

# Thilini Weerakkody

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## Education

### Chapel Hill High School (CHHS)

#### The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

June 2016

Expected Graduation: May 2021

- Major: Human Development and Family Studies

## Honor

- **Eve Carson Scholarship:** A prestigious scholarship awarded to juniors who have displayed leadership, service and scholarship at UNC. Students are offered a full ride their senior year and a funded summer experience.
- **Bonner Leadership Program:** A competitive fellowship awarded to 15 first-years, which fosters a 4-year relationship with a community partnership.
- **Virginia Carson Scholarship:** A scholarship funding a self-designed summer experience.
- **UNC Global Gap Year Fellowship:** A highly competitive fellowship, which awards a funded, self-designed gap year to six incoming UNC first-years.

## Leadership

### Campus Y Executive Board--Chapel Hill, NC

#### Co-president

March 2020-Now

- Serve as representatives, advocates, and student decision makers for the Y both internally and within the Chapel Hill community, which includes other student organizations, university faculty, administration, and local community partners in wider Chapel Hill/Carrboro.
- Appoint directors of outreach, communication, evaluations, development, finance, cabinet and executive assistant which compose the 15 person Campus Y Executive Board
- Act the leaders of the Executive Board. Acting as a liaison between staff, students, and the campus community in order to conduct daily operations at the Y and further the long term goals of Campus Y leadership.
- Represent and voice the interests and concerns of the Executive Board, Cabinet, and 2500+ students involved in Y programs to external stakeholders and community members.

### Grow Your World- Chapel Hill, NC

#### Racial Equity and Resilience Team Lead

September 2017-Now

- Lead team of individuals dedicated to evaluating Grow Your Worlds lessons, programs, and structure through a racial equity and resiliency lens.
- Provide consultation during staff recruitment in order to promote diversity and inclusion
- Organize and conduct trainings for staff and youth around racial equity, restorative practices, gender bias, wellness, trauma-informed practice, communication skills, and emotional literacy.

### Campus Y Global Gap Year Fellowship- Chapel Hill, NC

March 2019- August 2019

#### Global Intern

- Redesign and edit Serve Smart, an online course on how to conduct empathetic, ethical service abroad
- Organize logistics for workshops, events, catering and programs in order for incoming fellows to plan their gap years
- Lead workshops and activities such as "How to be a Woman or a Woman of Color Abroad" and "How to Serve Vulnerable Communities"

### Campus Y Executive Board- Chapel Hill, NC

March 2018-March 2019

#### Co-Director of Outreach

- Sit on the Executive Board of the Campus Y, UNC's center for social justice, which oversees 30+ social-justice oriented committees and supports over 2,500 students annually
- Create safe spaces with emotional and physical support resources, food, and talking-buddies during triggering protests and events such as the We Believe Survivors Rally, Anti-Abortion Protests, and Silence Sam Rallies.
- Organize events and projects to educate our community and promote social justice such as the Portraits of Racism, an event opening the space for 5 of color women to tell their personal anecdotes surrounding race
- Foster collaboration and collations between organizations within the Campus Y, at UNC, and in our Community during events like the Festival of Historical Activism, a festival dedicated to acknowledging UNC and Chapel Hill's history of racial trauma and celebrating student activism throughout the years
- Oversee and lead a group of 7-students called the Outreach Task Force in their personal social justice projects

### Global Circle- Chapel Hill, NC

May 2018 –May 2019

#### Chair

- Promote global engagement at UNC through organizing events and workshops which reach over 300+ students such as "How to Serve Ethically," a workshop on ethical global service, and "It's a Small World Dinner," an event dedicated to discussing your shared experiences abroad and navigating them at UNC
- Evaluate and mandate ethical, sustainable global service through working with Global Campus Y Committees
- Create connections between global oriented Campus Y committees and UNC organizations

### NUMEM- Pader, Uganda

December 2017-August 2018

#### Community-Based Research Intern

- Conduct community based research and collect health data on the efficacy of NUMEM's LARO KWO Project

- Work with midwives, physicians, nurses, and natural healers to understand and communicate health disparities within Pader, Uganda
- Produce an evaluation of NUMEM's LARO KWO Project including data analysis, achievements, highlighted concerns, and recommendations to target health disparities in the Pader District

## **RENA Center- Chapel Hill, NC**

*Bonner Leader Intern*

*September 2017-May 2019*

- Attend weekly skills development and leadership workshops
- Attend RENA center board meetings
- Write grants, organize events, and provide service to the RENA Center
- Teach and supervise the children at the RENA Community Center.

## **Duke-Ruhana Study**

*Research Intern*

*October 2016-January 2016*

- Conducted research on antibacterial resistance in mothers and babies, Galle, Sri Lanka
- Collected urine and rectal samples of mothers and new born babies at the Mahamodara Maternal Health hospital
- Traveled to homes of selected mothers in order to gather further post-partum data in addition to information about social setting, environment including soil and water samples, and living conditions; conducted both wet-lab data collection and community based research study.
- Cultured bacteria, prepped the samples and processed the data

## **Conservation Fusion- Kianjavato and Antananarivo, Madagascar**

*Intern*

*January 2016- March 2016*

- Worked with public relations and media management of Conservation Fusion's One Health Campaign
- Helped with organization and execution of educational and community programs in schools in the Northwestern Commune of Kianjavato
- Created/coordinated a program on One health, intended to teach students about their environment and how it affects their bodies, in order to foster ownership and ecological justice.
- Wrote ecotourism guide for Malagasy tour guides and organized a workshop for guides to train new tour guides

## **Experience**

### **Kidzu Children's Museum- Chapel Hill, NC**

*June 2015- July 2018*

*Makery Fellow and Programs (Girls Engineering Change Biomedical Engineering Program)*

- Work with preparation, execution, and clean-up of activities
- Conducted lessons on female empowerment and validity in STEM fields
- Supervise/interact/engage with children

### **UNC Wordsmiths- Chapel Hill, NC**

*September 2017- October 2018*

*Member of RESPO, a performance team, and management*

- Write, practice and perform poetry
- Organize and lead writing workshops
- Photograph, fundraise, and organize Wordsmiths events

### **WWOOFing Greece- Nostimo Village and Lipsos Island, Greece**

*March 2016-May 2016*

*Volunteer*

- Assisted in farm work, crop cultivation, and meal preparation

## **Skills**

- "We Are" Trained; a training to navigate race and class in educational settings
- "Darkness to Light" Trained; a training equipping individuals to identify and support victims of childhood sexual assault
- "School to Peace Pipeline" Certified; a certification through Carolina Friends School discussing race and restorative justice
- Certified Wilderness First Responder
- Fluent in Sinhala (speaking/hearing), Proficient in French, Basic
- 8 years playing Violin
- Proficient in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Power Point & iMovie