Project Proposal: Global Samaritan Resources

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Field Education- Contextual Immersion

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For the fulfillment of my Field Education- Contextual Immersion class and credit, I am proposing an internship with and research of a local non-profit of Abilene, Texas: Global Samaritan Resources. The summer internship with Global Samaritan Resources is a 10-week commitment of 30 hours per week. (I officially start May 19, and will continue on through August 1). I will be joining ‘Team Global,’ and working directly under Esther Kissell, the Director of Logistics & Disaster Services at Global Samaritan Resources. My work will be primarily contained in the 55,000 square foot warehouse, which stores the many different donations, (stuffed animals, medical supplies, the old theater seats from Highland Church of Christ’s auditorium, etc.), waiting to be shipped or given to any and all who are in need. Although I will be primarily concerned with the duties of the warehouse, (i.e.- loading shipments, unloading donations, inventory, etc.), my other major task will be to coordinate and work with the many different groups that come to Global Samaritan Resources to help. It will be my job this summer to organize and work with each of these groups, (which are usually different youth or student groups, and which usually come to work with Global anywhere from a couple days to an entire week), to ensure that each group has ‘enough to do’ while they are working with Global, as well as to keep these groups ‘on task,’ but also to ensure that they have a good, safe, and fun time while working with us. Thus, I will not only have the opportunity to be exposed to a new and different form of ministry than I have ever experienced thus far in my life, but I will also have the opportunity to remain in a somewhat familiar zone as I will be able to work with different student groups throughout the summer.

More specifically for the purposes of this paper, however, I would like to research not only how Global Samaritan Resources functions as a non-profit organization, but also
how they are connected to certain groups within Abilene, but not to others. I am interested in the management organization required to run a non-profit ministry such as Global Samaritan Resources, and specifically how they are able not only to run solely off of donated material goods, but also how they are able to run and operate as an organization which employs four full-time staff, two part-time staff, and are able to hire a summer intern, (myself), as well. Related to that, I am curious as to how Global Samaritan Resources is connected within the community of Abilene. I raise this question because in my five years spent here in Abilene, I was only recently exposed to this organization and the work that they do within the past few months. Granted, I had heard of the name thrown around before, especially in the midst of my work with Highland over the past two years. However, I had never actually been to Global Samaritan before this past March. Thus, I am curious as to how well or poorly they are connected with the Abilene community.

It would seem that an organization which is able to run and sustain itself solely on donations would be very well connected to the surrounding community. However, it also seems curious to me that such an organization which is seemingly well connected would not have had an impact on my life, and that I would have not even heard of or experienced it until the later part of my fifth year in Abilene. These curiosities and questions arise out of my ever-developing awareness of and heart for non-profit ministries, as well as out of my understanding of God’s call for each of us as Christians to love and serve others. An organization such as Global Samaritan Resources located in a very religious city with four five different colleges, universities or satellite campuses, three of which are labeled as ‘Christian,’ would seem to have much influence on or draw
to these students. However, it is through my own experience that I believe there is
somewhat of a disconnect between Global Samaritan Resources and Christian university
students here in Abilene, (specifically ACU students). Thus, I would like to see how this
organization is run and maintained, and in doing so, also see how it relates to ACU
students. The change I would like to see is that ACU students would be more aware of
Global Samaritan Resources, and that they would feel a sense of calling and urgency to
serve with Global.¹

With all of this in the background, my two research questions are as follows: 1) How does Global Samaritan Resources function and operate as a non-profit organization
that runs solely off of donations?, 2a) Is there actually a disconnect between the
university students here in Abilene and Global Samaritan Resources?, and 2b) How could
Global Samaritan Resources connect better with college and university students? Thus, I
am curious to explore the religious practices of management, organization, coordination,
and stewardship, as well as of advocating, service, and giving. I see research into the
managerial side of Global Samaritan Resources as an exploration of management,
organization, coordination, and stewardship. How does this company run? How are they
able to ship supplies and goods to 30 different countries, while also employing six full or
part-time staff members? I see the research of the connectedness of Global Samaritan
Resources to the greater Abilene community, especially ACU students, as exploring the
religious practices of advocating and spreading awareness, of service, and of giving and

