

Gilman Alumni Ambassador Program

The Gilman Alumni Ambassador Program is a diverse group of Gilman Scholarship recipients who have studied abroad in various countries around the world. They are official ambassadors of the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, providing presentations and promotional outreach to university and college campuses around the nation to students and advisors interested in learning more about the Gilman Scholarship Program. The Gilman Alumni Ambassadors have been trained by the Gilman Scholarship Program.

If you would like to request a Gilman Alumni Ambassador to present at your campus or if you are interested in becoming a Gilman Alumni Ambassador, please contact Gilman Scholars by email at gilman_scholars@iie.org if you have any questions.

2013 Gilman Alumni Ambassadors:

<u>Recipients</u>	<u>Page</u>
<i>Temiloluwa Adeniyi</i> , University of Cincinnati, 2013, Singapore	2
<i>Florence Adibu</i> , Spelman College, 2010, Brazil	3
<i>Ashley Blackmon</i> , Clark Atlanta University, 2010, Spain	4
<i>Katherine Bowen</i> , Ithaca College, 2011, Ecuador	5
<i>Raina Brooks</i> , Agnes Scott College, 2009, South Africa	6
<i>Merita Bushi</i> , Macalester College, 2012, India	7
<i>Randi Butler</i> , St. Edward's University, 2006, Germany	8
<i>Cameron Caja</i> , University of Arkansas, 2013, South Korea	9
<i>Brenna Cameron</i> , University of Puget Sound, 2013, Chile	10
<i>Christopher Crowder</i> , Pepperdine University, 2011, China	11
<i>Silvina Di Pietro</i> , Florida International University, 2011, Peru	12
<i>Danielle Ehrnstein</i> , Simmons College, 2013, Morocco	13
<i>Megan Finck</i> , Messiah College, 2001, Spain	14
<i>Patrice Francis</i> , Hampton University, 2012, Japan	15
<i>Elizabeth Hunt</i> , Arizona State University, 2012, Costa Rica	16
<i>Patrick Lam</i> , Creighton University, 2011, Hong Kong	17
<i>Darryn Lee</i> , Temple University, 2010, Spain	18
<i>Josue Lopez Calderon</i> , University of California – Los Angeles, 2010, Thailand	19
<i>Hector Santiago</i> , Brookdale Community College, 2012, Japan	20
<i>Danae Schufeldt</i> , University of Nebraska – Lincoln, 2012, Italy	21
<i>Emilie Wardrip</i> , St. Cloud State University, 2009, South Korea	22

TEMILOLUWA ADENIYI, SINGAPORE, 2013

University of Cincinnati
Ohio



As a Gilman scholar, I was provided the opportunity to study in Singapore during the spring 2013 semester, at Nanyang Technological University. The opportunity to study abroad has had a significant impact on my life; it allowed me to mature in ways that I could have never imagined. It yielded comprehensive growth that was professional, scholastic and personal.

The academic institution presented a wide range of experiences for scholastic development, including a diverse body of classes, from which students could choose, with a focus on cutting edge research. Among these classes, were those on tissue engineering or the

engineering of cells, tissues or organs, by artificial means. I desire to pursue this field, as a future concentration, in a research career. The multi-disciplinary way, in which, the courses were presented, allowed me to learn more about the tissue engineering field, meet prominent researchers and understand the immense need for tissue engineered products.

“All in all, my study abroad experience allowed me the opportunity to gain a cultural competency that would not have been possible otherwise.”

My academic work coupled with an opportunity to imbibe in the rich culture of the Southeast Asian region. Among the many things that it offered were the exquisite cuisines, diverse peoples and their accompanying languages. The culture of Singapore is composed of many diverse groups. This provided a great setting to learn new

languages and expand cultural dimensions. During my stay, I elected to study the Mandarin dialect of Chinese.

All in all, my study abroad experience allowed me the opportunity to gain a cultural competency that would not have been possible otherwise. With this increased competency, I feel that I have developed a better sense of self. With this renewed personal awareness, I am better equipped to take on challenges of the personal, academic and professional scope. As a result, I added Asian Studies, as a second major, upon returning home. Additionally, I took part in a class, which aims to improve underserved communities in Ethiopia. From this experience, I have gained so many lessons that I will carry with me forever. Among them, is the lesson of identity. My identity is not defined by my geographical settings – it’s so much more. I am a citizen of a global community, which awaits with open arms, ready to receive me.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

As a part of my Follow-on Service Project, I wrote a children’s story, which aims to increase awareness of opportunities found in the STEM majors as well as in studying abroad for minority children. The story is told through the

perspective of a doll, who collects experiences from several individuals. It is presented in a 3-D format that captures the attention of the 21st century scholars. Upon completion of the story, I read it to a local science enrichment

program. I hope participants in this audience will be inspired to pursue these types of opportunities in the future.

