferry had been retired after eighteen years of service, subsequent government deregulation permitted Chonghaejin Marine Co. Ltd. to purchase the ship and resume operation of the vessel, despite obvious risks. In addition, lack of regular inspections allowed the billionaire owner of the ship, Yoo Byung-Eun, to redesign the ferry to carry more passengers and cargo, all of which contributed to the tragedy. In addition to complaints about these issues, protestors also challenge the efficacy of the Korean Navy and Coast Guard, as miscommunication between these public agencies and a cheaper, privatized emergency response company failed to respond in a timely manner as the ship sank. As one activist noted, “simulations show that if appropriate measures were taken, all passengers of Sewol could have been rescued within 6 minutes and 17 seconds.” Instead, hundreds died.

At present, protestors have erected a memorial and education center in Gwanghaumun Square with photographs of all of the victims. According to Se Bok Oh, a Christian pastor stationed at the memorial and education center, the activists chose Gwanghaumun Square—located in the heart of ROK’s government district—because their “government needs to help, needs to recover the Sewol Ferry. Our government said to the families that they will do that, they will recover the Sewol Ferry. But that costs lots of money … Until we bring back the last missing person, this is the spot for protest.”

Though the ferry sank over one year ago, and nine bodies remain unrecovered, the government does not appear to have undertaken a formal investigation to determine the cause. According to those involved with this issue, the ROK government has refused to undertake an investigation, or accept responsibility. As Mincheol Kim explained, “The government has responsibility to save people, to make everything right when it comes to the transportation system. But the thing is that they didn’t do anything; and people have died, and many people are suffering from loss of life even now. The Korean government didn’t investigate the cause of the incident. They just try to hide something that might reveal the incompetence of the Korean government. They are afraid. It is ridiculous.”

Much like the situation in Gangjeong, it is religious clergy who are challenging governmental action in connection with the ferry incident. A collection of Protestants, Catholics, and Buddhists gather daily in Gwanghaumun Square to pray, assemble and hand out remembrance bracelets, and provide refreshments for visitors. Moreover, multilingual activists are posted at the memorial to educate visitors about the Sewol ferry using pamphlets and an informational video recounting news clips and interviews from the tragic event. The activists also collect signatures on a petition, demanding that the government conduct an investigation and recover the sunken ferry and missing bodies. The signature sheet, which now has several million names written in languages from all over the globe, displays the profound impact of these protests in the middle of Gwanghaumun Square.

In conjunction with these efforts, Korean protestors report that they have “organized protest rallies and symbolic pilgrimages, hunger strikes, and occupations of public space to raise awareness and demand justice,” and that they have “engaged in continued legislative and media activism to fight against growing apathy and the rush to forget.” Worldwide, family members of Sewol victims shared their experiences during a tour of more than fifteen cities in North America during March of 2015, vowing to educate the world about social justice issues that are all-too-real for their local community.

CONCLUSION

Korean citizens exhibit resilience as they strive to redefine and rebuild a country that has experienced colonialism, war, and authoritarianism within the past century. At Sogang University, social justice activists seek to educate and provide opportunities to improve public welfare, with some such programs offered collaboratively with local and national government agencies. Outside the university, some organizations, including Jesuits and the Catholic Church, engage social justice to challenge governmental action. While some protestors, including nuns and priests, have paid a heavy price for such activities, they have been effective in educating the public about social injustice. As shown by the protests related to the Gangjeong village naval base and Sewol Ferry tragedy, Korean citizens — particularly those affiliated with the Catholic Church — have proved their commitment to democracy and social justice. Ultimately, these groups are harnessing the power of education to improve the status of their community and world.
INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

FR. BENEDICT KANG-YUP JUNG, S.J., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SOGAN UNIVERSITY

As Executive Director for Sogang’s Board of Trustees, what are your goals for how social justice issues are implemented?

Firstly, through the Ignation Lecture, which aims at making students and alumni aware of the problems of poverty and discrimination, and the importance of service. At the moment, that is our goal: we wanted to form Men and Women for Others by providing classes through the capacity of our Board of Trustees, so that those who are participating in the specific classes, are becoming Men and Women for Others, which is the core of our Jesuit education philosophy.

[And secondly] through the Global Solidarity Program, between Sogang and Nepal. Last year, I led five professors from different disciplines, and I took them to St. Xavier’s college in Nepal, for five days... That exposure helps our professors to know the reality of the world-- more specifically, the world outside of Sogang. I think the program is trying to incorporate the ideal model of education into realistic solidarity, or engagement with the local people.

SENG THEARA, GRADUATE STUDENT, SOGAN UNIVERSITY

How has Sogang’s Jesuit identity influenced or impacted your experience at the University?

I am not a Catholic, or Christian. I am a Buddhist. But still, [the Jesuits of Cambodia, in my home country,] encouraged me to come and study here, at a Catholic university. If I didn’t get support from Sogang University and the Jesuits of Cambodia, I could not come here, because the tuition is much more expensive than in [Cambodia]. I would call that justice, because I can also have an equal chance to get an education here.

