

Sarah Stillman

2016 Watson Summer Thesis Travel Grant recipient

Post-award summary

Staying with my host family from last fall, I spent one week in the beginning of August in Rabat, Morocco to dig deeper into my thesis research (and brush up on my Darija, which has gotten rusty over the past six months). For my honors thesis, I am assessing the motivations behind European Union funding of Moroccan nonprofits. My early hypothesis is that funding is partially motivated by EU desire to curb economic migration to EU member states. To look into the feasibility of this topic and also gain some vital context, I visited nonprofits and the Moroccan Ministry of Migration. My first stop was AMAPPE, a Rabat-centered non-profit that works with both Moroccans and refugees from other countries to fund entrepreneurial projects. They had a major partnership with the EU that has since been stalled. I met with several people within the organization who were able to provide interesting insights from the point of view of the non-profit sector. Later in the week, I was also able to meet with a government official from the Ministry of Migration. Through this interview I was able to understand more fully the interplay between the nonprofit sector, the Moroccan government, and the European Union. I spent the rest of my brief time in Morocco interviewing academics and everyday, working-class Moroccans in order to gain insight into as many different points of view as possible. It was an amazing opportunity to see on-the-ground the phenomena I had read about in books and articles earlier in the summer. The weather was beautiful, the food was delicious, my host family was as welcoming as ever, and I learned more in one week than I could have thought possible.

