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In 1999 Americans Dana and Brandi Bates founded the New Horizons Foundation, setting out to address issues of corruption, lack of trust, and a greatly weakened network of social capital in post-Communist Romania. With strong partnerships from Romanian and American experts, they set out to train young Romanian leaders in team- and trust-building through challenge activities, including the country's first major ropes course. All activities institute a need for communication, trust, patience and encouragement. Before long, the Viata program was established (viata means "life" in Romanian), a week-long summer camp experience centered around a positive social setting where skills in rock climbing and other challenge-by-choice activities began to develop the seeds of a home-grown social capital.

The camp was an almost immediate success, and by 2009 it had welcomed more than 6,000 youth from all over Romania. It wasn't long, however, before the staff of New Horizons and the Viata program realized that another step was necessary. Viata's young alumni found themselves back in cities and towns still suffering from the malaise that followed forty-five years of communist oppression—hulking concrete block apartment buildings, a general culture of distrust and corruption, and among the lowest scores worldwide on the World Values Survey. As a result, the next step the organization took was to establish small service groups called IMPACT clubs in the towns and cities and neighborhoods to which the youth were returning after the Viata program. By 2009 there were more than 90 healthy IMPACT clubs in ten counties all around Romania.

The IMPACT model caught the attention of educators at Calvin College because of the unusual way in which it employs service-learning methodology in multiple layers. The principles of service-learning—reciprocity, empowerment, relationship, reflection—all work to build social capital among the youth participants and their communities in Romania. At the same time, through multiple points of contact for Calvin College students, the service-learning efforts fostered by the IMPACT clubs have enabled deep cultural learning to take place for visiting students who participate in both Viata and IMPACT programs.

For the Calvin students who participate in this program, the changes they experience in themselves are as significant as the impact they are making in Romania. During their time there, the students are subjected to the conditions the community faces everyday: power outages, lack of hot water, and large extended families living in one household. One participant, Anne Fennema, described her experience on the program blog, "I feel like there was a big emphasis on community, whether trying to make it happen within our group, examining the perfect model—the Trinity, or experiencing and hearing about some of the ways communism broke it down. Somewhere in there I started to learn how good and how important community is, and since my return [to the U.S.], I think I have spent a lot of meaningful time with the people that make up my community. I have really been appreciating and working toward community and I feel that is a gift from God."

What contemporary educators are re-learning in the twenty-first century through study abroad and service-learning opportunities is that learning is holistic, and students are not simply disembodied knowledge centers. The work of non-governmental educational organizations like the New Horizons Foundation are helping us understand that international contexts have the potential not just to serve as laboratories for American students' learning, but also that through well-established partnerships and a carefully executed service-learning model, actual social capital can be built, and actual social change can occur. *Engagement* must be the new watchword for teaching and learning and responsible citizenship. Service-learning and study abroad, with each of their vast recent expansions into the realm of the academic curriculum, stand ready to light the way.

For more information about the New Horizons Foundation, visit http://www.new-horizons.ro/about_us/index.asp.

