I spent two weeks in South Africa on an International Development/African Studies intercession trip. Our trip focused on the development of post-apartheid South Africa, from a variety of lenses- health, social, governance, and entrepreneurship. I had a particular focus on youth unemployment and the possible interventions and solutions that both public and private sectors were utilizing to address the massive unemployment amongst under skilled youth.
Angie Tyler (African Studies, Class of 2014)

During the January intersession with the support of the African Studies program at SAIS, my field research sought to explore how the global women’s movement, the promotion of women’s rights and gender equality, is perceived in a local context. Through a case study analysis in Dakar, Senegal I conducted interviews with local female religious leaders, women’s rights activists and scholars to identify the major political, religious and cultural debates surrounding women’s rights issues.

- Photo of Angie Tyler and Yayi Bayam, president of a small non-profit that provides skills training for young women in a religiously "conservative" community just outside of Dakar.

- Photo of Angie Tyler and Cheikh Aby Diagne, a highly regarded, 73-year-old religious leader in the Qadiriya Brotherhood - the only brotherhood in Senegal that allows women to rise to this level of prestige.
Nadia van de Walle (African Studies, class of 2013)

African Studies funded a research trip I took to Accra, Ghana for January 2011 where I attended conferences and conducted interviews as I researched oil industry development and regulation. I used this research to prepare my capstone paper. Additionally, African Studies funded my flights to and from Tanzania in the summer of 2012 while I was interning with Millennium Challenge Corporation there.
Ben Schelling (African Studies, Class of 2014)

In January of 2013, I had the opportunity to participate in the SAIS International Development-African Studies intercession trip to South Africa. Over the course of sixteen days and forty-one meetings, our group engaged with a variety of public and private sector actors ranging from the Department of Treasury and Standard Bank, to SPII (Studies in Poverty and Inequality Institute) and The Mail and Guardian to learn firsthand the developmental challenges confronting South Africa on a macro and micro level. Upon returning to Washington, each student wrote a short research paper detailing a developmental issue we encountered in South Africa and presented our findings to the SAIS community.
Phil Lovegren (African Studies, Class of 2013)

"I interned at Partners Senegal, an NGO which uses citizen-inclusive process to foster reforms in civil-military relations and human security in West Africa, as well as other governance reform projects in Senegal. During my internship, I wrote proposals for security sector reform initiative and traveled to communities to support a project to bolster fiscal decentralization. During my free time, I explored Senegal and trekked through Guinea."
Cassady Walters (African Studies Class of 2014)

I spent January 2013 in Freetown, Sierra Leone carrying out research on media programs focusing on governance issues. She examined radio and television programs, including dramas, poetry, panel discussions and debates, and call-in talk shows, that actively seek to promote government accountability and civic participation.

BBC Media Action's Edward hosts a panel discussion on Sierra Leone President Koroma's five-year plan. The show is broadcast nationally.
Jemilatu Abdulai (African Studies class of 2013)

With support from the African Studies department, I traveled to Accra, Ghana over the 2012 winter intercession and conducted interviews with representatives from various CSOs, political parties and the private sector on how they used social media to enhance their election activities. The insights I garnered will form the basis of my capstone project on the use of social media as a tool for enhancing democracy and transparency in West Africa.

In addition to eating my favorite local foods, donating blood for the first time, spending time with loved ones and enjoying a hot "winter", I had the opportunity to attend and cover Ghana's presidential inauguration with team mates from the Ghana Decides election project. All in all, it was a very fulfilling end to months-worth of work.