

Indigenous
Students on Study
Abroad:
Conducting
Research in Costa
Rica with the
Ngäbe

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The logistics

- 7 days at the Las Cruces research station
- 12 undergrad students from across the US, all STEM majors
- 7 mentors
- 7 research projects



Previous research/paper

- An Indigenous Intercambio Program: Empowering Underrepresented STEM Students to Participate in Scientific and Cultural Exchange Through Study Abroad
- Authors: Jessica Black, Stephany RunningHawk Johnson, Denise Silfee, and Celestino Mariano Gallardo
- This work done with Heritage University, 2 students, in Panama



A different type of study abroad

- Social justice in study abroad programming
- Creating equity in participation
- Anticolonial framework
- Host community needs and wants





Focus on the cultural

- Student to student
- Student to mentor
- US Indigenous groups to Ngäbe



Methods

- Followed students, mentors, and Ngäbe around for the week
- Interviews
- Posters and presentations





Time spent
building
relationships

Initial data analysis

- This is very preliminary!
- Students see themselves in different ways in a different country
- Spending this time with a group of Indigenous scholars is hugely impactful for the students and the mentors
- Mixed data on the importance of having an Indigenous mentor
- The multiple cultural exchanges going on were invaluable to participants
- Having the Ngäbe present was incredibly important and we could structure this better in the future



Next steps

- More interviews!
- More data analysis!
- More papers!
- More research!





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