FLORENCE ADIBU, BRAZIL, 2010

Spelman College
Georgia



I had the great fortune of studying abroad in Brazil with the support of a Gilman Scholarship. While there, I was able to conduct research and study Portuguese. My research was related to issues surrounding social justice and sustainable development. Through a range of experiences, I was exposed to the social, political, economical, and cultural realities of northeastern Brazil. The knowledge I gained from the School of International Training (SIT), my wonderful host family and the organizations I was working with, has influenced and further defined my academic and professional goals in innumerable ways.

One of the most gratifying experiences of my time in Brazil

was the opportunity to participate in a Social Synergy project; an emerging and innovative idea that seeks to stimulate networking and relationships between all sectors and actors in society. The academic, social and cultural project in Leadership in Synergy and Social Justice was a multicultural, multiethnic, international, interdisciplinary, and inter-sectorial experience designed to build friendships, academic and professional relationships across a spectrum of cultures, disciplines, sectors and social issues. In addition to this project, I taught English classes to Afro- Brazilian domestic workers and helped raise governmental funds for EDISCA, (Spanish name of the School of Dance and Social Integration for Children and Adolescents) which is a school that uses the discipline of ballet and dance as a means to children off the streets and away from drugs, prostitution and violence while directing their focus to education and empowerment.

Upon graduating with my bachelor's degree in International Studies and Sociology, I volunteered as a teacher at Meilin

Primary School in Shenzhen, China. I was able to easily adapt to a new culture and even practice my Portuguese in Macau; all of which I wouldn't have been able to

“Studying abroad changed the trajectory of my life and allowed me to set up a realistic plan for my future career goal as an aspiring professor of the African Diaspora and activist for women and girls.”

do without my study abroad experience in Brazil.

I am so grateful for the opportunities that the Gilman Scholarship has opened for me, and am so proud to be an alumna of a program that invests so much in their scholars. Studying abroad changed the trajectory of my life and allowed me to set up a realistic plan for my future career goal as an aspiring professor of the African Diaspora and activist for women and girls. I believe the Gilman Scholarship contributed significantly to my decision to pursue a path in academia.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

My Follow-on Service Project involved being a liaison between the study abroad office and students interested in studying and interning abroad. I held visa requirement tutorials to help students follow the often strict

guidelines. I additionally presented the research project I conducted in Salvador da Bahia entitled African Esthetic Violence and Performing Beauty in Salvador: Cosmetic Citizenship, Afro-Brazilian Beauty as a Public Health

Concern at Spelman College's annual research day. I believe that through my research and experience the audience was inspired to study or intern abroad to develop their own academics and carry out research plans.

ASHLEY BLACKMON, SPAIN, 2010

Clark Atlanta University
North Carolina



The best five months in my life were spent studying abroad in Barcelona, Spain. It was as if I was truly living for the first time. Initially it took some time to adjust to my new surroundings, but before I knew it, I was extremely comfortable with my life in Spain. Unlike some other study abroad experiences I have heard about, I felt that my study abroad experience gave me an immense sense of freedom. I found myself exploring the city and various parts of the country alone and I loved it! In total, I visited multiple countries in Spain, as well as a few other countries in Europe and Morocco due to proximity. My

school was excellent and I was able to make several friends from all over the world. I also was able to take part in many cultural experiences, including a visit to headquarters of MANGO (a well known retailer) and participating in flamenco dance lessons.

“While employed at American Express and now at PepsiCo, I constantly engage in conversations about global business operations in which I use my personal experiences from studying abroad.”

Academically, I have found myself to be significantly ahead of the curve and always seeking a challenge. I was pleased to find that I equally enjoyed learning about International Economics, International Marketing, and the Spanish language as much as I enjoyed the many activities that surrounded me on the streets of

Barcelona. This truly enhanced my study abroad experience.

Personally, I learned so much about myself and the things that drive me to continue to be successful. Having to adapt to a new society and culture forced me to discover who I am when placed in a totally new environment.

