

To the donors of the Wisconsin Study in Poland scholarship

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for granting me the opportunity to spend such a formative summer in beautiful Krakow, Poland. Not only was my experience incredibly enjoyable in a recreational sense, it was also very beneficial to my development as a professional and as a person, in many ways which I will detail below.

As with any place, the people you meet are an integral part of the experience. I met many people from similar backgrounds to my own, as well as those from different countries and walks of life, and I made many friendships which will last far into the future. The fact that Jagiellonian University can bring together such a disparate group of people around a constellation of common interests and goals is really incredible, and everyone's experience is all the richer for it.

Interacting with my cohort of fellow students of Polish, as well as day to day life living in Poland, helped me develop my intercultural skills and literacy, something I pride myself on having worked on for much of my life, but that nonetheless can always use improvement. While I have lived in Europe before, I had never lived in Poland, nor in the context which being a summer language student put me in. Though at times it was challenging, I overcame whatever difficulties and unfamiliarities I was faced with, and I came out of the program that much more experienced.

Perhaps most impactful aspect of all, however, is the invaluable familiarity I gained with Poland and her culture. I knew terribly little about Polish history, for example, before the start of the program. I was engrossed in the history lectures at Jagiellonian, and one major question I have now is why so much of the focus on medieval Europe in my education had been on England and France rather than Poland. Perhaps it is for the best, as I was able to learn about

everything for the first time in a historic, breath-taking university in Poland's cultural capital. As an aside, I earnestly believe that Polish food is the best food in Europe, better than even Italian and French cuisine. I say this objectively, as objective as an opinion on food can be, in that I eschew the prestige given to French and Italian food that is unfortunately not afforded to Polish food.

Poland is a unique country, and one that will be in my heart forever. I very much cherish my time spent there so far, and I look forward to the future when I am there again. My experiences there will continue to shape the way I see the world and for that I must once again thank those who made my education financially possible.

Regards

James Johnson-Adamczyk