FR. FRANCIS MUNSU PARK, S.J., JESUIT RESEARCH CENTER FOR ADVOCACY AND SOLIDARITY

Compared to the period during the dictatorship in South Korea, how have government and Sogang University policies changed with respect to social justice issues?

Now, with more open government, the governments of Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-hyun were much more open to social justice actions, and tried to include ways to cut back on social discrimination as a way to form government policy. However, at the same time, both those governments, felt like they couldn’t help but follow Neo-liberalistic economic policies. Still, that did lead to more openness.

Sogang has done a little bit more, but regarding social justice, it mostly comes through student volunteer action, so that they can contact people working in Korean society, but it would be much more focused on public welfare rather than changing structure or social justice issues.

MINCHEOL KIM, GRADUATE STUDENT, SOGAN UNIVERSITY

When you consider your peers at Sogang University, how do you think they generally feel about the construction of the Jeju Naval Base?

In general, there is division of age: the so called “young-age,” and “old-age.” Generally, the old-age is for national security; so, they argue that we should have the naval base to protect ourselves. But the younger generation, they are more for the environmental issue. So they are more concerned for the biosphere, and other ecological concerns. In general, more of the younger-generation are opposed to having a naval base there.

DO-HYUN PARK, JESUIT BROTHER, GANGJONG VILLAGE

What was life like in the prison?

I stayed 24 hours in a 1.5 by 2 meter [sized] room. For an hour, I was allowed to get some exercise in a little bigger space. I had visitors, so I had a chance to go meet visitors for 10 minutes around in a narrow alley... The main schedule was praying, reading and writing letters. Handwriting letters-- that was a big experience, because usually I use a computer. It was a really
simple life.

**What is the current situation like in Gangjeong village, with the construction process?**

According to the navy plan, the construction will be finished this year... With this situation, we have to accept that some villagers will desert [protest activities]. Many people think, “Yeah, but the naval base is finished! What can we do [to protest] against the naval base?” This is what we, Catholic activists, are thinking about. What can we do? How can we live with the death-- the death of villagers, and the death of others? There has been tension in certain groups, and still that kind of issue effects many people. So what I think, in my mind, is that we have to read about the real history of Korea. Why Korea? Why we should be divided?

**FR. SONG HWAN KIM, S.J., JESUIT PRIEST, GANGJONG VILLAGE**

Since you first went to Gangjeong in 2011, have you seen a difference in the amount of villagers that have been actively protesting against the base?

There were many activists here, but as time passed, it fell. Only 25, or maybe 30 peace activists remain... [The others] were tired of opposing this naval base. They thought that they couldn’t succeed, so they stopped. They gave up... [Now,] only Catholics in this area really take actions against the naval base. Even though they keep bringing in the construction workers, we will continue to try and kick out the naval base.

**SE BOK OH, PROTESTANT PASTOR, SEWOL FERRY ACTIVIST**

What is your purpose for being out here in Gwanghamun Square, in the middle of the government’s district in South Korea?

We are collecting signatures, so the government will listen. Right now they will not listen. So this is our asking, trying to make a difference. Our mission is to bring back the last missing person. But they don’t care; they don’t answer. Nine persons are still missing... So we are trying to recover the Sewol Ferry, and bring back the last missing person. Until we bring back the last missing person, this is the spot for protest.

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**LIST OF INTERVIEWS**

- **Fr. Benedict Kang-Yup Jung, S.J.**
  Executive Director of the Board of Trustees, Sogang University

- **Do-hyun Park**
  Jesuit Brother, Gangjong Village

- **Fr. Francis Munsu Park, S.J.**
  Jesuit Research Center for Advocacy and Solidarity

- **Gyoulee “Camille” Choi**
  Undergraduate Student, Sogang University

- **Hye Yoon Park**
  Ignatius Center for Human Development, Sogang University

- **Mincheol Kim**
  Graduate Student, Sogang University

- **Seng Theara**
  Graduate Student, Sogang University

- **Fr. Song Hwan Kim, S.J.**
  Jesuit Priest, Gangjong Village

- **Se Bok Oh**
  Protestant Pastor, Sewol Ferry Activist

- **Younggwan Kim**
  Undergraduate Student, Sogang University
OVERVIEW

Sabrina Khan is a senior in Georgetown College double majoring in Government and Women’s and Gender Studies. She is originally from Northern Virginia. In July 2015, Sabrina traveled to Dakar, Senegal to conduct research on the intersection of faith and education in Senegal, particularly the role private Catholic schools play in the Muslim-majority country. In Dakar, Sabrina focused on how teachers, administrators, executives, and students view interreligious dynamics among students of Catholic schools. During her three weeks of fieldwork in Senegal, Sabrina also spent one week in Mbour, where she stayed at the Centre de Formation Pédagogique, a center dedicated to training future teachers of Catholic schools. While in Mbour, Sabrina interviewed professors, students, and administrators about their views on religious tolerance, freedom, and solidarity within Catholic schools and what role these schools play in the development of pluralism and citizenship in Senegal.