Professionally, I have grown to appreciate my abroad experience because I can leverage it in any business conversation whether that be in the boardroom or at a networking event. While employed at American Express and now at PepsiCo, I constantly engage in conversations about global business operations in which I use my personal experiences from studying abroad. This has served to be an invaluable tool in my professional endeavors.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

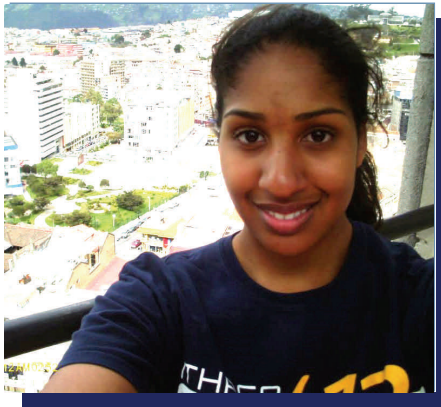
My Follow-on Service Project goals were to change students' perspective on funding for higher education. My most impactful deliverables were my “How to Apply for the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship” and “Budgeting while Abroad” curriculum. I put these two presentations together for the

Office of International Education to use after I graduated to continue to spread the word of how to be financially sound. In the beginning, my Follow-on Service Project only included information regarding how to apply for the scholarship but I wanted to take it a step further and educate students in managing their money

before and during their time studying abroad. I also presented examples of currency exchanges and how to enjoy studying abroad on a budget.

KATHERINE BOWEN, ECUADOR, 2011

Ithaca College
New York



As a child, I always had an interest in exploring cultures and celebrating diversity. Thanks to the Gilman International Scholarship, I had the opportunity to spend a semester abroad in Ecuador, which was a truly life changing experience.

While studying abroad, I attended Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador in partnership with IES Abroad. As a participant in the program I was able to visit the Galapagos Islands and the Amazon Rainforest as well as arrange my own independent trips to other cities and towns across the country. Studying abroad is a great opportunity to challenge yourself and to gain a new perspective on the experiences you have back

home. Being embraced by another culture teaches you about the one you are most familiar with. It was an eye-opener and has inspired me to dedicate my own career to encouraging cross-cultural learning.

"It was an eye-opener and has inspired me to dedicate my own career to encouraging cross-cultural learning."

In addition to my regular coursework abroad, I enrolled in a music academy. Every weekend I attended classical performance classes, and it was a great challenge! Music acted as the foundation for bridging the communication gaps between myself and the other students. The academy was a great opportunity to realize the different roles music plays in society and provided great insight into Ecuador's cultural diversity.

To engage with even more local Ecuadorians, I volunteered as an English tutor teaching courses to university students. Talk about another challenge! I enjoyed fumbling over their questions and trying to explain the meaning behind certain phrases or expressions, which to native speakers may seem natural but went against some of the grammar rules my pupils were taught. These sessions were a great space for myself and other students to share stories with one another while learning together.

The friends I made abroad inspired me in many ways, Even though a couple of years have passed since I studied abroad, I still maintain close relationships with them. This summer I returned to Ecuador and reconnected with friends and visited my host family, whom I consider my extended family. I am no longer intimidated by language and cultural barriers, which has allowed me to pursue further travel around the world. I am forever appreciative of the opportunities for personal growth the Gilman International Scholarship provided.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

My Follow-on Service Project had three parts. First, I participated in a panel discussion at Ithaca College for students interested in studying abroad in Spanish-speaking countries. Second, I wrote an article published by my study abroad program. Third, I

spent a day volunteering with students in a Spanish class at my former elementary school. My stories and experiences seemed to inspire a curiosity and enthusiasm in those I spoke with I was especially excited that the younger students had a keen interest in

learning about other cultures. A common concern I found in students looking to study abroad pertained to financial aid, and I highly recommended the Gilman Scholarship Program as a potential resource.

RAINA BROOKS, SOUTH AFRICA, 2009

Agnes Scott College
Georgia



Studying abroad in Cape Town was an absolutely amazing experience! Ever since high school, I knew that I wanted to study abroad. I was unaware of the fact that Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) majors generally did not study abroad, until I was bombarded with that reality during a study session with some fellow STEM majors. They assured me that unless I changed my major, I would not study abroad. After hearing this, I became even more determined to make it happen.

