



## Fall 2008 Update

It's been a busy summer for PiLA fellows as they leave Princeton, and home, and depart for their fellowships. Since June, three more fellows have joined this year's roster. Nathan Fabian, Georgetown '08, will be the 2008-09 Arias Fellow, helping PiLA continue our relationship with our longest-standing partner find another terrific new fellow. Having just finished a Project 55 fellowship in Chicago, Mariana Huh Kim '07 returns to her native Bolivia to work for Pro Mujer, a microfinance organization focusing on improving the conditions for women in several countries in Latin America. Working at another new placement in Cuernavaca, Mexico, will be Julia Sivon, Kenyon '07, who will be the community outreach coordinator for the Papalote Foundation's new Art Museum for Children, which opens early this fall. We're very excited to welcome these three fellows to PiLA!

In other news, PiLA has moved, thanks to the kindness of Princeton and the patient help of Tom Emmons, one of the University architects. We're now in one office suite with Princeton in Africa and Princeton in Asia. If you're in town, please visit us at our new office at:

**194 Nassau St, Suite 210**  
**Princeton, NJ 08542**  
**(609) 258-9200**

### Three New PiLA Fellows



**Julia Sivon, Kenyon '07, Papalote Foundation, Cuernavaca, Mexico.** Julia graduated from Kenyon College in 2007 with majors in International Studies and Spanish. While at Kenyon, she was a member of the Ladies Field Hockey team and participated in a program at the local elementary school teaching Spanish to fourth and fifth graders. She is now excited for the opportunity to again work with children through the Papalote Foundation, which is opening a new children's museum in Cuernavaca, Mexico. After her fellowship, Julia hopes to stay involved in children's education initiatives in the non-profit sector.



**Nathan Fabian, Georgetown '08, Arias Foundation, San Jose, Costa Rica.** Nathan is a graduate of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and hails from San Jose, California. At Georgetown he studied Science, Technology and International affairs and concentrated in Global Health issues. Spending a significant portion of his undergraduate days studying in Latin America, both in Quito, Ecuador and Buenos Aires, Argentina, has nurtured a passion for Latin America that extends from child healthcare and development, to community strengthening. He is excited to be able to represent the PiLA organization at the Arias Foundation in Costa Rica.



**Mariana Kim '07, Pro Mujer, La Paz, Bolivia.** Mariana Kim was born and raised in La Paz, Bolivia, where her parents have been living for over thirty years. She graduated in the Class of 2007 with a degree in Sociology and a PLAS Certificate. Upon graduation, she participated in a yearlong Princeton Project 55 Fellowship at the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights in Chicago, administering a state-funded program that helps immigrant communities access safety net resources. Currently, Mariana is back at home and working at ProMujer, an international microfinance network that provides business development training and health education to Latin America's indigenous women. After her fellowship, she plans on attending law school in the US.

## Spotlight on Maegan Zitren '07, Pro Peru Fellow, Urubamba and Cusco, Peru

My Pro Peru fellowship has been very interesting and my job position and role has changed substantially in the course of the year. I have had numerous work related accomplishments in the past year; one major accomplishment was being promoted to managing 5 different community projects. This has had a major impact on my year because I have gained experience and knowledge of how to work with rural communities, as well as organize and create development projects. In this role I was given complete freedom and creativity within my projects.

One highlight of my experience was organizing and running a four-day health outreach campaign. During this campaign, we treated over 300 people in various areas of health outreach. It was a great experience because I organized four days of treatment in four different communities in the areas of general health, women's health and dentistry. It was also interesting to see what common problems affected different communities and how their lack of medical resources only worsened the conditions of many rural community members.

Throughout my fellowship I have managed public health campaigns, environmental awareness projects in communities and schools, and have become a micro-business consultant to approximately 6 different small business organizations in the Sacred Valley near Cusco. In this organization I was given the opportunity to work in various different areas and have gained considerable business and work related skills that I can apply in the future.

Looking back at my work over the course of the year, I would say that I was pretty successful in accomplishing certain goals. I was promoted from intern to Portfolio manager about 6 months into my fellowship. By January, I was given a lot more responsibility and control over projects, which was something for which I had been striving.

I have a great relationship with many locals. I live in a small town where I interact daily with many Peruvians. In fact, it was very easy to incorporate myself into the culture and I have made many life-long friends. The Sacred Valley and Cusco is full of tourists and many volunteer organizations and it is very easy to go to only touristy restaurants and speak with very few locals, but because I made a point of spending time in only local spots, I met many Peruvians. In addition, in the office, we work with many locals and by adopting certain Peruvian customs, I have gained their trust and the ability to work freely within many communities.

I am actually staying on with ProPeru past the end of my fellowship. I was offered a long-term, permanent position with the opportunity for advancement within the company in future locations. I have decided to stay on and continue with my current projects for a couple of months longer. After that, I hope to find another job in the non-profit world.



