

Callie Dollof Transcript

Transcript

00:00:00 Speaker 2

Let's just do a brief introduction. So we are the groups from the After Mary Washington 195 and we're Group 5 and my name is Yifeng Chang and I'm live in local Fredericksburg, which is. And I was also in a senior year in Mary Washington. And my major is political science.

00:00:20 Speaker 2

And I'm pretty interested in foreign languages, so I maybe one day I can become an international lawyer.

00:00:25 Speaker 1

I'm Christopher Sullivan, originally from Richmond, living in Mary Washington now and my last semester, my senior year. I am a Spanish major.

00:00:36 Speaker 1

Here and I already have a job after college that deals with it and more specifically in the Hispanic community.

00:00:44 Speaker 4

Henry Paredes, International Affairs major with a minor in Asian studies and security and conflict studies, and I am a graduating senior and I'm also from NOVA as a commuter, students learned a lot of Spanish and some Chinese and a bit of Korean.

00:01:03 Speaker 3

And I'm Callie, Callie Dollof. I am a 2015 alumna from Mary Washington, originally from Blacksburg, VA, and I currently live in Buenos Aires, Argentina. I am a translator, copywriter, voice actor, and.

00:01:23 Speaker 3

This was just after a few years of teaching English and Spanish.

00:01:28 Speaker 1

Alright, I have one of the first questions. How did you fall in love with like the Spanish language and of itself and Arabic as well? And like, how did learning Arabic and Spanish at the same time? Did they mean together like were they similar at all?

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Great question. So I had a babysitter who was from Colombia, specifically from the hometown of Shakira.

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And she started out by just playing a bunch of music. And it was when reggaeton started to become a big thing in the world and in the states. And so it was mainly through music that I had the first contact. I definitely think that that the musicality of it and both of the language and also the music.

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Element really really helped. That was in high school and then in college it was. Honestly Arabic was just.

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Pure happenstance. I found it that it was offered and.

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I said, huh?

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Cool tried it. Turns out it sort of stimulates my brain in the way that like, it's easy to see really specific advances as you go along as you learn, you know, as a as you guys have all been there as like.

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Beginner students from zero students of a language, and you can see really big gains really fast. And that's so satisfying.

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Being able to connect also felt really good and then connecting with Arabic was actually.

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What made me?

00:02:57 Speaker 3

Re-fall in love with Spanish. I realized that it was something that I had been missing. And so that's how I ended up getting back into Spanish at Mary Wash and that's how I was able to later then study.

00:03:10 Speaker 3

In Spain, study abroad in Granada and I learned about this when I was.

00:03:16 Speaker 3

1st starting out in Arabic and Spanish but I can see the linguistic historical elements of Arabic in Spanish.

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Because of the the historical influences of Arabic on Spanish, I help my well, my English speaking or English. Native speaking students who are learning Spanish connect to a language they weren't expecting and my Spanish.

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Speaking students who are learning.

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English they get to, you know.

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Realize that they're connected to another language that they didn't realize either, so that's really for me. Really fun.

00:03:53 Speaker 2

So my first question is, uhm, what's the current job? Your first option, or exactly the job you desire? And what actually inspire you for choosing the job?

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Great question. No, this is not the original job I had planned. I as an international affairs major, thought that I would go toward the side of global development or something like that. And then I realized that I.

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Yeah. You know, for lack of a better word, my heart wasn't in it. And that was mostly because it turns out it was the language element that really excited me about the world and being able to connect to, you know, get different cultures, different geopolitical situations or foods.

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So that's how I started teaching English because.

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That was a.

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Really accessible way for me to explore the world.

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Really, as years went by, I was able to explore more because I was learning when I lived in Thailand, I.

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Learned a little bit.

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Of Thai I met people who were native Spanish speakers, and I sort of fell in love with Spanish all over again and really nurtured that element the the how can I?

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Continue my language learning about journey.

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And that was actually how I found myself doing translations. And then I went to do a masters in translation here in Buenos Aires that ended up leading me to copywriting, which I do now, which is it's mostly in English. But because I have the ability to.

00:05:35 Speaker 3

Exist in both the Spanish speaking and the English speaking world. That's a huge, huge advantage. The the culture element is really huge as well. There's a thing called localization and that is adapting a text or maybe not just a text, but documents as well to a.

00:05:50 Speaker 3

local, market Spanish and Argentina is totally different from Spanish in Spain. The voice acting element was because of, you know, word of mouth client to client, they say ohh you speak English? Do you think you would be interested in this? And then I was like, well, let's try it. And I was able to send some demos work with.

00:06:10 Speaker 3

Voice, voice coach. All of these things are tools in my tool belt that I I never, ever, ever expected to be here, but definitely the the thing that you know, the hook that makes me want more, the language element that was, that's always there and I'm able to create.

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More career paths for myself because I have a flexibility.

