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SENIOR FROM OLATHE RESEARCHES HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MANHATTAN -- It all began with a book.

Ariel Anib, a Kansas State University senior in pre-law and criminology, Olathe, was interested in international issues and law as a senior in high school. But she said her interest lacked a meaning or definition. That changed when her doctor recommended "Just Courage" by Gary Haugen.

The book focuses on international justice issues, including human trafficking. Haugen is the president and CEO of International Justice Mission, a religious-based organization that focuses on using the government and law enforcement to rescue victims of human and sex trafficking internationally.

Her interest piqued, Anib researched International Justice Mission extensively. She began contributing toward a program to help rescue those people served by the organization.

When Anib came to K-State she joined the Developing Scholars Program, which offers underrepresented students opportunities to research projects with faculty mentors. As Developing Scholars, students receive academic, social and financial support while participating in the discovery and creation of new knowledge at the university.

During her first two years in the program, Anib conducted research with Roy Barnett, instructor of sociology, anthropology and social work, on why Texas has the highest number of people executed on death row. When it came time to decide what her final year of research in the program would cover, the choice was almost instantaneous.

"I thought, 'What can I do that will be able to go to use somewhere?' And also where I would have the opportunity to educate people on something I am already interested in and want to have a career in, she said. "Human trafficking came to my mind immediately."

Anib started her research before the year began. Research for the Developing Scholars Program runs from August until April, when scholars present their work at a special symposium. Anib is conducting her research with Nadezda Shapkina, assistant professor of sociology, anthropology and social work.

Anib is interested in continuing her research through a variety of potential avenues, such as a research internship with International Justice Mission or an activist group focused on ending slavery. She also plans to apply for a Fulbright Scholarship. If accepted, she wants to conduct research in Guatemala.

After graduating from K-State, Anib would like to join the Peace Corps or conduct research as a Fulbright Scholar. She then would return to the U.S. and go to law school.

"My dream is to work with International Justice Mission because it's the organization that started my interest in the issue, and it's an organization that works really hard with advocacy through the court system," she said.

Anita Cortez, administrative director of K-State's Developing Scholars Program, says Anib is a highly valued member of the program.

"She is a go-getter," Cortez said. "She is a high-energy, community-minded person. Her desire to improve the lives of others, informed by her research and her international service, have stoked her passions and led her toward her life's calling. Her work ethic and unwavering optimism will help her change the outcome for others less fortunate."

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