

Persevering to Reach a Goal A. Margaret Boyd International Fellowship Recipient, Della Kartika Sari, studying at University of Cincinnati

GREETINGS FROM INDONESIA

DECEMBER 16, 2022

Dear Members,

I am already in Indonesia! It was a very hectic departure, as I did not plan to leave before December 10, but the ticket home was very expensive. I asked Fulbright to approve my travel before that date, as I could fly on December 5 using less money, and this was two days after my last class. At 1:30 AM on December 5 I traveled by train to Chicago because the Consular wanted to check my old passport. The train trip was not bad, but it took 9 hours. That afternoon I took a flight from Chicago, for 34 hours, to land in Jakarta, where I could not use any of the phones I bought in the US. The customs officers required me to register the IMEI number or they would block my phone numbers. I was very tired and had little energy for all the questioning, so I decided to take a train and head home. I cannot use or be contacted using my US number in Indonesia, except via Whatsapp, nor could I use my Indonesian number in my own country because I bought my phone in the US. A friend said, "My God, Della, your government treats you like a foreigner!" Two days after my arrival I bought another phone just to use my Indonesian number! Now I have three phones! Hahaha!

Then, the next encounter was that I went home to bring my daughter back to the US with me, only to discover the documents that needed to be sent to AMINEF, Fulbright representative in Jakarta had not been completed, and I had to go from one agency to another, knowing Indonesian bureaucracy, it was very complicated. Some people were very helpful, while others were not, as the offices were crowded with people and the officers were tired and cranky. The lines were exhausting. However, I finally managed to send the documents and we are currently waiting for the interview. I am hoping the Consulate will approve my daughter's visa application. There are so many things to do, and I have to do them all alone.

On the bright side, my academic news is very good, and I am thrilled with my progress this first semester. I am eager to begin my second semester.

Well, this is a very long story, but I thank you for reading and listening to my story as I persevere to achieve my goal in education. Merry Christmas and have a wonderful holiday.

Sending hugs,

Della Kartika Sari