

TEACH ABROAD IN HIMEJI 2014 PARTICIPANTS



Marle Ethalbah was born in Whiteriver, Arizona and belongs to the White Mountain Apache Tribe. Her close-knit family is comprised of her one loving mother, two outrageously funny brothers and a quirky younger sister. Marle has been participating in a mentoring program since the age of 7. She has been friends with her mentor since then and has prospered greatly from her mentors guidance, support and undying enthusiasm for Marle's future. When enrolled at Gateway Early College High School, Marle was able to attain her high school diploma and Associates in Arts simultaneously. When Marle realized her mother's motto of, "if you can help, then help", could be turned into a future career, she enrolled at Arizona State University and completed her Bachelor's degree in Social Work in December 2013. Marle hopes that teaching abroad will give her a push into completing a Master's in Social Work or a concurrent degree in Social Work and Public Administration. Being a youth ambassador for Phoenix Sister Cities in 2010 has ignited passion in Marle to learn about different cultures and how they interact with the world around them. She can't wait to explore Himeji, learn about their education system and interact with the students.



Justin Fultz has lived in Phoenix his entire life. Justin grew up with a healthy sized family living with five other siblings, being the baby of the family. In 2008, he graduated Magna Cum Laude from Arizona State University with a Bachelors degree in History. During his undergraduate studies, he managed to backpack around Europe making many new friendships along the way. When he returned to Phoenix he went on to work in the hospitality industry. While working he decided to continue his education at the University of Phoenix acquiring his Master's Degree in Secondary Education in 2013. Between his work and studies he managed to find time for himself to travel to Europe for a second time. From his travels, he realized the educational and fulfilling impact traveling has on an individual. Through the duration of his Master's program, Justin completed his student teaching at Saguaro High School. Through this experience, he recognized how rewarding teaching is he became dedicated to enriching the lives of young people while striving to make a better community and society through education. With his passions for

education and traveling his future plans include acquiring a degree in administration and to eventually work with other international educational leaders to improve schools all around the world. Justin is extremely honored and excited for this opportunity and while teaching English will be his focus, he hopes to learn more about the Japanese culture and society during his stay whiling sharing Arizona history and culture.



Adrienne Kishi grew up in Phoenix with her parents, older brother, and younger sister. Four years ago, she moved to Tucson to attend the University of Arizona, from which she will graduate in May 2014 with a degree in Physiology. Although Adrienne is interested in science, she has also always held an interest in culture and language. She studied Spanish and French during her undergraduate years, and she was fortunate to spend a semester in Alcalá de Henares, Spain. Adrienne learned a great amount from her experience – not only of Castilian culture and language, but also of her own culture, language, and perspectives. Her fondest memories came from her travels around Spain and in other countries, and from listening to the stories of those she met along the way. She hopes for the opportunity to do the same in Japan. Outside of her studies, Adrienne has tutored at the UA Think Tank for two years. She enjoys helping students with their work and is continually inspired by the dedication of many of her students. Tutoring

has been extremely rewarding work, and she hopes to take some of the lessons she's learned through tutoring with her to Himeji. She is excited for the challenge of working as an assistant language teacher in Japan. In the future, Adrienne hopes to go into medicine. However, she feels that there is much yet to learn before embarking on this path - not only about medicine itself, but also outside of it: about how people conduct their lives, and how culture and language guide them in doing so. She hopes that experiences such as living in Japan and working with teachers and students of a different culture will one day enable her to better serve her patients.



Shae Knowlton is the only native Arizonian in her close-knit family of mom, dad, two older sisters and two fantastic brothers in law. She recently just had her first pair of nephews, identical twin boys, whom she loves more than anything in the world. Her parents have been very supportive of her pursuits in life and will miss their baby girl while she goes off to explore the world. In 2012, Shae had the opportunity to take a semester off from college and work in order to travel to Zhongshan, China for 6 months as an volunteer English teacher. She will never forget her first students or the amazing experiences she had. This was her first experience with international travel and it sparked a passion that she continues to work towards each day. Returning from China, she continued at ASU and will graduate in May 2014 with a Bachelor's degree in Nonprofit Leadership and Management. While working towards graduation, Shae worked as a caregiver for special needs adults and children and for spent her free time volunteering at

(continues on next page)

animal shelters and working with No-Kill programs such as HALO Animal Shelter and AAWL. Shae became involved with Phoenix Sister Cities where she interned for 16 weeks. This internship taught her about cultural communication, international work, and the importance of creating bridges between different cultures. In the future, she plans on getting a Master's degree while working in the Peace Corps. She is very excited and honored to be going to Himeji, Japan. Shae can't wait to meet her students and create bonds that will last a lifetime.



