

## STUDENT PLENARY, STUDENT BIOGRAPHIES: IN THEIR OWN WORDS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2014

11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.; Salon ABC, Third Floor

### Students' Stories: Influential Experiences and Turning Points in Global Learning

Students from four institutions in the Minneapolis region will share their stories of what global learning means to them and how their global understandings, perspectives, values, and commitments have evolved over time. They will describe the kinds of experiences that lead to new insights about the world, their place in it, and their responsibility for the common good.

**Panelists:** **Modou Jaw**, Student—Minneapolis Community and Technical College; **Nazrawit Dimore**, Student, International Relations—Augsburg College; **Abigail Flores**, Student, Spanish and Education—St. Catherine University; and **Jane Sitter**, Student, English, Spanish, and Teaching English as a Second Language—University of Minnesota

Moderated by **L. Lee Knefelkamp**, Professor Emerita, Teachers College, Columbia University and Senior Scholar, AAC&U

### MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Modou Jaw

Hometown: Gambia

Major: Math; will transfer to the University of Minnesota in the spring to major in computer science and electrical engineering

Modou is a young man from Gambia. Growing up as a child, his father wanted him to study religion and to never experience western education. At the age of six, Modou's father moved to the U.S. to better support his family. Modou's oldest brother helped him to attend school in Gambia while continuing his religious studies. Skipping kindergarten and starting school in the first grade, Modou continued to excel throughout his school years. By the sixth grade, as a result of his religious studies, he was fluent in both Arabic and French. In 2009, Modou immigrated to the U.S. where he currently is both a full time student and a full time employee, working at Minco as a student engineer to cover his college and living expenses. In an important demonstration of unity, Modou brought together students from different cultures and religions to form the Muslim Student Association (MSA.) He then appointed a Christian Caucasian as the advisor of the MSA. Modou has also been a powerful voice in organizing the college's Malcolm X lectures this year--bringing in speakers from Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Somalia.

### AUGSBURG COLLEGE

Nazrawit Dimore

Hometown: Ethiopia

Major: International Relations

Nazrawit is Ethiopian and lived there until she was 11 years old, when her family immigrated to Minnesota. She is majoring in international relations at Augsburg. Nazrawit studied abroad in 3 locations: a university-based program in South Africa and both Augsburg's summer language program in Mexico and semester-long program in Central America. On her way to South Africa, she was able to visit Ethiopia for the first time since she left as a child. Since returning from studying abroad, she has been involved in an internship at a shelter for homeless people. All of this has caused her to try to compare local and global issues and determine where she wants to go with her career.

**ST. CATHERINE UNIVERSITY**

Abigail Flores

Hometown: Chicago, Illinois

Majors: Spanish, Education

Abby, whose parents are from Mexico, has lived in the Twin Cities for most of her life. As a bilingual and bicultural student, Abby decided to follow her passion of teaching in order to create bridges for students between these languages and cultures. She does this on campus in a variety of ways, both formally and informally. For two years she has served as the co-president of the Spanish Club, organizing film events and local outings to experience Hispanic culture. In two different on-campus classes Abby has participated in service learning at the local non-profit Mano a Mano, which provides medical supplies to Bolivia, as well as construction of clinics, schools, and roads. As part of a Spanish internship credit, she completed a semester at INGCO International, a translation and interpreting global marketing company in St. Paul.

Abby is a K-12 Education and Spanish major and is a senior this year. In her years so far at St. Kate's, she has gained global perspectives from her courses and experiences on campus and through service learning in the community. She is a domestic U.S. student who has had wide-ranging international experiences through her major and other courses. Abby is planning to study abroad in France through a language immersion program in Spring 2015.

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

Jane Sitter

Hometown: Oshkosh, Wisconsin

Major: Bachelor of Individualized Studies with foci in English, Spanish, and Teaching English as a Second Language

Jane is a domestic U.S. student who was introduced to international students in her first year on campus. She has become a leader in bridging the cultural gaps between U.S. and international students and communities. Jane resided in a living-learning community called Students Crossing Borders (a community in the residence hall) for two years with students from approximately 30 different countries. She currently is the Community Adviser for this community for the 2014-2015 academic year. Jane has spent 3 years as a mentor for 2 new international students each semester in the university's International Buddy Program. Additionally, Jane has tutored Spanish-speaking and Somali immigrants in the Twin Cities through a service learning class offered at the university. She is the recent recipient of the University of Minnesota's most prestigious student leadership award, the Zander Award. The university has previously used quotes from Jane in a speech given by the president on the importance of campus internationalization in student development. Jane is recognized by her professors as a thoughtful student who effectively articulates what she has learned through her friendships with international students.