¹ I am aware that some ACU students already know about Global Samaritan Resources, and are even
serving with them throughout the school year, as well as some students how have served with them in past.
However, I am curious as to how this organization is doing such good work for the kingdom of God and yet
had not come across my radar until my fifth year in Abilene. Through attending ACU, I was encouraged to
fulfill a minimal amount of service hours, (somewhere around 20 my freshman year). However, through
my experience with Study Abroad, I am aware that some universities, (namely those under the umbrella of
Oxford), encourage, if not require, volunteer work throughout their students’ career at university.
sacrifice. I believe that the intellectual puzzle that most represents what I intend to study is a mechanical puzzle—how does Global Samaritan Resources operate and work, and how do they or don’t they relate to ACU students?

For this research, I think I need to employ a couple of different types of research methods and ethnographic tools. I would love to conduct a survey of the entirety of the ACU student body about its awareness, (or not), of Global Samaritan Resources. However, this goal seems like a lofty and unattainable one due to the timing of everything. I would, however, still possibly like to create a survey, (with the permission of Esther and the rest of the Global staff), to give to each of the groups that comes to work with us with summer asking them about their experience. I think the majority of my research will be conducted through interviews, though, with each of the Global staff members, as well as with some other ACU students. I also will be using the tool of observation during my time at Global, to see how the staff members work together, how the office is run, how groups are conducted, and the other inner and outer workings of this organization. I would also like to obtain access to their budget if possible, to explore their spending versus their income. Some examples of questions I intend to ask research participants are: How would you describe the organization of Global Samaritan? How do you run solely off of donations/ how are the staff paid? How well is Global connected to the Abilene community? How well is Global connected to ACU? Does there seem to be a disconnect there? Why or why not? Then, for the students I would like to interview: What is Global Samaritan? What do they do? Have you ever heard of this organization? Do you volunteer during the school year? Why or why not?
I plan to conduct a total of ten interviews throughout the summer. I would like to have the opportunity to sit down with each of the four full-time staff members of Global Samaritan in order to interview them, as well as one of the part-time staff members. I would also like to interview five different ACU students, hopefully which range in age, gender, race, and year of school. As I mentioned before, I would also like to gain access to documents of Global Samaritan, such as their budget. I also would like to create a survey to hand to each of the groups that participate and serve with us this summer. I also plan to spend some time each day observing the day-to-day running of this organization. The limitations to this study are that although I would like to create more of a partnership between the ACU community and Global Samaritan Resources, I am not sure I can accomplish this through 10 weeks of work. There seems to a be quite a bit of red tape for me to go through if this goal were to be officially accomplished, which would probably take a longer amount of time than I plan to remain in Abilene.

My role in this research study will be as a researcher, an interviewer, an observer, a reader, a listener, a reflector, and as an investigator. This will definitely have the ability to put me in some places of power over others, as well as in some potentially aggressive places, (i.e.- if I am seeming to dig too deep into something). Thus, I need to be aware of these during my research. However, in addition to being in these positions, I will also be a participant, a fellow worker and laborer, an interested learner, and a servant. I chose this research because I believe that it will help me to better understand non-profit ministry, as well as to explore the issue that I saw in my own experience of not knowing about Global Samaritan Resources until the second (‘official’) semester of my graduate work here at ACU.
I actually have not had a chance to consult with the staff at Global Samaritan Resources about my research yet, besides Esther. I will be in further contact with them this week and following. However, in an effort to cover all of my bases, I plan to keep all information of the conducted interviews limited to the viewing of two people: either myself, for the purposes of this research and for this class, or to you, Dr. Bryce (also for the purposes of this class). This will be outlined in my informed consent, which I will present to each of the participants I plan to interview prior to the actual interview. I will give the option for anonymity if the interviewee so chooses it, as well as of a pseudonym. However, I plan on keeping and using their actual name and information if they will allow me to. I have attached at the end of this project proposal the informed consent form which I will have each interview participant sign before each interview. I will also give each participant a form of their own to keep, so they can review it for their own purposes on their own time. I have also attached my application for the Institutional Review Board.