PARTNER INSTITUTION: OFFICE NATIONAL DE L’ENSEIGNEMENT CATHOLIQUE DU SÉNÉGAL (ONECS)

In 2003, the National Office of Catholic Teaching of Senegal (Office National de l’Enseignement Catholique du Sénégal, ONECS) was created in order to nationally coordinate activities across the seven dioceses of Senegal. The organization’s mission is to better the education of “l’homme et de tout homme” – that is, of the whole person. ONECS seeks to educate Christian students about the values of the Catholic faith, non-Christian students about universal moral values, and all students about what it means to be a responsible Senegalese citizen.
The organization has been led by its National Secretary, Brother Jean Marie Thior, for the past four years. As National Secretary and member of the Congregation of the Brothers of Saint Gabriel, a Catholic order devoted specifically to education, Brother Thior not only coordinates Catholic education policies across the country, but also represents Catholic educational interests of Catholic education in front of the minister of national education. Additionally, Brother Thior represents Senegalese Catholic education to West African francophone countries as well as to the International Office of Catholic Education.

INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, the Senegalese education system has made strides in terms of accessibility, gender equality, and literacy among rural students. In part, Senegal has been able to increase access to its schools because it has invested 6 percent of its GDP into its education sector, an investment higher than West Africa's regional average of 4.6 percent. Additionally, completion rates in primary schools increased from 50 percent in 2006 to 66 percent in 2011. Gender parity has been reached in the pre-primary and primary level in urban zones, although these rates have yet to be matched in rural areas or in upper-level schooling.

Despite these successes, many challenges remain, including academic results. According to a USAID report, “Regional assessments found that slightly more than half of students in Grades 2 and 5 have basic competencies in mathematics.” Weak infrastructure, lack of funds, and insufficient numbers of highly trained teachers contribute to this reality. As the report recommends, one strategy for introducing national languages into the formal education system, currently based in French. By using a student’s first language instead of a secondary language, the student is likely to grasp the material more easily. As this report details, Catholic schools have introduced the project called Multilingual Education (Education Multilingue, EMIle), which incorporates native languages into the curriculum.

While increased access to education in Senegal is highly desirable, not all schools have been able to hire enough teachers to match the rising students. This need affects Catholic schools, which experience a high enrollment demand because of the excellent quality of education. As Sister Pascaline Thioro Ndione, director of Cours Anne Marie Javouhey, attested, “Many want to come to our school because of the quality of teaching and the values we develop among students. We often have difficulties satisfying the demand.” Indeed, while learning outcomes suffer in some parts of the country, they tend to be higher in Catholic schools.

Given these factors, it is compelling to research the factors attributed to Catholic schools that draw Muslim parents to these institutions. According to Dr. Emile Dally Diouf, a former teacher and social worker, over 20 percent of Senegalese students attend Christian schools, even though public and other private institutions are much more numerous throughout the country. Additionally, roughly 75 percent of Senegalese students enrolled in Catholic schools are Muslim, according to ONECS National Secretary Brother Thior. Given that that 94 percent of Senegalese are Muslim, while only 4 percent are Christian, it would likely be difficult to ever have a majority-Christian student body.

Considering these statistics, the research explored the context of Catholic education in Senegal and specifically the question: What are the factors for the high demand of Catholic education in a Muslim-majority country? First, this paper will place Catholic schools in the religious and educational context of Senegal. Then, it will explore different values and themes, particularly interreligious understanding, underlying the interviews providing the data for this report. Finally, it will consider challenges facing Catholic schools in Senegal and offer recommendations for overcoming those issues.

THE RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE OF SENEGAL

As previously noted, figures from the Encyclopedia of Global Religions estimate that 94 percent of Senegalese citizens practice Islam, 4 percent practice Christianity (the vast majority being Roman Catholic, with a minority Protestant presence) and 2 percent practice indigenous religions. According to the U.S. State Department, “most Muslims belong to one of several Sufi brotherhoods, each of which incorporates unique practices that reflect Islam’s long history in the country.”

While Islam is widespread throughout the country, it is important to note the unusual religious dynamics of Senegal. Elected in 1960, Senegal’s first president, Léopold Senghor, identified as Catholic. As President, Senghor famously said, “In Senegal, there are 80 percent Muslims, 20 percent Christians and 100 percent animists.” Indeed, research indicates “there is also a good deal of syncretism evident in both Islamic and Christian practices, and many ethnic groups engage in some form of ancestor worship.” This saying shows that Senegalese of both religions share certain traditions that existed before Islam and Christianity came to Senegal. While Senghor’s comment was intended as jest, it also demonstrates religious solidarity and mutual understanding that exists in Senegal and which allowed the Muslim-majority country to elect a Catholic president.

