

Introduction:

This is life invented. Invent the life you want to lead. Invent the life you want to lead. Be creative, be challenged, be the solution. Go Broncos.

Narrator:

Welcome to the life invented podcast presented by Santa Clara University. From campus life to what it means to learn in the Silicon Valley, we explore how to be a Global Citizen in an era of change. This is: Life Invented.

j:

We live in a global society, and no matter where you are currently in it, it's hard to deny: our world is getting smaller each and every day. We're all connected, and the decisions we make here and now are impacting the lives of communities in regions across the world. It's a beautiful day here in Santa Clara, and on this episode, we'll explore what it means to be a global citizen. We're talking the participants of the Leavey School of Business's "[Global Fellows Program](#)" a nine month leadership program at Santa Clara University. This unique program is working each year to foster global citizens, and nurture competence, conscience, and compassion in Santa Clara students. We're joined by program director [Tanya Monsef Bunger](#), and recent fellows, Nick Kikuchi and Onno Ho who share how they have left no path untraveled. Let's go!

Okay folks, so good to have you here on Life Invented, we're gonna start with you Tanya, so please, dish yo deets!

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

So my name is Tanya Monsef Bunger and I am a proud Santa Clara alum from 1986, I'm a Gen X-er, and I am a product of Silicon Valley, but I come by way of a global family. My father is Iranian and my mother is German. Both met here in the United States in Silicon Valley, so I'm a first generation American, and believe that my story of who I am is actually very much of a global citizen and it was just how I was raised. And so, my passion in the world is actually to bring about global harmony, and I really do a lot of work around-- working with NGOs and specifically women leaders all over the world. I've worked with probably 200 women from about 40 countries, and it's a lot of my work. Here at Santa Clara, I am the director of Global Fellows program, which is a multi-disciplinary program where we send students abroad to do an internship abroad. They live and work abroad in a developing country. They will work with either NGOs or for-profit companies.

j:

Thanks so much for joining us, thank you thank you. Onno, you're up next. Please, dish yo deets!

Onno Ho:

My name is Onno Ho, I am a Junior [Finance](#) major, international business/anthropology minor at Santa Clara University. I am a millennial, born and raised in Hong Kong, so I'm an international student. I really like food and the way I look at food is how food has affected cultures and how the people have been shaped by that specific-- by food and how people interact around like the dining table. So just growing up in international school, at lunch time you would see kind of foods from all over the world, just like brought out and people would have discussion like "why do you eat this, why do you eat that?" and you just kind of learn about how that's inherent in certain parts of different people's cultures. So that's kind of what I really like!

Nick Kikuchi:

I'm Nick Kikuchi, I'm a junior from San Jose, California, I am a millennial as well. I'm studying [bioengineering](#) here at the University. My family is from San Jose California, pretty much both sides of my family are both here in San Jose and I'm Japanese and Chinese, so half of my family is from China and the other half is from Japan. One of my passions is really being outdoors, I love hiking, I love finding new outdoor spots that really are kind of tucked away, and you really have to get to and it takes a lot of effort to get to them. So, love being outdoors.

j:

Ahh, yes and the Bay Area is a great place to be if you love nature and being outdoors. Okay, thanks for introducing yourself everybody, our global society is at a really interesting, complex, and critical point in our history. Tanya, why does this world need more global fellows from Santa Clara University?

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

I believe that the world is more interconnected than it ever has been. Access to technology, you know just-- the world is very very small. And unfortunately or fortunately, we live in a very vibrant community here in Silicon Valley, Santa Clara is one of the finest institutions here in the Silicon Valley; you know the employees in the major companies are Santa Clara grads, but we also live in somewhat of a bubble and so I think that it's super important for students and people to really understand what it means to be part of a global community and understand how you relate to other people. It's good for not only humanity, but it's also good for business. Every company here in the Silicon Valley is a multi-national company doing work globally, and so to have the capacity to understand what is needed, and to really relate to other people, is a super valuable skill.

j:

True indeed. Relating to others including those from different cultures is critical right about now. Tanya, can you tell us a bit more about the program itself.

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

The program was actually founded in 2008. Santa Clara incubated an organization called the [Global Women's Leadership Network](#), and we trained women from all over the world and it came out of this idea that "hey, we have this great network of people all over the world, let's send some of our students to go work with them". So that's actually how that started. The students go and work abroad and they work in everything from working in an orphanage in India, a woman who is fighting against female infanticide and feticide. In India, over 5000 girls a year go missing, so she's working to address that issue. We're working in the Gambia where a woman there is actually trying to change a generation and have women actually step up into society and so she works with young girls there.

j:

Fellows are the change-makers, the go-getters, the leaders of their communities. The Global Fellows Program recruits exceptional students who are engaged, contemplative, independent, compassionate, innovative, and curious. Nick, you've gone and you've been a Global Fellow, when you hear that, how does that resonate with the reality of what you've experienced.