My wonderful study abroad advisor helped me find the time to study abroad and also introduced the Gilman International Scholarship to me. I am so happy she did! With the

Gilman Scholarship, I was able to study abroad without having to think about the financial burden my family and I would incur and was able to fully enjoy my time abroad.

While abroad, my priority was to become immersed in the culture. Doing a home-stay allowed me to get a closer look into the life of South Africans. I enjoyed many South African dishes and also explored parts of Cape Town that I would otherwise not have. I volunteered as a mentor to four bright, tenth grade girls at a high achieving math and science high school. I also volunteered as a tutor to several girls at the Ark City of Refuge, which services unemployed and homeless women and children. Lastly, I joined a religious organization, which soon became my great big family. I still keep in contact with people from my church and with the girls I mentored. They are all in university now and I could not be more proud! These opportunities allowed me to get a glimpse into the South African culture and allowed me to feel as if I was South African. These enriching experiences were hands-down what made my study abroad experience life changing.

While abroad, I realized that although working is important, it is equally as

important to enjoy life. I also realized how much I enjoy volunteering and helping others. I have become an avid volunteer since returning home! In Atlanta, I served as an After-School Volunteer and later as a Family Literacy Volunteer at an organization called Refugee Family Services. I will soon begin volunteering as an ESL Conversation Partner with an organization called World Relief in North Carolina.

“With the Gilman Scholarship, I was able to study abroad without having to think about the financial burden my family and I would incur and was able to fully enjoy my time abroad.”

In addition to changes in my personal life, my career and academic goals have also changed. After graduating, I worked in clinical research at Emory University for almost two years. I am currently working as a Student Services Contractor at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. I decided to pursue a MPH in Epidemiology, which will equip me with skills that I can use in the U.S. as well as abroad.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

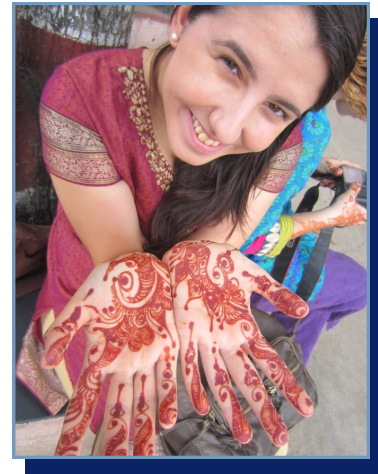
For my Follow-on Service Project, I shared my experience publicly at Agnes Scott College’s “Black Student Perspectives,” of which I had the honor of serving as both a panelist and the host. I shared what life was like as a STEM major, black woman, and volunteer in South Africa. I also

talked about my home-stay experience, involvement in organizations and the importance of cultural immersion. I mentioned that with help from the Gilman International Scholarship, I actually took out less money in loans than I had in all my years of studying at

Agnes Scott. The event was a success! I spoke to several students who stated that they were inspired and were strongly considering studying abroad after attending.

MERITA BUSHI, INDIA, 2012

Macalester College
Illinois



I had the fortunate opportunity of spending the fall semester of my junior year studying in Pune, India with the support of a Gilman Scholarship. I spent the semester taking courses that strengthened my academic focus. Activities such as going on field trips to view environmental and public health initiatives in action while understanding film analysis and memorizing dance routines challenged me in numerous ways. I was able to continue my cultural immersion outside of the classroom with a home stay arrangement.

The final component that made my semester unique and rewarding was an internship that aligned perfectly with my interests in the rural-urban divide, public health, non-profit operations, and geography. I worked with a rural health center right outside of Pune and gathered spatial information to include in their health and demographic surveillance system and mapped the data for further analysis. Along the way, I learned about non-profit operations and the international networks that were forming to enable this to work.

Academically, this strengthened my desire to pursue a future in public health, specifically using geographic information systems. My experiences in India also led me to think critically about what it meant to live and work abroad and fundamentally changed the lens through which I viewed the world. I learned that what we see and how we interpret it is entirely based on our perspectives and so it is

important to be aware of our biases. This is a lesson I knew before going abroad but did not fully understand or internalize until my time in India.

“As a Gilman Scholarship Recipient, I was able focus and enjoy my studies abroad without having to think about the financial burden my family and I would incur.”