Indeed, respect for religious rights and interreligious understanding plays a significant role in Senegalese society.
and politics. The constitution of Senegal, along with other laws and policies, “protect religious freedom and, in practice, the government generally respect[s] religious freedom.”65 The state is officially secular, with explicit respect for religious traditions; for example, Muslims who wish to adjudicate family matters can choose either civil or Islamic courts. Additionally, all religious groups in the country have access to funding for special events or pilgrimages.

Despite these protections for religious freedom, however, there is room for progress. According to a 2013 Pew Forum report on the global Muslim population, there is a 4-point gap between Senegalese Muslims who say they are “very free to practice their faith” and Senegalese non-Muslims (97 percent versus 93 percent, respectively). Interreligious dynamics also have their challenges: only 29 percent of Senegalese Muslims say Islam and Christianity “have a lot in common,” versus 61 percent who say the two religions are “very different.” Furthermore, only 33 percent of Senegalese Muslims say many faiths lead to heaven, while 62 percent say only Islam leads to heaven. These statistics point to gaps in interreligious understanding and dynamics in the country that remain to be improved.66

Senegal officially secularized its education system in 1904 following France’s decision to secularize its public education system. The government allows up to four hours of voluntary religious education per week in public elementary schools, in which parents can choose Christian or Muslim sessions. Furthermore, parents have the option of sending their children to private religious schools. The education ministry provides funds to all private schools, of which Catholic schools receive a portion. According to the U.S. State Department, “established Christian schools with strong academic reputations received the largest share of this government funding.”

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CATHOLICISM IN SENEGAL

Catholicism first emerged in Senegal following the arrival of the Portuguese during the fifteenth century. In 1442, under the authorization of Pope Eugène IV, bishops and missionaries sailed to Senegal to actively convert Senegalese. Shortly after, “the first concrete sign of the Christian presence in Senegal” was the construction of a church in Gorée in 1482.67 During the nineteenth century, la Mère Anne Marie Javouhey, founder of the congregation of Saint Joseph de Cluny sisters, started to train native Senegalese priests. After Dakar and Gambia split in the twentieth century, Senegal was divided into seven dioceses under the Ecclesiastical Province of Dakar.

In 1962, the Senegalese Catholic Church came under native Senegalese, as opposed to foreigners, according to Brother Thior. This is most notably marked by the rise of Monseigneur Hyacinthe Thiandoum, who was the first native Archbishop of Dakar, serving from 1962-2000. The current Archbishop of Senegal and Dakar is Benjamin Ndiaye.

HISTORY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN SENEGAL

According to Brother Thior, the history of Catholic education in Senegal can be divided into three parts: the first half of the nineteenth century, the second half of the nineteenth century, and the period following World War II.68 During the first half of the nineteenth century, the governor of Saint Louis, then capital of Senegal as established by the French, entrusted “The School for Little Black Girls” to the Sisters of Saint-Joseph de Cluny, who had already been present in Saint Louis since 1819, after having been founded in 1806 by Anne Marie Javouhey. In 1841, Brothers Euthyme and Héraclion, brothers of Pléremel, ran the first school for boys, created by Abbey Maveille in Saint Louis. In 1843, a school was established in Gorée, then in Dakar in 1882, and then in Rufisque in 1888. In 1843, Abbey David Boilat, one of the first three Senegalese priests, opened a secondary school for students. In 1848, the Soeurs de l’Immaculée Conception de Castre, created the first school for girls in Dakar.

More Catholic schools continued to open and expand into rural areas during the second half of the nineteenth century. With an anticlerical law passed by Auguste Comte in 1903, the development of Catholic schools slowed and education was secularized the following year. Twenty years later, the Governor General lifted the ban on Catholic schools and allowed missionaries to teach once again.

Catholic education in Senegal, along with its reputation, greatly expanded following the end of World War II. In particular, the brothers of Sacré Coeur supported the expansion of Catholic education in Senegal by opening many new schools, including l’école de la Cathédrale in 1959, l’école Saint Michel in 1960, le collège de la Petite Côte in 1961, along with many others. Other religious congregations not specifically dedicated to education, but that helped expand Catholic education included the Ursuline sisters, the Sisters of Saint Charles d’Angers, and the daughters of Christ Roi. In 1970, the National Board of Catholic Education was created, and then replaced, six years later, by a structure today called the National Secretary, alongside the creation of seven dioceses to better serve schools from a regional level. In 2003, ONECS was created to coordinate education at the national level.

Today, the majority of students who attend private Catholic schools are Muslim, as statistics cited below show. Christian
students of private Catholic establishments are offered catechesis, or basic religious education. These courses are voluntary for non-Christian students, who typically follow a secular curriculum called la morale. In addition to private Catholic schools, the government also funds private Islamic schools, at which approximately 60,000 students are enrolled.

