Staff Member Awarded Diversity Award

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Jessica Roueche was awarded the 2017-2018 Utah State University Diversity Award for USU staff. The awards recognize individuals and/or organizations on campus and in communities served by USU who have made significant contributions to affirmative action, equal opportunity and diversity.

As a transaction specialist at Utah State University Eastern-Blanding, Jessica Roueche has effectively served in an unofficial capacity as a study abroad liaison to the Blanding campus where she works tirelessly to support students during their journey to study abroad. Her work in this area has greatly diversified study abroad participation among persons typically underrepresented in this area, as well with students from USU’s regional campuses.

"Having been exposed to the study abroad programs with USU, and with volunteer services through Youthlinc, it was my goal to have these opportunities available to students here in Blanding” said Roueche.

“The impact from the exchange of cultures is an experience I had never had before.” remarked Roueche, speaking of the trip as a whole. “I was very impressed to see our students not hesitate to help, despite the language barrier. When there was a project issue, they were quick to communicate and work with the Cambodian people.”

Roueche helps oversee all aspects of the study abroad process. Because she believes in the value of the experience, she has helped students with the extensive paperwork of the application process, assisted with fundraising, sought out grants and scholarships to help cover expenses and organized pre-departure preparation. In the 2016-17 school year, Roueche initiated and organized the first ever Study Abroad Fair at the USU Eastern campus.

Several students in the program came from the many Native American communities in the Four-Corners region served by the Blanding campus, and the trip provided an opportunity to share the Native American culture with the people of Cambodia. The Cultural Ambassador Performance Program dance group from the Blanding campus shared performances of Native American dances while in traditional dress to the communities visited in Cambodia.

In addition to her unofficial study abroad role, Roueche strengthens a diverse community through her mentorship and participation with the Cultural Ambassador Performance Program that performs traditional Native American, Latin and Polynesian dances, and was a key facilitator in bringing this program to Cambodia last summer. She also volunteers with the Global Community Leadership club on USU’s regional campuses where she will lead the study abroad Cambodia program in summer 2018.