

UNCW PLS

STUDENTS ABROAD

Student: Cher Lowda (with the red hair)

Dr. Tan's India Trip, Summer 2009

Program Focus: Development and Globalization in India

Cher's comments on the India trip:

The people in India were wonderful. They were so welcoming and hospitable, and appreciative of our group's interest in their culture. I enjoyed meeting locals and chatting with them about political and gender issues -- it really gave me a firsthand perspective that I wouldn't have gotten in the U.S. Nothing could've substituted for living in India for two weeks. I also loved our trip to the national park ... staying in the little huts, being out in nature, going on safaris, seeing elephants [below], getting glimpses of the local tribal people within the park... it was beautiful!



Photo at left: Adrienne McTigue and Cher Lowda on the campus of the Infosys Mysore Training Center, Mysore, India (2009)

Cochin was a wonderful city, almost like a little village. We had a great time shopping, visiting different churches and temples, and seeing the fishing nets. My favorite part of the trip was visiting the working girls hostel. Talking, dancing, and playing games with them was a blast! The girls were so sweet and interested in us, just as much as we were them. It was inspiring to see those young women working hard to get educated or secure jobs for themselves -- something I think we've taken for granted in the United States.

This trip really changed me. Going to India was my first time out of the United States, and nothing could've prepared me for the shock of such poverty among all societal groups -- even women, children, and the elderly. It was humbling to watch people in this gorgeous country survive off the absolute bare minimum, yet they are happy, generous, and genuinely good people. It really opened my eyes; seeing people who have real problems, yet one would never know by watching them interact with their families and friends. Their lusts for life inspired me to stop agonizing over trivial issues, to begin requiring less material things in order to be happy, and to be a better person. The cultural differences were at times shocking and even unnerving, but they were real and enabled me to see that there are other cultures in the world far different from ours. We need to appreciate and respect these cultures in order to grow as individuals and an international community.

Photo at right: Elephant bath, Nagarhole, India (2009)



Photo above: Cher visiting the APSA Dream School, Bangalore, India (2009)

