

My Project GO Story

India is a good contrast of chaos and peace. No one is stressed about time; in fact, start times of events are really just suggestions, but there are so many people moving about that it can feel like everyone is in a rush. People also honk a lot in order to alert others of their presence rather than out of anger. I have learned through being here that amidst the chaos, one must keep their head cool and focus on embracing the moment.



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Memorable Moments

Funniest: We were woken up by monkeys on the roof evading the groundskeeper who was walking the perimeter of the house with a shotgun. It was a funny, perhaps even slightly disturbing experience, and I will never forget looking out the window to find a monkey peering down to look at me.

Most challenging: Uber here is not very reliable. One dropped me off 40 minutes from home, and I didn't speak enough Hindi to communicate that he was at the wrong address.

Favorite: Hiking in the mountains of Bhimtal during our long weekend was the best experience ever. It will be something that I treasure forever.

Cultural Differences

Something I found interesting was... Personal space and etiquette about staring do not exist in India. People will stare at you to the point where they turn their head as they pass. There is no waiting in line; I would always wait behind someone and someone would push pass me. That's just the way it is.

New Perspective

What I learned from my homestay family...

My host family was two parents and their 27-year-old daughter. In India, keeping the nuclear family in the same house is normal. It was interesting to see their family dynamic, especially as I assessed my own independence within my own family.

Advice to students considering this program: Talking to a local in their native language is euphoric; you realize how much you've learned in 2 months. Doing the program will be very fulfilling.

How this experience will help me in my future career: I thought the Foreign Area Officers we met at the US Embassy had a really cool job and interesting lifestyle. If I could become an FAO I would gladly do it-- especially at the Indian Embassy.