ONECS IN CONTEXT

Private Catholic education consists of preschool, elementary, middle, and secondary levels. In addition, many schools offer technical and professional training for those who decide not to attend university. Some Catholic schools in Dakar have also offered classes for deaf and mute students, and many more are planning to accommodate handicapped students in the future. Training for teachers of Catholic establishments takes place at two training centers: The Center for Pedagogical Training (Le Centre de Formation Pédagogique, CFP), headquartered in Mbour, and the Pedagogical Training for Catholic Preschool located in Thiès to train preschool teachers.

According to statistics released by ONECS for the 2014-2015 academic year, there were 325 Catholic schools throughout Senegal. Out of the 107,028 students enrolled in Catholic schools, 27 percent are Catholic and 52 percent are female. Out of the total 3,486 teachers at Catholic schools, 83 percent are Catholic and 73 percent are female.

Catholic schools in Senegal have an excellent reputation for academic rigor and discipline, which contributes to high demand for their services. For the 2011-2012 school year, 83 percent of students at Catholic schools passed the baccalauréat, 94 percent passed the End of Studies Certificate, and 91 percent passed the Certificate of End of Middle School. While statistics could not be found for students of public schools, Brother Thior asserts that these success rates in Catholic schools are higher than the rest of the country. What accounts for this
higher than average rate of academic success, and is it unique to Catholic schools?

NON-CHRISTIAN INTEREST IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

When asked what attracts Muslim parents to Catholic schools, many interviewees referenced discipline that is unique to Catholic schools. Edouard Gueye, who works in promoting literacy at the CFP in Mbour, suggested that this discipline is common knowledge: “Parents know where to find the serious work. Students of Catholic schools are at a higher level than students of public schools. Everyone wants this and is aware, whether you are Catholic or Muslim. Our work is always controlled. But, our religious studies are never imposed upon anybody, and parents know that, too.” Gueye’s quote suggests that the Catholic education system reputation for academic success is well acknowledged throughout Senegal. Furthermore, the system’s religious identity does not deter diverse families because the Catholic system is also known for its protection of religious liberty.

When asked the same question, Henri Diadhiou, director of the Diocesan Union of Associations of Parents of Pupils of Catholic Education of Dakar, agreed that “the discipline and rigor” attracts families. Furthermore, “most of the high examination results come from Catholic establishments. These values [of rigor and discipline] exist more profoundly in Catholic establishments than in public schools. Even though we all live together, education is not the same. In private Catholic schools and even in homes, there is a certain discipline. No one ever goes on strike in Catholic schools.” Pascal Diouf, teacher at the Ecole d’Application of the CFP in Mbour, echoed these sentiments by saying, “There are certain things a teacher of a Catholic school cannot permit, like certain absences. There is an internal system that doesn’t exist in public schools. There is a system, but it’s not always followed to the letter. Even teachers in public schools know it – most of them send their children to public schools. There are already strikes happening in public schools. In Catholic schools, you cannot leave your students like that.” Here, Diouf and Diadhiou point to what they believe distinguishes Catholic schools from the Senegalese public system: in particular, the regularity and immunity from strikes. In addition to Diouf and Diadhiou, seven other interviewees also explicitly cited the lack of strikes as an advantage of the Catholic education system.

Indeed, strikes, common in many public schools, are forbidden in Catholic schools. While strikes are utilized to demand increased funding from the government, they prevent students from being able to attend class for prolonged periods of time. Additionally, as Yvette Diop noted, unions for teachers of Catholic schools represent the interests of teachers at the state level and seek to secure better working conditions on behalf of the instructors.

Additionally, classes taught in a student’s mother tongue, rather than in a secondary language, influence academic results. Recognizing the importance of utilizing a mother tongue, many Catholic schools have incorporated lessons that integrate the student’s native language rather than relying solely on French. As Brother Aloise Ndour, coordinator of the project Multilingual Education (Education multilingue, EMIle) remarked, “What I like the most [about EMIle] is really the fact that the child uses their own language to introduce a foreign language. Otherwise, one teaches the child a language he has never heard, that he has never spoken. EMIle revalues the mother tongue. This puts the child at ease. After leaving his family, he comes to school and finds roughly the same linguistic realities. This contributes to the academic success we see.” Brother Ndour, along with others, is working to expand this project to older students as well in Catholic schools throughout Senegal. The project is one of the many ways Catholic education hopes to distinguish itself in Senegal.
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND TOLERANCE

The Catholic education system in Senegal committed itself to cultivating academic results as well as a culture of tolerance and solidarity among students. Henri Diadhiou, director of the parents’ bureau of Dakar, asserts that Catholic schools teach students “how to live in society through mutual respect.”

