Jacob Longaker spent 2014 immersed in LGBT public policy and social movements in Brazil. His Fulbright-Hays grant enabled him to engage in fieldwork critical to his dissertation research.

Longaker, a doctoral student in political science, was one of only 80 students nationwide to receive the prestigious award from the U.S. Department of Education in 2013. This premiere grant “was the one to go for” and the only one he applied for. His interest in comparative politics and public policy and his desire to do fieldwork led him to his research topic.

Within social movements there can be rifts, as activists have different views on how policies should be enacted. Brazilian LGBT activists have a common agenda, but deciding what that means for the different groups involved has been problematic, Longaker said. A multiplicity of gender identities exist. Through formal and informal mechanisms, the shift is taking place by changing the language of the debate. Terminology is shaking things up.

Through interviews with movement leaders, he examined the internal dynamics. Members of the gay community were open to his questions, but people in the trans movement were harder to engage with. They have a distinct agenda based on gender identity nondiscrimination policy and sexual orientation is usually the focus of policies to fight homophobia.

“Some were suspicious; some accepted me. They told me ‘we’re not objects of research’ and asked me how will this help?” Longaker said.

In order to give back, he went from observer to participant observer, which he described as the richest part of his experience. Being able to connect by participating in public events helped him get a closer look.

As part of the 40 interviews he conducted, Longaker spoke with public administrators at the municipal level in several cities to learn how they implement LGBT policies. Those conversations informed him that LGBT policies varied from city to city, with some municipalities having departments dedicated to those issues.
Most Friday mornings students interested in international studies gather in Bailey 318 to learn about topics that increase global awareness. Jayhawks without Borders has grown into a thriving, student-driven club with weekly presentations covering topics such as human trafficking, careers in the Foreign Service and translation, as well as recent events in Ukraine.

In spring 2013 the Center for Global & International Studies Assistant Director Mike Wuthrich started the Global & International Studies club after students asked him if one existed. Wuthrich described the club as “organic” with sporadic leadership. He wanted the club to be more inclusive and more representative of campus and the area studies centers. Last year Wuthrich turned to Adrienne Landry, the Center for Russian, East European and East Asian Studies outreach coordinator, for advice.

“She gave the students marching orders on how to transform the club,” Wuthrich said.

The goal was to make the club self-sustaining and more professional. The first step was to change the name. Students voted and chose Jayhawks without Borders. Elections were next, and six officers were elected, including President Sally Kagay. Fifty-six students are in the club, with 15 to 20 usually attending the weekly presentations.

“One of the main reasons I wanted to start this club was to round out my Global and International Studies degree. I think that areas studies students focus so specifically on their own region of interest, that events and issues in other areas of the world can escape their notice,” Kagay said.

Kagay wants to share her interest in international issues with her fellow students and help them connect with what is happening outside the United States.

A benefit of being an active club officer means developing leadership skills. The officers are responsible for organizing the weekly presentations, social media and fundraising. The officers had regular meetings to discuss the presentations. With the goal of being topical and diverse, Kagay takes the ideas, contacts potential speakers and designs the programs. She made an effort to present topics from multiple regions of the world.

“Sally has transformed into a leader,” Landry said.

Club fundraising means being aware of university policies and working with area businesses to create opportunities. This semester Treasurer Rebekah Burgweger worked with Freddy’s Frozen Custard & Steakburgers on an evening where the club received a percentage of the restaurant’s profits.
Go big or stay home applies to Ryan Limbocker’s upcoming first international experience. Limbocker will spend three years at the University of Cambridge as a Gates Cambridge Scholar pursuing a doctorate in chemistry.

The Gates Cambridge Scholarships were established in 2000 by a donation from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to the University of Cambridge. They are awarded to outstanding applicants from countries outside the United Kingdom to pursue a full-time postgraduate degree in any subject available at the University of Cambridge. Limbocker and 39 other scholars from American universities will begin the program in October, joining 55 other scholars from other parts of the world.

Limbocker applied for other national scholarships including the Churchill, Marshall and Rhodes, scholarships, but the Gates was the one he wanted because of its emphasis on working for the common good. Limbocker is motivated by the desire to help others through his research on neurodegenerative diseases.

“As a consequence of advancing our understanding of how these diseases manifest themselves in human populations through dysfunctions in protein folding, I hope to ultimately uncover universal biomedical interventions capable of combating key neurodegenerative and systemic diseases,” he wrote for the Gates Cambridge website.

