

ROCKPOINTE MISSIONS

Partner Update: Laura Martin

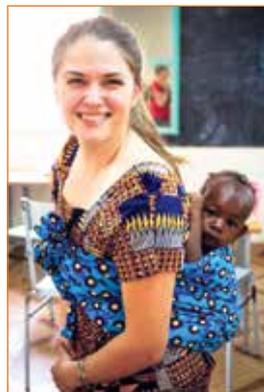
Educational Interns are active RockPointe attendees participating in a kingdom/missions/ministry focused internship through an educational degree program. In 2016, **Laura Martin** (nee Trabadello) served on a 7-month internship in **Niger, Africa**. Here is Laura's summary of her experience:

My name is Laura Martin and I just recently graduated from Ambrose University with a Bachelor of Ministry in Intercultural Studies. What got me excited about entering this degree five years ago was the Onsite Internship program, which incorporates learning of language, history, and culture with practical cross-cultural ministry experience. I had the privilege of going to Niger, West Africa last January for 7 months on Onsite, serving with the Christian & Missionary Alliance.

During my internship, my main role was as a learner, studying Tamajeq, the heart language of the Tuareg people, and immersing myself in Nigerien culture. I was also there to teach math and French at the Niger Vocational Training school, with Chantelle McIver as my mentor. This school is a place for young women to learn sewing and artisanal skills, improve their math and French, and discuss holistic health lessons. The school partners with families to combat the issue of child marriage, empowering young women with an education, helping them to provide for their future families and thrive in their communities. I was thrilled to be a part of this ministry, learning from the missionaries and these young women.

The other side of my role in Niger was building relationships with the girls at the school. This is what Chantelle calls the "ministry of hanging out." I would meet with these young women in their homes, with their families, and drink Tuareg tea with them on their beautiful mats. Sometimes we would say nothing at all, observing the children playing and just being present with one another, and other times we would have engaging conversations on family, culture, world events, and faith. Building trust is so important in Nigerien and Muslim culture, so spending time in friendship with these girls was the most enriching part of my time in Niger. I learned so much from them, about their lives and their culture, and I was even given opportunities by God to share my faith. When I would visit, I would simply pray that God would use our conversations and my actions to convey His love and truth, and He opened doors in very tangible ways.

I am thankful for my time under the hot, desert sun—where God shaped me and gave me opportunities to be a part of what He is already doing amidst the Nigerien people.



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Partner Update: Mackenzie Funk

Educational Interns are active RockPointe attendees participating in a kingdom/missions/ministry focused internship through an educational degree program. In 2016, **Mackenzie Funk** served on a 7-month internship in **Hungary**. Here is Mackenzie's summary of her experience:

I was privileged to serve in Hungary, Central Europe for 7 months through an internship with Ambrose University. There, I worked with an organization called Josiah Venture (JV). JV walks with the youth of Central and Eastern Europe in the disciple making process exemplified by Jesus Himself and works to gain momentum for the kingdom of God.



*In Hungary, I was able to meet and disciple some amazing young people. I lived in a small town in Western Hungary called **Vesprém** and went to a small church of about 20-30 people. In my first few months overseas, I was fortunate to be able to study the Hungarian language in the country's capital, **Budapest**. Budapest is an amazing city, filled with history and culture. In these months I was able to get my feet wet in Hungarian culture, and begin building relationships and trust with the local people.*

The Josiah Venture staff helped me to adjust, but they also pushed me to learn. These individuals, both Hungarian and American, exemplified to me that the learning process is never fully finished. Constantly asking questions and making mistakes, I learned not to take myself too seriously, and to my delight, the Hungarian people always extended grace to me when I messed up.

I spent my time learning and exploring, but I also worked hard. Josiah Venture hosts summer interns from the U.S. every year, who in turn, help run the JV summer camps. For three months, there were a few more bodies in my immediate circle, and I was the only Canadian! These interns soon became cherished friends. When the interns arrived, I helped them get adjusted and become acquainted with the local culture. Together, we worked to plan our camp curriculums and programs and several times throughout the summer months, we took local youth out to experience nature, to have fun, and to hear the gospel. Some heard the gospel for the first time. There is no experience like seeing the realization of what Jesus did, on the face of a child of God. The weeks I was at camp with these kids changed me forever, and I think of them, and miss them often.

I encourage you to pray for Hungarian youth; that they would be bold in their schools and their families, believing and proclaiming Jesus without fear. Join me in praying for a movement of God in Central and Eastern Europe.