



Josef Korbel School Alumni profile

Name: Katrina Berg

Josef Korbel School degree program: MA International Development, Global Health Affairs Certificate, 2007

Undergrad degree program: Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, FL; Majors: Anthropology and Spanish, 2000

Language skills: Spanish proficiency, Bemba conversational

Tell us about yourself:

Upon completion of my undergraduate degree, I joined the Peace Corps for four years. I served as a Rural Aquaculture Extension Agent in rural Zambia where I focused on teaching fish farming, integrated agriculture, and basic business practices. After conducting a rapid assessment of additional needs, I incorporated HIV/AIDS education and nutrition into my programs. This experience led me to pursue a MA in [International Development](#) focusing on [global health](#).

Why did you choose the Josef Korbel School?

I chose the [Josef Korbel] School of International Studies for its focus on international work, and its attraction to [Returned Peace Corps Volunteers](#) (RPCV). I knew there would be many other students with a similar experience that led them to a MA in International Development as well. It also provided RPCVs with the opportunity to follow a modified, yet rigorous schedule that allowed me the chance to complete an internship and still graduate within 15 months. During a visit before making my final decision, other students continually spoke highly to the diverse experiences of the professors as well as their support and interaction with students. The praise for DU professors; smaller, interactive classes; and the variety of course topics offered confirmed my decision to choose the Josef Korbel School. Of course, its location in beautiful Denver was also alluring.

What is your current career?

Currently, I am a PhD student at the [Johns Hopkins School of Public Health](#), studying behavior change communication for health. This past year I took a leave of absence to work on a malaria diagnostic study in the eastern region of Uganda in order to supplement my academic work with a long-term field experience. In this role, I locally supervised a random control trial assessing the feasibility of local drug shop vendors selling and using rapid diagnostic tests for malaria. I have since re-enrolled as a full-time student working on my dissertation. My career goals focus on the development and evaluation of behavior change campaigns in Africa.

Which courses at the Josef Korbel School are the most useful for your career?

Health Data for Decision Making was the most useful and memorable class for me personally. It provided students with an understanding of how health indicators are calculated, and how to interpret them correctly in order to create appropriate development programs. This class, coupled with my internship in Peru, made me realize that I wanted to further my understanding of research design and how statistics are used practically. For these reasons, I decided to pursue a PhD.

Social Marketing was another influential class. I had no experience in social marketing prior to enrolling at the Josef Korbel School, and after the first class I knew social marketing was the specific field within the broader arena of public health that I would pursue. I continue to use the skills I learned in this class in my current academic studies as well as the field.

Overall, how did the Josef Korbel School prepare you for this type of career?

The Josef Korbel School provides students with a wide ranging skill set including development theory, statistics, program management and health. In addition to a thorough academic background, the staff contributes a diverse range of experiences. I had support from multiple professors who understood my personal and academic ambitions, and who made themselves available for additional discussions, support, and career advice. The [Global Health Affairs](#) program allowed students to create an environment that explored our specific topics of interest with the [Santé student group](#), film series, and lunch-time lecturers. I felt as if the students had significant input into our own education and experience at DU.

Internship site: Iquitos, Peru

Intern title: Researcher

How did you obtain your internship?

I obtained this internship through personal communication with Professor Kuhn. I had taken classes with him, and we worked together on the Santé Global Health student group. He was aware of my desire to engage in a field-based internship to gain experience with data collection, and he facilitated meetings with a local organization looking to conduct a rapid health assessment in the Peruvian Amazon.

--M. Schwinn, MA Candidate in International Security
Josef Korbel School of International Studies