On April 10, 2015 I had the pleasure of presenting at the University of Denver (DU)’s second annual Internationalization Summit, along with five of my International and Intercultural Communication (IIC) graduate program classmates. This year’s summit theme was “Internationalization at Home,” and the two-day event included panel discussions, presentations, and workshops that centered on topics related to international issues at DU.

Our workshop, “Putting the ‘I’ Back into Intercultural Communication: Self-Reflexivity in Multicultural Settings” allowed us an opportunity to explore some of the ideas we have discussed during our first year as IIC students. The theme of the summit encouraged us to create awareness and have a dialogue about the role of culture in our everyday lives.

Our focus was to create a space for participants to think about their own cultural identity and its role in shaping their perceptions and interactions. In order to achieve these goals, we asked the audience to define culture, consider their own identity, and also think about the identities that they assign to others.

This led us into a discussion on stereotypes and how they can be mitigated in multicultural situations and settings. We were pleased by the level of interaction and engagement among the participants in our workshop, and it was exciting to have an open discussion about the stereotypes we experience and how we can work to communicate beyond those stereotypes.
Workshop attendee Alea Littlejohn said about the panel, “This session was not only informative but it was also very interactive. It was great that participants were encouraged to exchange stories about their own cultural identity. When you discuss topics such as this, you are able to learn more about a person beyond their appearance, and you begin to break down stereotypes.”

The summit culminated with CultureFest, a celebration of cultural diversity at DU that included food, music, and performances. IIC students had an interactive booth at the event with candy from around the world and international music trivia. Attendees were invited to put on a pair of headphones by SoundDown Party - Denver's Silent Disco Company and guess the country of origin for songs on our world music playlist.

The Internationalization Summit is an ideal venue for IIC students to collaborate on topics relating to internationalization, and we enjoyed the opportunity to team with others around campus with similar interests.