



Global Rochester: South Africa

Helping Build Community

Two Rochester undergraduates are building connections with the people of Egoli, a squatter community on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa.

During study abroad programs earlier in their Rochester programs, John Dawson '13, '14 (T5) and Katherine Wegman '15, both of Pittsford, N.Y., first visited the settlement, one of several largely unrecognized

Together, they plan to hold focus groups and community development workshops to help ensure that Egoli residents have a voice in charting their own course for development, she says.

Dawson, who studied molecular genetics at Rochester and plans to attend the School of Medicine and Dentistry this fall, and Wegman, an anthropology major who studied



EGOLI: Katherine Wegman '15 first visited South Africa while studying abroad.

communities that trace their origins to the country's apartheid era.

Working with the settlement's 2,000 residents and the Cape Town nonprofit Ikhayalami, the two returned this summer, with plans to help build a new community center. The students' work is funded with a \$10,000 grant from Davis Projects for Peace, an initiative that encourages students to design grassroots projects that promote peace and address the root causes of conflict.

Serving as a library, church, childcare center, and meeting place, Egoli's current community center is an important resource, but its poor condition and small size limit gatherings and make adding programs, like health clinics, difficult.

Wegman says that Ikhayalami brings to the project a network of resources to support Egoli community leaders as they create a strategic plan.

public health during a semester abroad in Jamaica and England, worked with Jennifer Kyker, an ethnomusicology professor at the Eastman School of Music, who helped them with the project's design and with writing grant proposals.

Ikhayalami founder Andrea Bolnick says that Egoli will benefit tremendously from the new center.

"A common space everyone has a vested interest in can become a powerful asset in a community," she says. "It can build trust, unity, pride, and a sense of dignity."

—Melissa Greco Lopes

ROCHESTER & SOUTH AFRICA

People

- 18** Alumni living in South Africa
- 4** Undergraduates from South Africa
- 1** Graduate student from South Africa
- 86** Students who have studied abroad in South Africa since 1996

Connections

The College's Office of Admissions and Financial Aid has partnered with the African Leadership Academy, a private, selective secondary school outside Johannesburg, since its founding in 2008. More graduates of the academy have enrolled at Rochester than at any other university in the United States. Rochester is host to the academy's fourth annual reunion this year.

Rochester and the University of Cape Town are two of 17 members of the Worldwide Universities Network, a consortium of research universities designed to foster research collaboration among international institutions.

Faculty members representing departments such as psychiatry, psychology, pediatrics, history, earth and environmental sciences, political science, and others have research and scholarly exchanges with colleagues at academic and medical institutions in South Africa.