Limbocker’s interest in going to Cambridge began with his high regard for Christopher Dobson and his lab, which focuses on protein function in neurodegenerative disease. After corresponding with Dobson, the John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Chemical and Structural Biology at the University of Cambridge, the professor agreed to sponsor him for the scholarship.

“He’s passionate about research,” Limbocker said.

His choice of college, where Cambridge students live, eat and socialize, also was influenced by Dobson. Dobson is the master or head of St. John’s College, Limbocker’s future home.

Working in Dobson’s lab and participating in the Gates program will expose Limbocker to international collaborations and the research of other Gates scholars. The Scholars’ Council, a representative body, organizes social events, hosts a distinguished speaker series, and communicates between the Trust and the scholars.

The Gates Cambridge Scholarships were established in 2000 by a donation from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to the University of Cambridge. They are awarded to outstanding applicants from countries outside the United Kingdom to pursue a full-time postgraduate degree in any subject available at the University of Cambridge. Limbocker and 39 other scholars from American universities will begin the program in October, joining 55 other scholars from other parts of the world.

Limbocker applied for other national scholarships including the Churchill, Marshall and Rhodes, scholarships, but the Gates was the one he wanted because of its emphasis on working for the common good. Limbocker is motivated by the desire to help others through his research on neurodegenerative diseases.

“As a consequence of advancing our understanding of how these diseases manifest themselves in human populations through dysfunctions in protein folding, I hope to ultimately uncover universal biomedical interventions capable of combating key neurodegenerative and systemic diseases,” he wrote for the Gates Cambridge website.

Limbocker’s interest in going to Cambridge began with his high regard for Christopher Dobson and his lab, which focuses on protein function in neurodegenerative disease. After corresponding with Dobson, the John Humphrey Plummer Professor of Chemical and Structural Biology at the University of Cambridge, the professor agreed to sponsor him for the scholarship.

“He’s passionate about research,” Limbocker said.

His choice of college, where Cambridge students live, eat and socialize, also was influenced by Dobson. Dobson is the master or head of St. John’s College, Limbocker’s future home.

Working in Dobson’s lab and participating in the Gates program will expose Limbocker to international collaborations and the research of other Gates scholars. The Scholars’ Council, a representative body, organizes social events, hosts a distinguished speaker series, and communicates between the Trust and the scholars.
Global Scholars Find Right Fit for Research Mentor

Finding the right mentor takes self-awareness and courage. Global Scholars Erin Ice and Jennifer Corcoran found what they needed for a mentor in Assistant sociology Professor Jarron Saint Onge.

Having a mentor is one of the components of the Global Scholar program, a selective program for high achieving students interested in international topics. Instead of assigning a mentor, Director of Faculty Programs Dena Regis- ter encourages students to reach out to a faculty member who taught a class that interested them.

Saint Onge agrees with that approach. “It’s an organic process. Something has to draw you together,” he said. The relationship needs to be student initiated and maintained by both people, he said.

Senior Erin Ice took Sociology of Health and Medicine with Saint Onge in her junior year. She asked him for more readings and his advice on applying to medical school. Those conversations led to Saint Onge asking Ice to take his graduate seminar Social Determinants to Health. The seminar was a good fit for her interests and helped Ice in her decision to pursue a master’s degree in sociology at KU after she graduates this month.

Ice didn’t “know what research looked like” before she started working with Saint Onge. This year she is learning another form of language, coding. Saint Onge and Ice met twice a month this semester to talk about Ice’s project, using data about social capital in Indonesia to build data sets that will lead to research questions.

Corcoran is not a sociology major, but she is interested in health care issues, specifically the impact on health care by one’s gender, race, income and education. So she also took Saint Onge’s graduate seminar. Corcoran wanted to explore the topic more so she took an independent study course with Saint Onge where she compared health care systems in Chile and Sweden.

“[He] has experience in what I’m interested in. I want advice and am staying open to formulating ideas,” Corcoran said.

Both students’ work with Saint Onge were the topics of their presentations at the Global Scholars Research Symposium earlier this semester. He worked with Corcoran and Ice on their presentations.

Saint Onge and his mentees’ advice to students regarding mentors: Don’t be afraid to change mentors when interests change. Professors are here to serve students’ interests.
Town Peterson has a vast international network in 21 countries. From Ghana to Guyana, the distinguished professor in ecology and evolutionary biology collaborates with colleagues and brings scholars to KU for research.

