

Hello Friends!



The departure is quickly approaching and I can't believe it! I still remember the snowy day that I got the acceptance email and immediately called my parents and now the day we leave is almost here! As I think ahead into Friday and the coming weeks I have realized that I really have no idea what to expect beyond what the brochures and emails have told me—what will the landscape look like? will it be humid? how bad will the bugs really be? It has been hard to try and move past the African stereotype and imagining everything with animals roaming around, farmer's markets, and tall grasses waving in the wind. I think that I am most looking forward to meeting new people and learning all about their lives: their hardship and their joys both within the group that I'll be traveling with and the people that we meet there. I hope that I am able to be the most help possible but make sure that I am not trying to squeeze at much service into the trip as I can. Yes, I hope to be of service to the people I meet but I want to be present in those relationships instead of moving on to the next person to make a difference in their lives. That being said, I believe that my goal two goals for this trip are to be present and learn compassion; I want to live in Africa, not in my Facebook posts once I get home and not in my phone calls to my parents, I want to take advantage of and meditate on each of my experiences. I want to learn compassion in that I will understand how to love unconditionally—despite long layovers or long hot walks. I hope that these next few posts will give you a little look into our lives in Livingstone for the next few weeks.

-Bri

Hello Honors Blog Readers!!!

My name is Rachel Mason, I will be a junior in the Biomedical Sciences program this fall, and this week I am travelling to Livingstone, Zambia to volunteer with a group called African Impact. (For those of you who don't know, Zambia is a peanut shaped country a little above South Africa.)

What is so cool about African Impact is their partnership with the local community to pursue community-driven projects, this creates sustainable change for the people in Livingstone. While there are several types of projects going on in Livingstone now, I will be specifically working in healthcare. I will gain experience in clinics, home health, and HIV/AIDS education.

What may be most exciting about my trip, though, is the opportunity to meet new people and build relationships with people across the world! I am so excited to learn about the Zambian culture (and international travel)!

Let's talk soon!

~Rachel Mason

P.S. I'm all packed up and ready to go!!! Zambia, here I come! =]

