Name: Kenza Bouhaj
Class: Ezra Stiles 2016
Title of Project: Agricultural Decisions after Relaxing Credit and Risk Constraints
Mentor: Christopher Udry

Description of the Project:
This project is a large, multi-year Randomized Controlled Trial that assesses the effect of capital (in the form of grants) and rainfall index insurance on agricultural yields in Northern Ghana. Findings show that demand for index insurance is strong, and insurance leads to significantly larger agricultural investment. Moreover, data analysis shows that demand for index insurance in subsequent years is positively correlated with farmers' previous insurance payouts, insurance payouts in the farmers' social network and poor rain in the village. The specific part of the project I worked on is analysis of data from 2010-2012. I will be working on the newest 2013 data in the fall. For more information on the project and the paper, see here.

Responsibilities:
I had different responsibilities throughout the experience. One of my responsibilities for the summer was to become familiarized with how the data from the previous years was organized and transformed from questionaire answers inputs into variables that allowed analysis of different control and treatment groups. To do so, I went back to previous Stata do-files and analyzed how sample frames were created, organized and what data operations were run on Stata. Another responsibility that I had was to make the data from previous years public and accessible to academics who need it. I thus created new Stata do-files to clean the data from any sensitive information and created folders for public release. I then learnt two programming languages -HTML and CSS- in order to create a website and release the public data. The website will be up on the Economic Growth Center website and will include summary descriptions on the data collection process and analysis, as well as the cleaned data for public use. Finally, I will be working in the fall with the new data (2013) that we just received from the staff in Ghana. I am looking forward to that work, as it will involve further analysis.

Lessons Learned:
I learned a handful of lessons from my mentor, Professor Udry, who answered my numerous questions and offered me help and guidance throughout the SRO experience. Among these lessons, I learned:
- The importance of properly handling sensitive data related to human subjects in academia, especially in social sciences.
- The administrative side of running a large, multi-year RCT.
- How Professors collaborate on projects and co-author papers.
- How raw data is coded and transformed for analysis and later mathematically modeled.

Opinion of SRO experience:
The SRO experience was a very valuable insight into economics research and gave me a insider look of the profession of Professor in development economics. I would recommend the experience to anyone who is interested in economics research or who would like to pursue a PhD in economics. I would specifically recommend working with Professor Udry for his help and guidance throughout the summer. I would also like to thank the Economics department at Yale for such an opportunity.