His first international connection remains his strongest. Peterson met his former student and now frequent collaborator Adolfo Navarro Sigüenzena at the National University of Mexico. His extensive experience in Mexico and Brazil and his fluency in Spanish enables him to describe them as “home countries” that he does not count as international. Peterson visits Mexico once to twice a year.

Peterson continues to build his online resources. He has his own YouTube channel where he posts the courses he has coordinated. In Mexico, India, Poland, Kenya, South Africa and Ghana, Peterson has coordinated different projects with the same intentions: to bring in experts to cover different topics on biodiversity analytics. The workshops bring scholars together and are videotaped to be shared digitally.

Peterson received a grant in 2012 to put together an online textbook on biodiversity informatics. The foundation that gave him the grant wants to fund projects in Africa, so Peterson brought experts to Kenya, South Africa and Ghana to address 15 major topics. The “continent has covered” his heart, he said so he is going to Benin in September and has invited some of his circle of colleagues to join him. His work in those countries has led to cooperative agreements with universities in Benin and Ghana.

“It’s hard to find time for my research because everything is collaborative,” Peterson said.

By the numbers Peterson’s sponsorship of students and scholars is impressive. Twenty international graduate students have received degrees under his mentorship. Currently he has five students from around the world (Brazil, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Egypt) and one postdoc from abroad (Mexico), with incoming students from Iran, Libya, and Iraq (as well as the USA). His work with students extends outside KU. Peterson is mentoring 21 students from other institutions across the developing world (Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Cameroon, South Africa, etc.). Since 1995, he has sponsored 64 visiting international scholars to come to his laboratory at KU for research. On average he hosts six to seven scholars a year, and this year’s list include scholars from South Africa, Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, China, Peru, Turkey, and Colombia.

“Mutual scrutiny” through email is usually the first step towards Peterson working with someone. He corresponded with a student from Chile who invited him there to give a presentation at a symposium. The student then came to KU to do research and later Peterson returned to Chile.
O’Hagan Goes Global to Recruit Students

Being an international student recruiter requires stamina, enthusiasm and flexibility. Assistant Director for International Recruitment and Articulation Agreements Shannon O’Hagan recently returned from two trips to the Middle East where she participated in different types of events to recruit prospective students to KU.

Her first 2015 trip was a tour with the United States Education Group. During the two-week trip to Dubai, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait and Jordan, O’Hagan traveled with representatives from about 15 other universities. A typical day included visits to three high schools where she participated in a mini-fair with a possible event or reception in the evening. During the hour-long school visits she answers questions about KU’s location, student life, housing, safety, transportation, internship and career opportunities and unique attributes. The unexpected questions include if she knows KU basketball players and if she has their cell phone numbers.

“The challenge is to try to establish a personal connection with the limited time available,” O’Hagan said.

Before the trip KU staff organizes the materials to send ahead. O’Hagan’s boxes include translated materials about KU, Jayhawk paraphernalia and information to share with school counselors.

Her second trip was to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates for a large recruitment fair. From 9 a.m. to as late as 9 p.m. she spent several days in Riyadh participating in the International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education sponsored by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education. She spoke with a student who was concerned whether she would be able to wear a hijab at KU. O’Hagan assured her that she would and “it looked like a weight was lifted off her.”

“It’s the little things that people want reassurance about,” O’Hagan said.

Her schedule included a workshop presentation on keys to success. Engaging with students during workshops is one of her favorite things about visiting a school.

O’Hagan has been on 10 international recruitment trips since she began at KU in 2013.
Department Finds Ways to Help Visiting Students

Finding ways to work efficiently with visiting students has been a process for the Department of Civil, Environmental and Architectural Engineering (CEAE). The department’s goal is to “make their experience here the best they can have,” said Associate Professor Mario Medina.

Visiting students sponsored by the Brazilian Science Mobility Program have been coming to KU since fall 2012 for one semester or an academic year. Twenty-six have taken CEAE classes.

The fix that Medina developed is procedural, but for students new to the university, it is a big help. Because visiting students are not degree seeking, they need permission numbers to enroll. This required someone to contact faculty members to get the information, which could be frustrating. To save the department staff and the students’ time and effort, Medina designed a form for students to fill out listing the courses they want to take. Medina then verifies if the student has the pre-requisites to take the course, gathers the permission numbers and shares them with the students and department staff. Students can enroll quickly, changing the process that used to take 10-20 days.

Medina has four BSMP students in his Architectural Engineering course Energy Management. “They are excellent students and have enriched our classes,” he said.

