

I felt my actual experience compared to my ideal experience in Jamaica by visiting attractions, tasting the food, and exploring the craft markets. We stayed at The Buccaneers Hotel. When we entered our rooms, waves filled with crashing sand peered right outside of our windows as we embraced our new lives. After we went to the beach, we prepared ourselves for a warm welcome dinner from the University of the West Indies. The next day, we took a long drive to Kingston and explored the Bob Marley museum in St. Andrew. Being there gave me a broader understanding of his family background and beliefs. In class, we learned that Jamaica was predominantly Christian. According to Davis (2011), “It has the highest concentration of churches per capita in the world” (pg. 32). On Sunday, a few members of the group attended *Trumpet Call Ministries International* in Montego Bay. I really enjoyed listening to the worship team, watching the praise dancers, and hearing the word that was ministered. Afterwards, my group went to Negril beach and rode on a banana boat. Then, we went cliff jumping at Rick’s Cafe.

Throughout the week, we traveled by “coasters,” which are Toyota minibuses. Being transported by this was a major cultural shock for me. The text mentioned the driving was very bad in Jamaica, with a death toll of approximately three hundred a year (pg. 126). Thankfully, we had a good driver, yet seeing cars come and go as they please, paying little to no attention to other vehicles and pedestrians was a big adjustment for me. However, whenever we made pit stops, I enjoyed having the locals approach the minibus to offer us food. The options of food were endless! We visited “cook shops” and ate a variety of local dishes such as, the famous Jamaican patty, jerk chicken, ackee and saltfish, and a wide range of fruits and vegetables. Other places we visited included the Rose Hall plantation house, Devon House - owned by the island’s first black

millionaire, and Fort Charlotte Drive, Lucea, Jamaica. Nearing the end, we bought hand crafted goods, clothes and art as we bargained with the owners at the craft markets.

Among all, spending time with the teen girls at the Women's Foundation of Jamaica Center was most fulfilling. Initially, the girls were very shy, yet the more we spent time with them, the more they began to open up. It was very humbling to know what some of them had been through and to hear them talk about their goals and plans of getting a better education to provide for their children - I couldn't imagine if I would feel the same being in their shoes. One of the young girl's brought me to tears as she expressed her passion to want to be a better mom to her daughter than her mom was. It was very admirable to hear so many testimonies of their plans for the future.

The knowledge I learned in my international service-learning experience has allowed me to develop intercultural sensitivity and intercultural awareness. Engaging in activities that not only supplied me with knowledge but provided me with hands-on learning experiences are skills that will better prepare me in pursuit of my career as a volunteer and outreach coordinator.