CILMAR 2018 Study Abroad Vision Award

The recipient of the CILMAR Vision Award for Study Abroad is Dr. Heidi Parker, Assistant Director of Latin America & Spain in Global Engineering Programs and Partnerships. From her nomination letter, written by Darshini Render: “Dr. Parker redesigned various global engineering courses to incorporate…global and intercultural learning outcomes and objectives…as well as evidence-based assignments and assessments. Some of the courses she redesigned and currently facilitates are a sequence of 2 courses which make up the first-year Global Engineering Learning Community [ENGR 103 and GEP 200], ENGR 297 study abroad pre-departure course, and ENGR 497 global engineering capstone course.] We know from the Lunch N Learn lecture she presented on the results of last year’s mini-grant award that Dr. Parker’s focus on intercultural learning and mentorship in her study abroad trip to Colombia was phenomenally successful; by implementing best practices such as formative assessment, regular reflective dialogue with students, and assignments that applied intercultural theory to experiences in the host community, she was able both quantitatively and qualitatively to document significant intercultural development in her students.

In her nomination letter, Darshini also pointed out Dr. Parker’s substantial positive impact on inclusivity in Engineering Study Abroad through her administration of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas grant: “The first study abroad program she led in May of 2017 had 14 male and 2 female students, [only one a minority] student. This year, that same program has 6 male and 11 female students, and 45% are minority students. Moreover, she designed and will facilitate this summer the first ever Minority Engineering Program study abroad, which is an innovative pre-freshman program that will have 100% minority student participation.”

Finally, a comment from one of Dr. Parker’s recent study abroad students: “Thank you for being an amazing mentor, coordinator and teacher during the study abroad trip to Mexico. I was continually motivated by your ability to deal with problems and still keep a smiling face throughout, and I hope to emulate you in the future. Your ability to handle stress and a make positive impact in someone’s life is matched by none.”