



## Abroad in Costa Rica During Tropical Storm Nate



*Kathryn McConnell (IAFS '20) in Costa Rica*

When Tropical Storm Nate hit Costa Rica in October 2017, [Global Grant](#) recipient Kathryn McConnell (IAFS '20) was taken by surprise while studying abroad in San Jose. The day of the storm was chaotic—power outages, flooding, and rain storms cancelled classes and hindered communications. In the following days, landslides and other damage left over 400,000 Costa Ricans without running water or shelter. She recalls the experience: “We filled water bottles and buckets as our water supply was rerouted from our area to aid neighboring towns with damaged pipes.”

Studying abroad in another country during a natural disaster gave McConnell an opportunity to witness disaster relief in another country. She saw [American Red Cross](#) workers heading to the coasts. National campaigns were raising funds, and international organizations collected clothes, toiletries, food, and cleaning supplies.

[Read the rest of the story about McConnell in Costa Rica](#)

### Hey, Bay Area Alums!

Dr. Tom Zeiler, Director of the International Affairs Program, will be in the San Francisco Bay Area on January 11-12. He would love to hear from you and share updates on the program. If you would like to meet with him, please [email us](#) and we will follow up with additional details.

### Become Involved

Be a part of our Global Grants endowment! Global Grants support students as they study abroad and experience the world. Help International Affairs continue to grow our endowment by giving today. Please add the following to the Comments box during check-out: *Global Grants Endowment Fund #0151296*

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# Time Abroad Inspires Alum's Involvement in Local Maine Community

Andrea Marr Casanueva's passion for investing in her local community all started with her experiences abroad. While finishing high school in Maine, she participated in a 10-week [Outward Bound](#) program to Central America, volunteering in rural cities. She continued to develop her interest in global issues by choosing to study International Affairs at CU Boulder. During her sophomore year, she visited Ecuador to work with local children and to help developing communities by building a playground, painting murals, and teaching English. A year later, she participated in a study abroad program to Brazil, focusing on social innovation and community development in rural and urban areas. When she graduated in December of 2011, Casanueva wondered where to move—many cities demonstrated the need for community growth and assistance.



*Andrea Marr Casanueva (IAFS '11)*

After working in San Francisco for six months with the [ALS Association](#), Casanueva returned to Maine to work in management for the family businesses, Dockside Grill and Handy Boat Service. In 2016, Casanueva joined her family's philanthropic efforts as they launched the [Marr-Anderson Family Foundation](#). "My experiences in other communities gave me the ability to see needs not only abroad, but also locally," explains Casanueva. "It is one of the reasons I am truly passionate about the purpose and mission of the foundation."

[Read the rest of the story about Casanueva and her local community involvement](#)

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## Dinner and Debate with the IAFS Club



*International Affairs Club members*

Political tensions, climate change, and democracy are normal dinner discussions for students in Ketchum 1B60 on Tuesday nights at the [International Affairs Club](#). Club Co-President Nick Harvey (IAFS '19) describes the student organization as "a forum to have open and informed discussions on pressing issues" where students can share their opinions, learn about global topics, and engage in productive discussions. "We eat pizza together each week because the best discussions happen around the dinner table," says Harvey. The International Affairs Club attracts a variety of attendees, from social and natural sciences to engineering, and even graduate programs.

Recently, turnout has been growing and global problems involving culture, politics, or conflict have attracted a crowd. One recent meeting had participants discussing China's move away from its One Child Policy and the impact on China's power in the global arena. "It was fascinating," explains Harvey. "We talked about everything from Chinese economic growth to the global threat of overpopulation for the environment." Conversations at the table frequently involve strong opinions and perspectives because "members are passionate about what is happening in the world," says club Co-President Rachel Ensign (IAFS '19). With no shortage of events in news headlines, the International Affairs Club always has topics to discuss and new members to welcome.

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