Maegan with NYU Service Group



Maegan at Ancawasi

## Saludos from PiLA Alumni

**Christina Lara '07** reports that: "I'll be working for an organization based in Paris called Ton Monde (your world) <http://www.tonmonde.org/> - It is a relatively young organization, but they are ready to expand to the Americas. I'll be the liaison between the group and N. and S. America. While out there, I'm most likely going to be working in an after school program for the students in the banlieue, the suburbs outside of the city. I figure that urban youth can provide a pretty good contrast to the rural students in Mexico. I promise to send you more concrete updates once things get started. I'll be out there beginning August 23rd." Meanwhile, much closer to Princeton, **David Cobey '07** is working for a start up credit card company with a group of Princeton alumni, headed up by a PLAS alumnus. He says "it's the other ends of the earth from Guatemala!" The New York City based contingent also had some reports, included that of **August Petrillo '02** who is between the first and second years of his MBA at Columbia Business School, where he is involved with the Latin American Business Association. He tells us: "I spent my summer working at a globally-mandated hedge fund in New York, investing in Latin America among other places. In the fall, I will be studying Portuguese in addition to my more traditional business studies, and I have been practicing my Spanish with classmates from all over Latin America. I returned to Argentina for a week last spring to visit my friends, coworkers and host family from my PiLA fellowship, and I am looking forward to traveling to Colombia, Venezuela and Brazil this winter with Christian Gomez and a few other Princeton alumni." August has been a huge help to PiLA during our interview season and is looking towards a third straight year of doing alumni interviews. Anyone else who'd like to join us during the second week of January 2009 is welcome! Also in NYC is **Jane Hong '07**, just back from her year at Endeavor's Santiago, Chile, office. She says: "I'm already over a month into my new job at Goldman Sachs in the Securities Division in NYC. I am currently in training and in about two weeks, preparing to move full time to my actual desk on the trading floor...Rates Sales in the Fixed Income, Currency, and Commodities group. It's been a completely different experience thus far, but certainly, a much more enjoyable one for having spent such a fulfilling year abroad in Chile working for Endeavor!" Further afield from New York are **Alisha Holland '07** and **Melissa del Aguila '05**, who appears on page 4 in a lovely group photo. **Alisha**, up in Cambridge, Mass, is beginning a Ph.D at the Harvard Government Department this fall and continues to have her focus be on Latin America. She just finished up a Fellowship at Human Rights Watch, based in Santiago Chile, where she also visited Venezuela to view the referendum on Chavez, held earlier this year. After that and much other research, she contributed a chapter to a book being published by Human Rights Watch. On her way home to Massachusetts, she took a trip to Peru—check out her photos, below! **Melissa** spent her summer in Paris, studying international law at La Sorbonne. During the rest of the year, she's up in Ithaca, where she is a second year law student and is also working toward an LL.M in International and Comparative Law.

If you have news you'd like the PiLA community to know about, email Claire at [pila@princeton.edu](mailto:pila@princeton.edu).



From Alisha's adventure in Peru



## Felicitaciones

### Abby Williams '05, Arias

The last two years since my fellowship at the Fundacion Arias para la Paz y Progreso Humano have been a whirlwind indeed. After 10 months at the foundation, I moved back to the United States, where I worked at the American Cancer Society's Latin American Initiative. I did not last long. Having met the love of my life in Costa Rica, I returned to the land of papaya batidos and Pura Vida (something Ticos say several times daily; a fantastic combination of "awesome" and "it's all good") after 6 months. For the next year I worked at a Costa Rican health care consulting firm called Sanigest Internacional, where I was part of their proposal team. The work was hard, but there was always the consolation of weekend trips to the Caribbean and perfect weather year round.

I finally returned to the United States in August of 2007 (I can't believe it's been a year already!), to start a masters in public health at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. I currently



work with a professor at Mailman, a fellow Princeton alumna who is conducting research (incidentally with a team including 2 other Princetonians) on the barriers Latin migrants face to adhering to antiretroviral treatment. Since starting my masters I have also interned at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences on a community based participatory research project attempting to increase cancer screening and access to treatment services in under-served communities in Queens. In both jobs, the use of Spanish has been indispensable, making me feel all the more fortunate for my PILA experience.

In January 2008, I married the wonderful man I met in San Jose. The ceremony and reception were held in Piermont, NY, and we were very happy that several friends from Costa Rica and Spain (my husband is Spanish, and had been working as a cooperante with the UN in Costa Rica) were able to come. My former roommate and dear friend, fellow PILA alumna Melissa del Aguila gave a speech at the wedding along with a picture of a beaming me the day Eugenio and I went on our first date.

I can't imagine my life today if I hadn't spent that first year after graduation in Latin America. PILA was in so many ways the catalyst for all the events that came later, and I feel infinitely lucky for the doors it opened.

I have attached 2 photos from our wedding: one of just Eugenio and me, and one of all the folks we met in Costa Rica who came from our wedding. The picture on the left includes 2 other former PILA fellows- **Melissa del Aguila, '05**, and **Michelle Parris '04**.