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In any market, if you're able to be flexible and and willing to learn or more than willing, but really wanting to learn that I think is the thing that makes you go far, whatever it.

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Is that you choose to do.

00:06:50 Speaker 2

Would you mind sharing some like experiences or hard times and how you get managed to get through?

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If we bring it back to the language thing right, something that I've learned in Argentina is culturally there's a there's a drink called mate. It's something that you share, you pass it around and you serve a little bit of water. You take a sip, and then you give it back to the Cebador the person who is in charge of giving everybody the mate.

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Help pour more water, she'll.

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More water. Send it to the next person and it's a great way to like come together.

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And just take take a.

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Beat and so that is something that I've learned being in Argentina is is connecting.

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With other people and.

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Taking a moment for camaraderie. It's huge.

00:07:35 Speaker 2

All right. Thank you so much. Do you have anything to add, Henry for your?

00:07:40 Speaker 4

For your study abroad in Spain, what was your experience like there, particularly like with the Arabic cultural studies program you did there?

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It was great. I was.

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A little bit nervous because I was going specifically to Granada specifically for this program so that I could have both Spanish and Arabic, and it felt like I was going out on a ledge a little bit because I wasn't going with Mary Wash to Bilbao, but in the end, you know, those study abroad.

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Most of the study abroad companies are pretty good. The one that I went.

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To had a really good reputation, so I felt.

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Really supported. There was a lot of great community, had so much fun. It was really cool to go see the world. The food was amazing. It was incredible and definitely to this day I travel with my stomach. That was really fun. I probably enjoyed learning and just living.

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In life, more in.

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My study abroad moment than I had ever before, so it really helped me. Actually appreciate learning and appreciate life and other stuff. Post that experience. So going back into Mary Wash like I think I felt more connected to making more connections to.

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You know, reaching out, looking for more social opportunities. And I think that like studying abroad, you're thrown into a new group of people in a new setting. And so it it affords you the ability to.

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Try on a new hat or a new personality and say ohh maybe I'm a little bit more social than I thought it was. So yeah yeah it was great. It was a really fun. I definitely to anyone who can afford to go or is able to get a scholarship or whatever. I wholeheartedly recommend that they study abroad because it is so enriching.

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In so many ways.

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When you graduated, what were you thinking of doing at that time?

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So when I finished the degree, I was so happy that I did and all of that. But then I was like, OK, so it turns out the language is the thing for me. How do I do that? And I.

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Figured OK teaching English but with what? And I looked for.

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Certifications that would, you know, facilitate me getting a job and also to be honest, get me a better paying job. I got my Celta, I got my certification and then I found the I was looking for jobs and I was looking sort.

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Of everywhere at.

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The time I said I'm going to go with.

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Like I did, study abroad with somebody who is a recruiter, who has sort of a safety net or contacts there. I was between Turkey and.

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Thailand, for some reason I went with Thailand and do remember that I was able to negotiate a bit higher salary because of my CELTA certification and then in Thailand it was. There was a group of people that had gotten in touch with this recruiter and we had like a little an overhaul briefing of what?

00:10:49 Speaker 3

Thailand is like and what's expected and cultural things and.

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In some ways of speaking, there's, like, you know, the basics, the very, very basics so that we could get set up for success. One of my regrets in Thailand, one of the things that I, the lessons that I learned actually was that I didn't connect more with the local community and that I didn't learn more of the language.

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But I learned anyways, I learned.

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To do things differently, I came to Argentina.

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And I said.

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By God, I will learn the language. I will be with the locals and I will, like, do what I can to really build up my community in in a local way.

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What led you to go to Argentina?

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Good question. I was I I wanted Latin America. I wanted Spanish speaking Latin America.

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Which is huge.

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Oh my God, many many options. The reason I chose Argentina was pure and simple. I I met a friend who was Argentinian and was like we were having a conversation. He was a a writer and was working on a book and so he was interviewing me for it. And after he finished the interview and he had asked what I was going to do when my contract.

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Ended and I was like, well, I think I'm I'm ready to move on from my experience in.

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Thailand, I I.

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Want to go back to speaking Spanish? Like, that's something that I'm I'm missing. So again with like the call of the Spanish language.

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And he was like, well, dude, I'm from Argentina. I'm going to be living in Argentina. Like, come stay with my family. So I was like, OK, and I finished my contract in Thailand. I took a month off and I traveled a little bit more.

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And then I flew from Thailand. I got my stuff and I went to Argentina directly. I ended up really enjoying Argentina. I honestly felt so me. I had never felt so me here. And I think part of it was the language. Part of it was the lessons learned in Thailand of connecting with local people.

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Nourishing friendships I was really enjoying the work I was doing. I had, I like, really enjoyed teaching at that point.

00:13:00 Speaker 1

Well, thank you very much for giving us your time. Thank you very much. Connect with you and doing this interview.

00:13:07 Speaker 3

My pleasure. My pleasure.