Krystal Leyvas is a native to the State of Arizona who grew up in South Phoenix with her parents and older brother, Daniel. At the age of 17, her mother passed away due to a long history of medical issues. Primarily responsible for raising herself, she managed to finish high school and enrolled in Arizona State University. As an adult, she has a great support system and is blessed with 17 nieces and nephews. In May 2007, Krystal graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Social Work. While at ASU, she served as a member of Kappa Delta Chi Sorority, Inc who's mission is to promote the values of Unity, Honestly, Integrity and Leadership among women at colleges and universities. After graduation, Krystal started working with Child Protective Services (CPS) as an Investigator for three years. In 2010, she was accepted into the Master's of Arts Program for Forensic Psychology at Argosy University. During this time, she was an Academic Counselor for South University. Upon graduating in April 2012, she started working with the Maricopa County's Office of the Public Defender, as a Mitigation Specialist. Becoming an Assistant Language Teacher is new adventure that Krystal is looking forward to being a part of. Krystal is honored that she has been selected for the teach abroad program in Himeji, Japan. She is looking forward to learning a new language, culture and perspective on education and language learning – fully immersing herself into this incredible opportunity. After returning, she is open to going back into social work, continuing teaching (on some level), or possibly joining the Peace Corps.



Dana Parsons, originally from Rockford, Illinois moved to Glendale, Arizona in 1992 with her parents, Scott and Esther, twin sister, Kelly, and two older brothers, Aaron and Ryan. She graduated from Deer Valley High School in 2007, and then went on to attend Arizona Christian University to earn her undergraduate degree in elementary education in 2011. Dana had began voluntarily teaching in her church's children's ministry at the young age of 14, and having grown up with a nephew diagnose d with autism spectrum disorder, Dana has a desire to help children with special needs. After Dana graduated, she student taught for a fourth grade class in the Peoria Unified School District for eighteen weeks. She then earned a teaching degree along with a certificate to teach in Arizona. Growing up Dana had an underlining desire to leave Arizona and travel. She always found it to be so fascinating to learn about different cultures and specifically how others lived outside the small realm of Phoenix, Arizona. She was fortunate to have the opportunity to travel in Europe when she was seventeen and experience the countries of Turkey and Greece. Seeing and understanding the way people live and thrive in other parts of the world presented to her that she desperately wanted to explore and learn more about this planet. Dana had an alternative opportunity to teach English in Zhengzhou, China. However, upon acceptance into the Phoenix Sister Cities teach abroad program in Himeji, Dana immediately turned down the job offer in China. Dana's goal is to gain knowledge of diverse cultures so that she may bring passion to her future students while showing them what it means to follow your dreams. Dedicating one's life to the lives of children is not only a career, but a passion she would like to pursue. It is a great honor to teach abroad in Himeji, Japan and to educate children to improve our future society.



Trey Wilson was born in Los Vegas, Nevada on April 29, 1989, however he has spent most of his life in Phoenix, Arizona with his parents and siblings. At 24 years old, he is the oldest of three children. Trey graduated from Arizona State University in 2013 with a degree in Communication. He grew up with a strong love for sports, which has now been channeled into coaching. This is a passion that he hopes to continue while teaching abroad. Trey has always had the desire to help others and this teaching opportunity will allow him to assist in teaching the English language, as well as learn about the beautiful nation of Japan. As a very diverse and open-minded individual, Trey can't wait to experience the rich culture that Himeji, Japan has to offer. Trey has worked with children for over nine years in several different settings. Starting as a life guard at the age of 15, this is where he believes he began to fall in love with helping others. This lead to his work as an after-school counselor, Youth Sports Director, and head coach of a youth basketball team. With a long history of working with youth, it is Trey's goal to teach and motivate others. Year after year, this idea proves to be true as each experience brings more joy into his life. In the years to come, he hopes to share all his cultural experiences with his students. Trey cannot wait to immerse himself in the rich and invit-

ing culture of Japan. Trey's lifelong dream is to travel the world and eventually work in an education setting, serving as either a teacher or a coach. He is proud to represent the City of Phoenix in the Teach Abroad Program. Trey is very blessed to have been selected and promises to make the most of his time in Himeji, japan. This opportunity is something he will carry with him for the rest of his life.