In this presentation, I offer an overview of a collaborative project entitled “From Africa to Patagonia: Voices of displacement” (http://umich.edu/~aacollab/). Since 2017, our research team has been funded through the Humanities Collaboratory, a research initiative established at the University of Michigan. Our interdisciplinary team includes eight faculty, eight graduate students, and thirty-two undergraduate students. Our mission is to analyze how language is entangled with cultural identity through the Patagonian Boers, a community that traces its roots to the South-African Boers who settled in Argentina after the Anglo-Boer War of 1902. In our research, we combine ethnographic, linguistic, and historiographical methods to explore the voices and ideologies of the Patagonian-Boer community. We have disseminated our findings through six research articles, five public essays, and a digital archive (https://aacollabarchive.humin.lsa.umich.edu/omeka/). In this talk, I will explain how our collaboration emerged, how we refined our collaborative process, and, especially, how we fostered undergraduate involvement in our research. Our student collaborators bring a variety of skills and perspectives from their respective areas of study — some of which go beyond the scope of our faculty — that have been vital to the project. Altogether, we demonstrate that altering the traditional educational structure while encouraging agency and creativity yields new forms of learning for all involved.

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