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10-7-2014

### Another Spanish Teaching Assistant Explains About the Change

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#### Recommended Citation

Ortiz, Jennifer, "Another Spanish Teaching Assistant Explains About the Change" (2014). GWU-Today. 44.

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## Another Spanish Teaching Assistant explains about the change

🕒 October 7, 2014 👤 GWU Today 📁 Feature, News, Testimonial  
Tuesday 💬 0



Photo by: Megan Hartman

By: Jennifer Ortiz

Although this new, rural way of life is completely different to what Ailen Morginstern is used to back in Argentina; she has been enjoying the change and the chance to reflect and process

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everything that she learns along the way.

“I see myself enjoying the moments of silence. I see myself enjoying the smell of grass. The other day I looked at the sky, and I saw the stars,” she said. “The pace here is different. Life in the south is quieter, so I really enjoy that. I didn’t think that I would say this because I am always in a rush in Buenos Aires, going from one work to the other. Here that I am not rushing, I am actually enjoying this peaceful atmosphere.”

Morginstern was born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina; a very large city with a population of roughly 3 million people. She graduated in 2012 from the teacher training college in Buenos Aires, where she studied English education. She has had teaching jobs since 2007, to gain experience and to affirm her passion for teaching.

Like the other teaching assistants, TAs, Morginstern acquired the position at Gardner-Webb through the Fulbright Scholarship Program.

“I also chose to apply for this scholarship as a challenge because my family is very close to each other. Leaving the country for nine months is a big challenge. I miss talking to them at dinner or meeting them once a week and also barbecues—especially that—those family meetings where you share moments with your cousins and all that,” Morginstern said.

In order to apply for the Fulbright Scholarship, Morginstern said you have to be an English teacher. “They chose teachers of English from the different provinces, and I am here as a representative of the city of Buenos Aires,” she said.

Despite the drastic change from a big city to a small town, Morginstern said that she has enjoyed her time here so far. She had previously visited New York and Miami as a tourist, but says that you see things differently as a tourist. She describes this as a completely different experience in which she can see things as somebody living within this society.

Morginstern said that she had few prejudgments about Americans before coming here, and that she came here with an open mind; wanting to learn about a new way of life. She mentioned that the

American campus life has always piqued her interest.

"What you see in movies is that people go out and have fun and then they study a lot, but at the same time, they go to parties a lot," she said. "I thought, 'How does this work?'"

Morginstern explained how campus life does not exist in Argentina because most university students still live at home during their college years.

"When you are a university student [in Argentina], you still have dinner with your family and all that. Here, your friends become your family, and I love it because you become much more sociable and open minded," Morginstern said. "You get to talk to much more people here than in Argentina because the environment is like a community. When you go, take a class and then go back home, you are not immersed in a community."

The open-minded people she has encountered at Gardner-Webb have made this a learning experience for Morginstern.

"I really like the fact that people want to learn and really get to know who you are. You have the possibility to learn a lot about your culture by explaining it to others, so I am learning a lot about my own culture and my own traditions. So far that's been great-talking to people," she said.

Even though it has only been a month away from home, Morginstern said, she misses her family in Argentina and getting to see them on a regular basis.

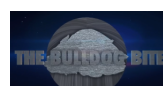
Morginstern lives in a house with the other three TAs. Huerto Corbalan, is from Argentina as well, though she lives in the north. Morginstern said that she has not had the opportunity to travel to that part of her country as often as she would like and that she is learning a lot through Corbalan as well as the other young women.

"Not only am I sharing the house, but also I am sharing with people of a different culture. It's a challenge because you have to negotiate things every day. From those compromises, I'm learning a lot-especially to share," said Morginstern.



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