Senegal’s legal system protects religious freedom, and in practice, these laws are upheld and enforced. Mirroring Senegal’s culture of religious freedom and tolerance, Senegalese Catholic education seeks to encourage interreligious understanding and cooperation. Collège Saint Pierre student Ousmane Balde drew direct parallels between student dynamics at Catholic schools and religious understanding nationally in Senegal by asserting that, “I am Muslim. Everyone is free. We don’t even see differences between Christian and Muslim students. In Senegal, we have religious stability. Christians and Muslims celebrate each other’s holidays, like Christmas and Eid al-Fitr. If there’s a holiday, we invite each other. There isn’t a religious problem in Senegal. Everyone is free to believe in what they want. It’s religious democracy.” While Balde’s statements could be called overly general or optimistic, he was not alone in connecting culture inside of Catholic schools to the religious landscape of Senegal.

Sister Pascaline Thiore Ndione, director of Cours Anne Marie Javouhey, shared these sentiments by asserting that Catholicism embraces many civic virtues, such as democracy. She claimed that, “Values like liberty are universal values of religion and of reason. They complement each other.” By inculcating civic virtues like mutual respect for fellow citizens of different backgrounds, Catholic schools play a role in the development of pluralism and meaningful citizenship in Senegal. Furthermore, like Balde, Yvette Diop, head of the national union for teachers of Catholic schools, also connected mutual respect among students of different backgrounds in Catholic schools with political culture at large in Senegal: the importance
of education, she asserts, is not only academic, but also “education of civic values, morals, and ethics […] In Catholic schools, we closely hold onto our values and the idea of living together. Living together is what makes a state. If youth learn to live together from a young age, they will grow up well.”

In addition to a culture of tolerance, religious freedom is also respected within Catholic schools. As Odette Tine, director of the primary school Mère Jean Louis Diène remarked, “We don’t have many problems because parents know to respect our Catholic identity. We don’t impose prayers on non-Christian students and we live in a very relaxed manner. I don’t think we have any interreligious difficulties because of our ways of living together. The Muslim students are at ease during morning prayers [in which Muslim students are not forced to participate], because it’s not done in an ostentatious way.” She also went on to say that, “I think interreligious dialogue lives in our schools. We accept students because they are students that need to learn – religion comes after. We do not distinguish between students. A child is a child. They are instructed and informed. This is the Senegalese profile: we take who we can and do what we can.” Here, we can see the Catholic system’s relevance to Senegalese citizenship. The administrators and students interviewed above view the school system as preparation for life in a religiously and ethnically diverse nation. To be a productive and responsible citizen who will support policies that promote religious liberty and solidarity, students must experience pluralism in action inside of their schools.

Certainly, we cannot conclude there is no religious conflict in Senegal from these interview excerpts. According to a 2013 Pew Forum report, 23 percent of Senegalese Muslims say religious conflict is “a very big problem in their country.” While Catholic schools do promote interreligious understanding in Senegal, the country nevertheless experiences religious tensions. This should be kept in mind while reading the interview excerpts included in this paper.
SOLIDARITY

In addition to the tolerance of different faiths, there also exists a sense of solidarity among Muslim and Christian students in Catholic schools. Sister Eugénie Babene, teacher at Collège Sacré Cœur de Dakar, says that at her school, “You can’t tell which students are Christian and which students are Muslim. It is forbidden to wear the veil, since it’s a Catholic school. Since students wear a uniform, you also cannot tell who is rich and who is poor. Each morning there is a prayer. Everyone respects the silence, but no one is forced to participate. Parents agree to these rules before registering their children.” However, forbidding the veil is not necessarily universal among private Catholic schools, as each determines their own policies.

Some might argue that forbidding the veil is inconsistent with religious liberty. When asked whether this ban creates tension among students or has ever been protested by families, Sister Eugénie responded that parents are aware of the policy before enrolling their child. Furthermore, Muslim students are free to perform their daily prayers while in school, depending on the private school in question.

Additionally, in many cases, this sense of solidarity applies among not just students, but also parents. Odette Tine asserts that, “In terms of interreligious dialogue in schools, we can’t complain because everyone gets along well. Parents work together for the good of the school. The interreligious dialogue materializes in our schools,” before manifesting itself in the social and political realm.

How does this solidarity manifest? Many interviewees noted that the culture of solidarity goes beyond academics – students helping one another with assignments or befriending others of different religious or ethnic backgrounds. In fact, solidarity is connected to religious practices in schools. As Sister Pascaline Ndione asserted: “Teaching according to Catholic values is a part of our identity. We have more Muslim students in this school. But that does not prevent us from transmitting our faith and Catholic being. We transmit values like justice, gender equality, respect, solidarity, hard work, et cetera. But also, we do not forget that our Catholic values are universal values. We keep our Catholic identity: We pray every Monday morning, but no one is forced to participate. What’s marvelous is that a lot of students who are not Catholic ask for prayers for their close ones.” Through Ndione’s words, we can see more clearly the appeal Catholic values might have to Muslim parents, since many “Catholic” values can also be considered universal or Islamic values, too.