To attract international students, it helps to have international faculty members who understand cultural differences. This extends to the other international students from Egypt and Iraq who take CEAE classes. Administrative Associate Susan Scott works to match Iraqi graduate students with the right professor and is available to help with problems and to connect them with other students.

BSMP students are required to get an internship or do summer research. BSMP Students contacted KU faculty about coming to KU, and this summer seven students attending other universities will spend eight weeks working with KU faculty.

“The relationships the Visiting Student Program, and BSMP in particular, has with academic departments is very important. CEAE is one of the incredibly supportive departments that not only permits visiting students to enroll in their classes, but offers research opportunities and faculty support to the students as well. Without the assistance from departments like CEAE, these programs couldn’t exist at KU. We really value the academic departments at KU and hope that what these students bring in terms of perspective and culture is a benefit to the departments,” said Celeste Yaluk, sponsored and visiting student coordinator.

BMSP students Ana Karine Santos Dantas and Fernanda Daccoroneack (front) and Pedro Guimaraes Trindade and Ramon De Souza Carneiro (back) are in the process of developing facility energy conservation measures.

BMSP students Ana Karine Santos Dantas and Fernanda Daccoroneack (front) and Pedro Guimaraes Trindade and Ramon De Souza Carneiro (back) are in the process of developing facility energy conservation measures.
The University of Kansas Center for Russia, East European and Eurasian Studies (CREES) hosted eight young environmental activists from Russia, along with Russian program director Maria Zhevlakova, for a series of activities in April where the group learned about sustainability initiatives on campus and in the surrounding community as part of the Peer-to-Peer Eco Reps Program.

CREES and its Russian partner, the Center for Transboundary Cooperation (CTC) in St. Petersburg, Russia, were awarded a major grant from the U.S. Department of State in 2014 as part of the U.S.-Russia Peer-to-Peer Dialogue Program. The grant called for CREES, working with CTC, to identify, train and connect Eco-Reps from the Midwest with their counterparts in Russia. These Eco-Reps designed and implemented projects with the goal of raising awareness and educating others about sustainability, and creating positive environmental, social and economic effects in their schools, communities and small businesses. Once the projects were implemented, they were evaluated by an expert committee, and the best were nominated for a peer-to-peer exchange experience.

According to Zhevlakova, development director at the Center for Transboundary Cooperation, the Russian Eco-Reps had unique and diverse projects including developing a system with the student cafeteria at a university in St. Petersburg that allows food waste to be collected and transported to local producers of organic fertilizers and organizing a “School of Positive Actions,” to work with students in the villages of the Ustianskiy region and inspire them to create their own projects focused on sustainable development.

Participants also developed a youth movement titled “Clean a Provincial Town” as a way of organizing ecological and socially-minded activity for younger generation and worked to connect all of the eco-friendly activities in the city in order to inform citizens about the environmental opportunities available in their region.

On campus, the group met with representatives of the Center for Sustainability, the Biodiesel Initiative, the Student Farm, and Professor Dan Rockhill’s Studio 804. In Lawrence, the group toured the Lawrence Public Library, the materials recovery facility operated by Hamm Inc., and meet with Douglas County Sustainability Coordinator Eileen Horn. In the Kansas City area, the group met with sustainability coordinators at both University of Missouri-Kansas City and Johnson County Community College. Finally, the delegates traveled to Greensburg, devastated by a tornado in 2007, in order to see the changes that have been made in order to make this the “greenest town in the United States.”

The second part of the exchange will take place May 23-30, when the Eco-Reps from the U.S. will travel to St. Petersburg. While there, they will learn about sustainability initiatives in St. Petersburg and surrounding areas as well as participate in an annual Sustainability Expo.

Adapted from a CREES press release by Bart Redford
Thank you to everyone who supported International Programs in 2014. Your gifts enabled students to study abroad, faculty to conduct international research and international students to come to KU.
With your donation, students see the world and change their lives. You make possible critical discoveries and allow faculty to research and collaborate across the world.

Gift Information
I/We would like to make a gift of:

$_________ in support of International Programs (36379)

Gift is from:

Email:__________________________

Phone number __________________________

Your gift to KU Endowment can be enhanced through employer matching gift programs. Contact your personnel office to find out if your employer will match your gift.

Giving options
Please make check payable to KU Endowment
Check the appropriate credit card
☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ American Express
☐ Discover
Credit card# __________________________
Exp. date ______ ______
Signature ____________________________

Give securely online: www.kuendowment.org/givenow

Match Gift
Company____________________________
Spouse's Company_____________________

Procedure: ☐ Form enclosed

www.kuendowment.org