Nick Kikuchi:

I think that's pretty much as perfect as you can get. You know, when you're on this fellowship, you're in a developing country, you're in a place that you've never been to before most likely, you're gonna find some new challenges, you're gonna face obstacles that you would have never anticipated. I know for me it was my first abroad or international experience, so it was really really eye opening for me. You know, that whole idea that the United States is the best country in the world was kind of something that I just grew up with because I had never been anywhere else, and so having the chance to see you know what other countries have to offer, how different people work, how different business types, how their goals are really affected by where they grew up or their culture is something that really just changed my perspective about everything. Being able to go after you know anything and any opportunity that you want is something that I really saw come to life when I was on my Fellowship.

j:

Onno, what about you?

Onno Ho:

I was looking for more of a meaningful service experience and a meaningful project. In high school, after doing those four different service projects I kind of thought about the impact I was making, and realized that a lot of the stuff I was doing could have been easily done by the people there, like was the work I was doing, was that for the benefit of them or the benefit of me having intrinsic happiness, like "oh, I went and helped these people"? So, I applied to these-- my specific program, because I wanted to see more of a long term impact and I wanted to see the actual effect on the people I was helping. So when I was in Bolivia I was working for this company, they're an ethical and sustainable manufacturer-- like artisan manufacturing firm, and

a lot of their workers are artisan women who did a lot of knitting and a lot of different kind of practices, and the boss was talking to all of her employees and realized that all of their kids were failing math and she came to the conclusion that there's no way these kids are all inherently bad at math and created this after-school tutoring program through using Khan Academy. Through using Khan Academy we were able to track the statistics of these students who were coming back year to year to see them improve, and so that was the main project I was working on which was really rewarding because you could track progress, see that these kids were doing well and doing better in school. They'll come back and bring back their test schools from school and you can see that. It doesn't only help me, motivates me to see these kids do well, but also I can see it benefit their own lives

j:

In our society there tends to be a lot of conversation around the war on apathy and the ability to increase empathy for various people and causes around the globe. Nick, how has Santa Clara University nurtured in you the idea of being a man for others.

Nick Kikuchi:

You know, it's funny. I've had this conversation with my mom actually. She'll mention how different she thinks I've become in college, and I think a lot of that is because of how the University has kind of instilled these different values in me. I know when I was in high school, a lot of the focus was getting a job that will get you money, like "money, money, money", that was the biggest thing; money was used to measure success, and coming to the university a lot of the things that they talk about is vocation and fighting that thing that you've passionate about that will bring about the biggest social impact, the biggest change, and so seeing that transition between where-- I originally chose to be an engineering major because of the money, and now I want to be an engineering major because of the innovation, because of the change, and the impact that it can have not only in the country but across the globe, and seeing that change in my perspective and how I think about things like how I study or what I do or what I'm doing and how it affects others, I guess that really just shows how the University has changed me and those values that they instill in me.

j:

Tanya, the Global Fellows program is hosted out of the Leavey school of business, I think it's safe to say: most don't tend to put the concepts of business and compassion together, can you talk about how this program is changing that.

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

We have Arts & Science, Engineering, and Business majors participating in the program, almost equally, actually. So the compassion piece is a huge thing for me. I feel very blessed, I teach in the business school, not just this program-- but I teach in the business school, and I consider it a great place to teach business, because business is about making profit, but it's also about what your impact is in humanity, and so as a business professor here at Santa Clara, I can bring

that more holistic view into the landscape of how I approach the teaching. And so, for the program, that's absolutely a fundamental part of it, is: how do we think about business-- is not just you know just producing widgets, but also, what are some really innovative ideas that are happening around the world, here in the US as well, and how can a student be thinking about their vocation a little bit different than they had before? And again, my goal is not to get students to go into the Peace Corps; we have students all over in all kinds of companies around the Bay Area and also around the world, but I really want them to see themselves as something a little larger than just sitting in a cubicle, or in an office producing paper everyday.

j:

Onno, how has Santa Clara changed your perspective on how you as an individual can have a positive, global impact?

