

# HOLLERAN CENTER PICA JUNIORS IN ACTION



Meet Aleksandr Chandra '16 at his internship site in Delhi, India



I recently founded *Mending Maya*, an intergenerational contact program that bridges the years through meaningful connection in Delhi, India. I oversee the 8-week program with the help of a team of youth who collaborate with seniors at an old age home through various art forms including movement and theater, music, and arts and crafts. I also intern part-time at the Agewell Foundation where I am working on two different campaigns. One of our current projects is focusing on providing the services necessary to enhance the digital literacy of the aged in Delhi, while our other campaign is trying to connect the generations through archiving photographs one has of an older generation.

The mission of *Mending Maya* is to bridge the generational gap through meaningful connection and the mission of the Agewell Foundation is to make a coordinated effort with compassion and understanding to transform social attitudes towards senior citizens. Through our efforts we hope to create the infrastructure to empower every older person.

My current projects and internships align with plans for my future studies of ageing. When I return from having completed my projects and internships in India I will compile all of my findings into an honors thesis I will write and eventually publish entitled “Mending Maya: Bridging the Years through Meaningful Connection.” Thereafter, I intend to pursue graduate studies in the field of gerontology with hopes of one day returning to India to establish a senior center managed and run by youths for seniors in the community.

The best part of *Mending Maya* is that not only, I have had the honor and blessing of witnessing the awakening of interpersonal connections and the closing of generational gaps between Indian youths and seniors, but I have also watched gaps close between cultures and organizations, intellects and identities. The best part about working with the Agewell Foundation is the opportunities I have had to take ownership of my own initiatives. Never before would I have thought I would be able to co-manage two campaigns that are impactful for the older generations in Delhi.

Marry your internships with intent. Don't look for those that are shiny, but find or create internships that resonate with you deeply so you make the most out of it for yourself.