Having a Catholic identity does not mean Catholic uniformity. As director of Cours Anne Marie Javouhey, Sister Pascaline

THE FUTURE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN SENEGAL

Education plays an important role in Senegal’s long-term development. Not only does education prepare students for the job market, and future scientists, engineers, and doctors to promote health and better infrastructure, education also develops civic values such as tolerance and mutual respect.

In particular, Catholic education in Senegal aims to produce responsible citizens who will contribute to long-term development. When asked what role Catholic education plays in Senegal’s future, Sister Pascaline Ndione notes that it will
help prepare students for their intellectual and professional life. However, she also states that Catholic education “forms the morality of the student. I think that’s how we can measure the importance of education for the future development of the country. It’s where development begins.”

Through Sister Ndione’s words, we can clearly see the role Catholic education plays in the Senegalese conception of not only students’ lives, but in the larger, national goal of religious harmony and fraternity. Administrators at Catholic schools connect interreligious dynamics among students to Senegal’s larger sociopolitical culture, resulting in a celebration of pluralism that can endure long after students have graduated. This point is further demonstrated in Sister Eugenie Babene’s interviews: “In the Catholic education system, we teach students fraternity and to live with others. We teach students to get along well with their peers even if they are not Catholic. We learn to share. In general, if a student is well educated, and if he knows his religion well, he lives well with others. In Senegal, we have conviviality between Catholics and Muslims.”

Many of the interviewees referenced alluded to the idea of *cura personalis*, or caring for the whole person, as important rather than just cookie-cutter academic success. Brother Thior said: “The heart of education is the education of the heart […] de l’homme et de tout homme.” This form of education goes beyond academics to include the formation of values like love, solidarity, charity, and generosity. While Catholic education succeeds in many respects at accomplishing this goal, many challenges remain, particularly increasing the accessibility of Catholic establishments to the poor and marginalized.

**CHALLENGES**

**Accessibility for Disabled Students**

Along with the public education system, the private sector has also made efforts for disabled students. While limited efforts have been made in Dakar to offer private Catholic education to the deaf and mute, more resources must be invested by the state to open doors to disabled students who otherwise cannot attend. By maximizing the number of students who can attend higher education establishments, Senegal supports its own development. Additionally, while some scholarships are offered for lower-income students to attend Catholic schools, many interviewees noted that these scholarship opportunities must be expanded in order to secure the equal opportunity to attend private schools.

**Overcoming Negative Perceptions of Catholic Education**

Catholic schools experience a high demand given their widespread reputation for academic success; nevertheless, negative perceptions concerning the religious identity of the schools do exist. Emile Dally, a former teacher in the Catholic school system, argues that the greatest challenge facing Catholic schools in Senegal today is “fundamentalists who think that Catholic teaching is a way to indoctrinate children.” He states that the system must show that “we teach children to live well without wanting to attract them to another religion, contrary to what fundamentalists think. It is true that there is prayer in our schools. Some Muslim children hear the prayers and even manage to recite these prayers. When they say the prayers at home, parents are afraid. But we do not impose the prayers. It’s a choice.”

Dally asserts that this image is a misperception. Catholic schools do not need to change their actual policies, merely their image among certain families, since these perceptions may influence parents’ decisions to enroll their children in Catholic schools or even withdraw them. Whether fundamentalist views on the Catholic school system are in fact misperceptions is an area that requires further research.
CONCLUSION

Looking Ahead

ONECS maintains a positive relationship with the Senegalese state and will likely continue to do so. While funding is limited for all private schools, which can be challenging for Catholic and Islamic schools alike, none of the interviewees participating in this research project cited that as a source of tension between the state and the Catholic education. Rather, the state views Catholic education favorably and considers the system to be doing the state a service by providing high quality education to one fifth of Senegalese children, according to Brother Thior.

Through a culture of discipline, rigor, and interreligious cooperation, Senegalese students graduating from Catholic schools will be well-prepared for the job market. Students interviewed for this project seemed ambitious career-wise and eager to help Senegal's development. Benjamin Ndafate, for example, hopes to become either a sociologist or diplomat, while Ousmane Balde wants to be a civil engineer. Equally important to ensuring the economic and political development of the country however, is the future of religious pluralism. Private Catholic schools prepare Catholic and Muslim students to live in a pluralist world by serving as a microcosm of the national religious landscape. In addition to finding employment that contributes to the long-term development of Senegal, students must learn to live productively and comfortably with diversity.

