

## The Student Loan Transcript

**Mark Gerolami:** I mean, I grew up hearing about this program. I mean, I always heard about Louis Armstrong and the big tours overseas and Duke Ellington and his trips. In the music world there is a lot of interesting stories about those tours that come down through the ranks. Um, so it's something that we were always aware of, that the State Department did these sort of programs. I don't think that we ever thought we would ever have an opportunity.

**Chad Kimbler:** Certainly, most people don't start bluegrass bands to become diplomats (laughing) in general, you know...

Music: Nat Sound

(Graphic) white screen with the State Department Logo and the Jazz at Lincoln Center logo and the word "present"

(Graphic) white with circles "The Rhythm Road" American Music Abroad

(Graphic) Picture of the group "The Student Loan" and a graphic at the bottom of the screen that says "The Student Loan"

**Mark Gerolami:** Yeah, yeah we jumped at the opportunity to apply for it, to try to do it, um, like we said we love traveling, we love playing music, we love being on tour and this seemed to, you know, combine all the things we are really interested in.

Music: Nat Sound

**Liz Chibucos:** Well I think as musicians, anytime you actually get the opportunity to share your music the way we are going to be doing that on our trip plus being able to sustain yourself, like that's a big deal, you know?

**Julio Appling:** It's the best our lives have been for awhile (laughing) Like really, for awhile.

**Mark Gerolami:** We could, theoretically, we could theoretically take a vacation to one of these countries, um, but it would be a lot harder to set up a tour. (Nat sound begins under audio) You know, so the idea to perform with people and to meet people there is something that there is no way we would have been able to do on our own.

Music: Nat Sound

**Mark Gerolami:** I mean, as a bluegrass musician, to a certain degree it's a validation of our style of music, you know. And we're influenced by all of the big musics here in America. The jazz, blues, rock, bluegrass, folk, like we grew up on all of that stuff, and to

have that validated by Jazz at Lincoln Center, or the State Department, for us, was a big thing.

**Julio Appling:** For us, it very much seems like, oh wow, we have this chance to go there, you know, and a lot of the big part of these programs we hear about is sending the musicians out... But, yeah, I mean the musicians who are going out are receiving so much and you know you can kinda sit back and personally take a lot of pride in it. It's not often you get the chance to represent something that's this much larger than yourself.

Music: Nat Sound

**Julio Appling:** I'm Julio Appling and I'm a double bassist for The Student Loan.

**Mark Gerolami:** Hi, I'm Mark Gerolami and I play banjo, guitar, and vocals for The Student Loan.

**Liz Chibucos:** I'm Liz Chibucos and I play guitar and violin and/or fiddle and I sing as well.

**Chad Kimbler:** I'm Chad Kimbler and I play mandolin for The Student Loan.

Nat Sound – Music

(Graphic) Follow their travels at [exchanges.state.gov](http://exchanges.state.gov), [jalco.org](http://jalco.org)/the road.

(Graphic) Photo credit: Frank Stewart for Jazz at Lincoln Center

(Graphic) Recorded at National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C.