Onno Ho:

For me, my high school kind of did a lot of the-- I guess the initial like "testing the waters", putting these ideals to my head, but then Santa Clara really kind of ingrained these ideas and instilled these values in me. We have these things called the "3 C's", which stands for conscience, competence, and compassion. It's really made me think more so about my global impact and how I can affect the people around me., not just in my near community, but also you know-- on the whole global scale, and it's changed my life vocation in a sense. You know, I'm studying finance and originally I wanted to be a-- I wanted to go into investment banking, and then I realized like, I really do not want to go into this industry after studying it a little bit more. Hopefully I can take my finance major and apply that to other communities around the world, through maybe like impact, investing, or micro-financing. So yeah, it's really changed my perspective; we're always told like, "conscience, competence, and compassion" throughout our 4 years here and applying that to your career, and that's actually reflected in our courses. All students have to take ethics classes, diversity classes, theology classes, so it really kind of educates students with a holistic mindset.

j:

Nick, I think a number of future college students are gonna be able to relate to you travelling for the first time to a different country for several weeks to study in some interesting place around the world, can you share an example of a person or experience that really contributed to the transformation of your world view?

Nick Kikuchi:

I think for me, we were living with our boss basically kind of right next to them, and our bosses wife actually lived in the rainforest for 12 years, and she told us the-- kind of her back story. So she's originally from Argentina, and she's was one of the first like "South American hippies, and when they were being prosecuted she actually decided to go into the rainforest and live this entirely new life with another group and that's where she stayed for 12 years. She said that it took 3 days just to hike out of the rainforest; they would make the trip twice a year to get ammunition, food, and I believe medicine, and so just seeing how she just packed up her entire

life and moved somewhere completely remote-- she said she would watch the monkeys, see what they ate, and she would do the same, make sure she didn't get sick, and then would do the same. And so, just seeing how differently we've been raised, or have grown up, or just our mindsets almost. I think it's really easy to get tunnel-visioned, really easy to have this narrow view of how you get to one place from kind of where you are. It was definitely interesting to hear her perspective and how she went this entirely different path, went this entirely, you know-- new experience that I wouldn't have ever thought of or would never even consider honestly to get to where she was at that moment, and that was really eye-opening for me.

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

For me what I think about when I think about deep transformation, I think that you gain this new perspective of you know your values, your beliefs, maybe your aspirations change too. There's a woman that comes to mind, she went two years ago to Turkey, and I didn't really know this about her, but she said, "you know, a typical Saturday night for me would be, I'd be home, and I'd have maybe maybe my friends over and we'd watch Netflix, and I really made this decision that I wanted to really expand my world", and so we sent her to Turkey; she was in Istanbul, Turkey working with a women's organization there and she just dove right in. She just changed her whole life, her whole viewpoint changed because she made the decision that she wanted to do something different, something that she'd never done before, and now she's working for the CDC in Atlanta doing great work there, she's going to go to Medical School after this. Those are the kind of students that we have, the students that see a need, and just go figure out how to make it happen.

j:

And an amazing opportunity to be able to have that sort of independence as an undergraduate student especially. Tanya, being culturally sensitive and aware is not always the reputation Americans have while in other countries, how does this program create balance between respecting a country's culture and influencing our American culture in way of doing things on them.

Tanya Monsef Bunger:

One of the fundamental principles on actually selecting a placement, and also the student is-- I have a core belief of reciprocity. So we are not going to Ghana and India to help them, you know to make them like, you know-- do something that's somehow going to make them "better". They are very well equipped, they're very strong leaders in and of themselves in these countries, and so I work with the placements to see how can we as Santa Clara send students that will help you in furthering whatever your business is. The students are there for about 7-8 weeks on average, and so it's not that long, but they do have a project that they're working on, and most of the placements say to us, "what we really want is we want a little bit of Silicon Valley to come to Morocco or India and we want to see what it's like to meet them", and then for our students I think that is one of the biggest challenges is for them to actually understand that they're going in not to change anything, they're actually going in to learn as much as they're

going to give, and so how do we balance that reciprocity? And I think that that is our biggest challenge, or students here at Santa Clara are very very smart and dedicated and passionate and they have a very long to-do list and they have their check list everyday that they do, and then they'll go to India or Ghana; you know, the time-- the relationship with time becomes very different, so in a day you might be told "show up at 10 o'clock and we're gonna do X, Y, Z", and it might actually happen at 2 or it might happen the next day, and so I think that's one of the biggest challenges, and even being in a global business, if you're working for Google or Facebook and you're having interactions with an international office, you have to be prepared to understand -- and really compassionately and with reverence -- really understand what it means to be in a different culture, and that our culture is not the only culture, so that's really the goal.

j:

Ahh yes, cultural sensitivity and awareness is so critical to developing successful relationships, business, or otherwise. Tanya, Nick, Onno, thank you all so much for spending some time with us here on life invented. The Global Fellows program is such a powerful and impactful one, and we're just thankful that each year more and more of you will be influencing our global family in such a positive way. Thanks again for being here with us.

Narrator:

You've just listened to the Life Invented podcast presented by Santa Clara University, and there's so much more to explore. Visit us at scu.edu/podcasts, and learn more about Santa Clara's commitment to innovative and inspiring opportunities.