Globalization. It’s more than a buzzword. Elise Lasko knows that. That’s why she opted to study international business and get hands-on experience in the field. She’s preparing to thrive in a world where far-flung economies are united by technology, entrepreneurship and social mobility.

Right from the start, Elise knew she wanted to pursue international business. She lined up the right slate of courses and got involved with SIFE (Students in Free Enterprise). Soon enough, she was helping the organization raise money to support its Technology for Africa project. Along with other SIFE members from the College, she helped raised $78,000, which was used to purchase computers for a community center, a medical school and a private university in Cameroon. During spring break, she and others traveled there to deliver their gift and to experience firsthand a world unlike their own.

“That was exciting, and satisfying, but it was also really informative. Some of the things we take for granted here, such as access to computers, can make a tremendous difference in areas like Cameroon that we’re supporting.”

In a Global Strategic Management class, her group project was to analyze a grocery chain. “The company we chose isn’t actually a global firm, but it aspires to be one. We examined the industry and recommended that the company initially enter the Mexican market with small-scale convenience stores.”

Joining the College’s Microfinance Club was one of Elise’s most empowering experiences. “Our club partnered with a development organization – Global Brigades – and I ended up in Honduras on spring break. Along with our faculty advisor, about 20 of us interviewed individuals from a rural community who were seeking loans. Farmers here grow coffee, and they must borrow from brokers who charge high interest rates. Now, through a community bank called Caja Rural, the microfinance concept allows them a much less costly option.”

Right after graduation, Elise will work full time with Global Brigades, applying knowledge and skills she acquired through this major.

International business – it’s a lot more than you might imagine. Check it out.