Global Samaritan Resources is local non-profit in Abilene, Texas yet it is connected with thirty different countries on five different continents. It is an organization which connects supplies with people, providing anything and everything, from medical supplies, (such as I.V. stands to hospital beds), to stuffed animals for local children, to lightly used church benches, (which are to be shipped to Zambia in a matter of weeks). My role with Global Samaritan Resources this summer will be, (as already identified), to work primarily in and with their 55,000 square foot warehouse, to load and package shipments, to unload donations, to inventory what they have in the warehouse, and to perform any other miscellaneous tasks on their campus. However, I will also be working with the many different groups that work with Global over the course of my 10 weeks
there. I will help coordinate and organize groups to come in, as well as work closely with the groups while they are serving and working with us.

My research question is two-fold: 1) How does an organization such as Global run and operate?, and 2) How is it that I, a typical, (or maybe not-so-typical), ACU student can go through my entire undergraduate career and hear and know nothing about this organization which is nothing more than 5 miles away from where I live? I am curious to explore not only how a non-profit ministry operates, but also how it connects with the community in which it is in, specifically with the ACU students here in town. I would like to explore organization as well as service, in order to see how Global sustains itself and runs, but as well as how ACU is or is not connected with it.

I am interested in this research because I am interested in non-profit ministry. I am also interested in this research because I am interested in missions and mission work, which is something that Global Samaritan Resources does and does well. I am going into this research with the expectation that, (specifically related to my second research question, as well as to my own experience), although Global Samaritan Resources may be well connected with the greater Abilene community, it is not, for some reason or another, connected with ACU very well. Thus, I am curious to probe at this understanding and expectation, to see if it is true or false, and to see the reason why, if it is true. Not only this, but I am also curious to see how to change this, (again, if there is actually a disconnect between ACU and Global), so that a better connection is established between university students and this organization.
International Review Board Application

**Researcher:** Wes Rasbury; (314) 791-0999; wcr09a@acu.edu  
**Course:** Field Education - Contextual Immersion, taken at Abilene Christian University  
**Advisor:** Dr. Brady Bryce; (325) 674-3750; brady.bryce@acu.edu

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research is to explore the workings of Global Samaritan Resources, to see how this organization runs and operates, and to see how Global connects or does not connect with ACU students.

**Research Methods:** I plan to conduct 10 45-minute to 1 hour long interviews, 5 of which will be with 5 of the 6 staff members at Global, the other 5 of which will be students from ACU. I plan to record interviews with my iPhone, and to jot notes down as well. I also plan to take pictures of the work of Global throughout my 10 weeks there.

**Interview Questions:** See attached list.

**Relationship to Participants:** I will be a fellow employee with half of the participants. As for the other half, I will be a potential friend, classmate, student, or acquaintance at ACU.

**Potential Benefits of This Study:** There are no guaranteed benefits from this study. However, it is my hope that I will gain insight into the working of a non-profit ministry, as well as that there will be a better connection between ACU and Global.

**Potential Risks of This Study:** There are no known or foreseen risks to participating in this study. If a participant wishes to keep their identity confidential or anonymous, they are able to opt for this, as well as for a pseudonym if desired. Only myself and my professor, (Dr. Brady Bryce), will see the content of this research. If a participant feels uncomfortable in an interview at any time, we can stop the taping and/or end the interview. If a participant wishes to not answer any question(s), they can opt out of it or skip to the next one.

