LAUREN THOMPSON
2023 Summer Scholar
Class: 2024
Major: Exercise & Sport Science and Communication Studies
Study Abroad Program: Honors Burch Field Research Seminar on Sport and Cultural Innovation
Extension: History, Culture, and Sustainability in Malta

Program in Spain
Courses: Connected Cities and Connected Teams
Research Focus:
- Connected Cities: Human well-being and smart living
- Connected Teams: Technology for soccer players' mental and physical well-being
Locations: Madrid, Toledo, Cordoba, Sevilla, Barcelona, Girona, Costa Brava
Key Activities: Individual reflections, mind maps, itineraries, micro-presentations, group reflections
Cultural Highlights: Museums, cathedrals, mosques, stadiums, local experts, workshops
Educational Approach: Hands-on and experiential learning with minimal classroom time.
Cultural Experience: Exposure to Spanish lifestyle, food, architecture, and traditions.
Language Skills: Improved Spanish language proficiency.
Transportation Skills: Navigating the metro in Barcelona independently.
Academic Growth: Developed research, note-taking, and professional engagement skills.

Extension in Malta
Educational Aim: Explore Connected Cities course further, focusing on aspects of history, culture, and sustainability
Research Focus: Intersection of history, culture, and sustainability.
Comparative Analysis: Compared Malta and Spain's experiences in terms of history, culture, and sustainability.
Activities: Exploring cathedrals, museums, ancient ruins, stadiums, architecture
Key Locations: Mellieha, Valletta, Ghajn Tuffieha, Mdina, Rabat, St. Paul's Bay
Friendly Environment: High English proficiency, low crime rate, community values
Cuisine: Blend of Italian, Mediterranean, Spanish, French, and British influences; learned about the historical influences on Maltese cuisine
Personal Growth: Confidence, adaptability, openness to strangers, self-discovery
Expanded Worldview: Developed a broader perspective through cultural interactions

History, Culture, and Sustainability: Spain & Malta
Across all locations, the influence of history was evident in the architecture, cuisine, transportation, and values, illustrating the interplay of time and culture.
Cultural Comparisons
- Similarities in fortified cities, medieval streets, historical depth
- Communitative dining styles emphasizing conversation and connectivity
- Prioritization of maintaining core cultural values
- Growing focus on sustainability within society
- Central focus on spirituality and community as there was a plethora of cathedrals and mosques in all locations
- Rich cultural heritage in the arts
- Sports seen as a unifying component of society
- Importance of community, food, and nature