My time abroad also gave me a new understanding of what is required to gain cultural competence. Professionally, I believe the lessons I have taken from India will translate well with my future endeavors. Upon graduation, I hope to return to school and pursue a Master in Public Health in order to work with a community-based organization that is intentional about delivering health care in a culturally competent way.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

When proposing my project, my goal was to solve a present problem I saw forming on my campus, the lack of discussion about the socioeconomic diversity of students. I realized that this issue often times resulted in false perceptions as

students did not think a semester abroad was possible. To address this lack of information, my project focused on giving presentations and targeted information as well as creating spaces where this conversation could take place on campus.

Through these discussions, I was empowering these students to believe that their study abroad aspirations were attainable despite their socio-economic status.

RANDI BUTLER, GERMANY, 2006

St. Edward's University
Texas



My experience studying abroad in Germany was one of the most influential and exciting periods of my life. I studied abroad for an academic year at the Universität Bonn in Germany. This program was unique because it allowed me to enhance my German language skills through language classes that were taught “GSL” style (German as a second language). In addition to this, I was also able to take classes with the university's English department which allowed me to earn credits towards my English Literature major. This proved to be an interesting experience as all of my

assigned readings were in English, whereas the class discussions and lectures were in German. This helped me learn how to seamlessly navigate between two languages.

I went abroad with the intention to continue studying German and eventually become a German professor. Studying abroad in Germany was so imperative to accomplishing my future goals. Feeling at ease within a new culture while understanding the German conversations I had with the people I encountered, allowed me to make strong connections and friendships.

I also had the opportunity to travel independently to Trier, Aachen, and Berlin. Without a doubt I would not have been able to study abroad if I did not receive a Gilman Scholarship. I was able to enjoy the many opportunities that Germany had to offer because I was receiving financial support.

Overall my study abroad experience was better than I could have ever imagined. In the end, my study abroad experience really lit a fire in me to encourage others to study abroad which inspired several friends and family members to study abroad after they saw how successful my experience was.

“Studying abroad in Germany was so imperative to accomplishing my future goals.”

My career goals have changed since my experience abroad and I am currently in a Master of Arts program studying College Student Development with a focus on international education. I recently interned for the study abroad office at St. Edward's University coordinating a buddy program between visiting students from Japan and American students at St. Edward's, and I look forward to a career working in study abroad!

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

When starting my application for the Gilman Scholarship my initial career goal was to pursue a Doctorate degree in German Language to eventually teach German. I believe instilling an interest in foreign languages and cultures should be introduced at an early age in order to ensure that these experiences are truly

meaningful. With that in mind, my Follow-on Service Project involved visiting German classes for children 5-10 years old at a local German Heritage Center in Austin. I assisted the students with their language classes for several weeks and also did a presentation for them in which I showcased pictures of my time in Germany

and talked about my overall experience studying abroad. The students were very excited and even talked about going to another country someday. I truly believe that the excitement of that day will stay with them as they get older.

CAMERON CAJA, SOUTH KOREA, 2013

University of Arkansas—Fayetteville
Arkansas



Even with a background in International Relations, Political Science, and Asian Studies, I never could have imagined the life I discovered in South Korea. The Gilman Scholarship allowed me to take part in an amazing program with Soonchunhyang University's "Global Village" Student Community. This extraordinary program is based on creating an environment where domestic Korean students and international exchange students are living in shared "suites." In these suites, the students were immersed in a wide range of cultures every day on a very intimate level.

My classmates included students from Sweden, England, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, China, Laos, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, and many others. Even though we came from several diverse countries, we were

all "foreigners" in Korea and we built strong friendships as we discovered this fascinating country together.

"Even though we came from several diverse countries, we were all "foreigners" in Korea and we built strong friendships as we discovered this fascinating country together."

Academically, my semester abroad was an exceptional addition to my major studies. The faculty at Soonchun Hyang included foreign diplomats, executives of multinational corporations, and leading scholars of government and politics. These instructors were able to share an invaluable perspective on inter-Asian politics I never could have received in the United States.

Perhaps some of the most rewarding experiences were those triggered by my research for Reach the World, the Gilman Program's partnering organization. As I would seek out answers to questions about Korean society for a class of young students in the U.S., I was able to

meet some captivating people along the way. Examples of these include Frank Quintero (Mayor of Glendale, California) and Byung-hyo Choi (Republic of Korea Ambassador to the United States). I was also able to meet with employees of Arirang Radio, a leading distributor of Korean media throughout the world and a powerful agent in the rising global influence of Korean business and culture.