**Consent Form:** See attached form.

**Final Product:** I do not intend to publish the results of this research. I will prepare the final results and my findings into an ethnography, of which only myself and my professor, Dr. Brady Bryce, will see and have access to. I may share portions of the ethnography with the staff members of Global Samaritan, but will maintain completely privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of each participant who so desires.
Informed Consent Form for Ethnographic Study of Global Samaritan Resources

Introduction:
My name is Wes Rasbury, and I am a student at the Graduate School of Theology at Abilene Christian University. I am conducting an ethnographic study for a course on ethnography and ministry. My telephone number is (314) 791-0999. My professor is Dr. Brady Bryce, and his telephone number is (325) 674-3750. You may contact either of us at any time if you have any questions about this study.

Purpose:
The purpose of this research is to study the organization and management of Global Samaritan Resources, as well as how it is connected to the ACU community. I am trying to learn about non-profit ministry, and university student’s involvement in service.

Procedure:
If you consent, you will be asked several questions in an oral interview that will take place on Global Samaritan's campus. I will record the interview on my iPhone.

Time required:
The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour of your time.

Voluntary Participation:
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still refuse to answer any question that you do not wish to answer. You may also withdraw from the study at any time.

Risks:
There are no known risks associated with this interview.

Benefits:
While there is no guaranteed benefit, this study is intended to benefit Global Samaritan Resources by exploring how it operates and how it connects with ACU.

Confidentiality/Anonymity:
You have the option for complete confidentiality and anonymity, if you so choose. I can either keep your name completely confidential, I can use a pseudonym, (which either myself or you can choose), or I can use your actual name- the choice is yours. I will ask you before the interview begins which of these you would like to choose. I will be the only person present for the interview, and myself and my professor, (Dr. Brady Bryce), will be the only two people who read the final paper presenting this research.

Sharing the Results:
I plan to construct an ethnography- a written account of what I learn- based on these interviews together with my reading and historical research. This ethnography will be submitted to my professor at the end of the term. I also plan to share portions of this ethnography with the staff of Global Samaritan.

Publication:
I do not intend on publishing the results of this study.

Before you sign:
By signing below, you are agreeing to an audiotaped interview for this research study. Be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your satisfaction. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you.

Participant’s Signature: __________________________ Date: ______________
Print Name: ______________________________________

Researcher’s Signature: __________________________ Date: ______________
Print Name: ______________________________________

Participant’s Signature: __________________________ Date: ______________
Print Name: ______________________________________
Interview Questions for Ethnographic Study at Global Samaritan Resources

For Global Samaritan Staff:
Please state your name and relationship to Global Samaritan Resources.
How long have you been involved with Global?
How would you describe Global Samaritan Resources?
How would you describe the work of Global? Here in Abilene? Around the world?
How would you describe the organization of Global Samaritan?
How is it that this organization runs off of donations?
What all is donated?
What other sources of income do you all have?
How are shipments decided upon? How are connections made between people and the items that you have?
How well is Global connected to the Abilene community?
How well is Global connected to the ACU community?
Does there seem to be a disconnect between Global and ACU? Why or why not?
If so, how could Global connect better to ACU and its students? How could students connect better with Global?
Would a better connection with ACU help Global Samaritan?
What changes would happen if this were to occur?
What changes need to be made for this to occur?

For Abilene Christian University Students:
Please state your name and your relationship to ACU.
Have you ever heard of Global Samaritan Resources?
If so, how and where?
How would you describe the work of Global Samaritan? Here in Abilene? Around the world?
Do you currently or have you volunteered during the school year? If so, where?
Why or why don’t you serve?
Were/are you required to maintain a certain amount of service hours per semester? If so, how many?
How important is service/volunteering to you? In your own life? As a Christian?
How would you rate the attitude toward service/volunteering in general at ACU? Is ACU open toward service/volunteering? Or, is ACU generally hostile toward and against this? Why do you think this attitude is present?
Should ACU encourage more of this of its students?
Knowing more about Global Samaritan now, does it sound like a place would be a good place to serve with or at?
Do you think ACU students generally know about this organization? Why or why not?
If more students knew about Global, do you think more would get involved?
How could ACU become better connected with Global Samaritan, or vice versa?
What changes would need to made for this happen?
What changes would happen if this did occur?