Following a Mission

Education in Senegal is not without its obstacles. Catholic schools are not exempt from these problems. In rural zones, literacy rates remain low, test scores are below average for students who do attend schools, and gender parity has not been reached. For students faced with severe financial constraints, disabilities, or geographic limitations, Catholic schools might not be an option. Catholic schools must focus on increasing access to the hardest-to-reach populations. However, despite these challenges, Catholic education in Senegal has made significant progress towards raising the level of academic rigor and results in the country. Catholic schools also pride themselves on their mission of educating citizens of tomorrow, that are willing to work with other Senegalese regardless of background for the future development of the country. As Brother Aloise Ndour, coordinator of the EMiLe project said, Catholic education instills in its students “many fundamental religious values like charity, sharing, love of another, brotherhood, and the respect of others. These are important values because students arrive to school differently, with different ages, genders, and religions, but we learn to respect everyone. We are different, but together, we can enrich ourselves.”
SISTER EUGÉNIE BABENE, STUDENT AT L’ECOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE, TEACHER AT COLLÈGE SACRE CŒUR DE DAKAR

Can you describe the religious formation process (the steps to become a Piariste Sister)?

Our religious development begins by the Postulat, which lasts one or two years after having taken the baccalaureate. Next is the Noviciat. The first half of the step is the canonical year, in which you live at your assigned house to closely study religious life and community. In the second year, the pastoral year, you learn about apostolic life. For me, this means learning how to work with children and youth. This stage depends on the mission of your congregation, whether it be education, like the Piariste Sisters, or health, or women’s rights. The next step is the Juniorat. In this stage, you learn the fundamentals of religious life. This includes a deeper understanding of the self. I am at this stage, which can last 6 to 9 years, depending on the congregation. After this stage, we continue to constantly learn and better ourselves, but the formal development ends.

What is the role of education in interreligious dialogue?

In the Catholic education system, we teach students fraternity and to live well with others in the world, even if their peer is not Catholic. We teach them to share. In general, if a student is well educated, and if he knows his religion well, he lives well with others. In Senegal, there is friendliness between Catholics and Muslims.

M. PASCAL DIOUF, TEACHER AT L’ECOLE D’APPLICATION

What is the importance of Catholic education for youth?

Catholic education transmits traditional values, like obedience, the love of work, shame when appropriate, honesty, and respect of others. These are the values we teach and inculcate in our students. These are family values, to continue the education that begins in the home. We teach respect of others, respect for those who are older, which exists in the home and at school. Additionally, there is the love of work. A student learns that if he doesn’t work, he doesn’t eat. One must work to earn a living and help the parents who raised you. There are plenty more values like these. But, the world is evolving, and we often experience the loss of values, like the disrespect we sometimes see in daily life. Catholic schools teach youth to be responsible for the development of their country. The hard work and effort is the key to everything.

BROTHER JEAN-MARIETHIOR, NATIONAL SECRETARY OF ONECS

In your opinion, what qualities are necessary to be a good teacher?

To be a good teacher, you have to first love your job, because not everyone is made to be a teacher. If there is love, the work will be well done. The second condition is to have professional dedication. That includes things like punctuality, regularity, and well-done work.

Also, you need to be a “people person” who is capable of working with others, because a school is a family, in the spirit of a family. When you have the spirit of a family, the work becomes profitable. It’s like a factory in which the workers must work as a team.

The fourth condition of being a good teacher is to actively seek to improve your knowledge. Each year, the teacher must be able to renew his teaching, course content, to motivate students. If we always do the same thing, it becomes a routine. In the end, a good teacher is someone who is a good role model. A teacher who dresses appropriately, speaks appropriately, communicates with parents, and with students. This is very important in the mission to educate. To better educate students, we find that teachers must be role models, who know how to convey the universal and Christian values.

In general, what do you think attracts Muslim parents to Catholic schools?

Overall, Muslim parents that choose Catholic schools are very grateful to us and thank the Church for participating in the education system in Senegal.
Parents are also very happy to enroll their children because our school symbolizes a place of Muslim-Christian dialogue, because we allow youth of different religions to be able to live together. Additionally, parents also enroll their children for reasons of stability: we do not experience strikes in Catholic schools.

Can you explain the Muslim-Christian dialogue in your schools?

The dialogue, in our schools, permits people to know the religion of someone else, and to also recognize the person himself and to respect him within his religion. At school, you frequently hear students wish others happy Eid, Ramadan, Christmas, Easter, Tabaski, etc.

Muslim-Christian dialogue is also a social dialogue: living together, working together for the development of the country, sharing together joyous and unfortunate events, and uniting for good causes.

Doctrinal dialogue is a little more difficult. If I say, “Jesus Christ is the son of God,” I say it because I am Catholic. But, I cannot force a Muslim to espouse the doctrine of my faith.

MELQUISÉDÈQUE BENJAMIN NDAFATE, STUDENT AT COLLÈGE SAINT PIERRE
ENDNOTES


4. Ibid.


15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.


21. “Health Resources” THIS IS NOT A VALID FOOTNOTE (I CAN’T ADD COMMENTS HERE)


31. 21% identify as “predominantly Amerindian;” only 7% as “Amerindian

32. “Guatemala.”


37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
48. Ingrid Morjan, rComponente de Becas” BecasCSLLandivar, 2015).