It was an unforgettable semester. I feel like there is still so much to learn and share. I cannot wait to return after graduation to look for career opportunities in East-West Relations and globalized youth education. Even after my return to the U.S., The Gilman Program continues to provide unique opportunities for service and professional networking through the U.S. Department of State's International Exchange Alumni Network and the Gilman Alumni Ambassador Program. I cannot show my appreciation for the U.S. Department of State, IIE and the Gilman Program enough. I am so grateful that my study abroad advisor encouraged me to apply; it has dramatically broadened my horizons and opened countless doors to my future.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

After receiving the Gilman Scholarship, I was given the opportunity to fulfill my Follow-on Service Project through their partnership with the educational nonprofit, Reach the World.

While in Korea, I was given weekly topics to explore and report on to elementary students in Brooklyn, New York. This required me to study all aspects of my host country's language, traditions,

ethics, architecture, environment, and more. This further encouraged me to discover Korea in a far deeper way and to share my passion for cross-cultural youth education and global citizenship.

BRENNA CAMERON, CHILE, 2013

University of Puget Sound
Colorado



Receiving a Gilman Scholarship to Santiago, Chile in the Spring semester was an experience that changed my life. It allowed me to learn so much about myself and another culture and sparked new career interests and goals. While abroad, I stayed with a host family. They were so warm and welcoming that I instantly felt like I was a part of the family.

I learned a lot about the culture and the daily lifestyle of the Chilean citizens. Academically, I was enrolled in a health focused program where I was able to take a Spanish class for healthcare practitioners and do clinical observations in local hospitals. This was definitely one of the

most rewarding experiences of going abroad.

Before I went abroad, I knew I wanted to go to medical school and these observations allowed me to explore some of the different healthcare fields. It also gave me a better perspective on healthcare systems and infrastructures of other countries. Studying in a foreign country and making friends from all over the world, really opened up my own world in a very personal and intrinsic way. I began to explore how I dealt with certain situations and challenges through the many unique obstacles I had to face while living abroad in a foreign country. This forced me to adapt to a more simplistic lifestyle.

I came to truly appreciate all the amenities that I have access to in the States and how in many parts of the world people struggle to maintain their basic needs. It made me refocus on what is important in my own life and to take life along with challenges a little less critically. My mindset began to change, allowing me to grow from every experience rather than

letting challenges or obstacles dictate my success. I loved my time on my program so much in Santiago that I decided to stay an extra month in the country in order to explore a research opportunity. For a month I worked in a lab with graduate students, analyzing cells and viruses.

“Academically, I was enrolled in a health focused program where I was able to take a Spanish class for healthcare practitioners and do clinical observations in local hospitals.”

It was an experience that allowed me to explore avenues of health and medicine I had never had the chance to look at before. It also made me consider going into research as well as medicine as a career prospect. Overall my experience abroad has completely transformed my life and I am so thankful to the Gilman Scholarship for giving me the opportunity to explore who I am and also gain a broader perspective of the world.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I organized a study abroad fair for science students at my university. While many students at my university choose to study abroad, I noticed that many science majors were not able to choose to study abroad. I wanted to change this and

show students that not only was it possible to study abroad while studying science, but that it was vital to the furthering of their education. I had students who had previously studied abroad give short presentations about their experiences, including pictures of

them abroad. After the presentation students mingled in order to ask questions and learn more about studying abroad. Overall, I think the fair opened the minds of science students and encouraged them to study abroad. I hope that the fair will continue in the future.

CHRISTOPHER CROWDER, CHINA, 2011

Pepperdine University
California



Studying abroad is an incredible opportunity to expand personal boundaries and pursue academic goals. My academic year in China was absolutely no exception. Studying in one of the world's largest cities, traveling throughout Asia, learning from professors in the top of their fields, and meeting lifelong friends collectively contributed to an unforgettable experience that will stay with me forever.

I lived in downtown Shanghai while studying abroad at Fudan University. As a top private institution in China, Fudan was initially intimidating. Learning from distinguished professors who often

serve as advisors to China's political leaders challenged and encouraged me to look beyond the status quo. Appreciating and learning from a different perspective enhanced my experience and understanding of life.

While abroad I also completed a professional internship at a large chemical engineering firm. This opportunity was the perfect complement to my international experience. While attending class, I worked three days a week as an English language marketing advisor and cultural consultant. Beyond the professional experience I gained, I spent two hours a day commuting — by scooter, subway, bus and taxi — fully immersed in Chinese culture and daily life.

Not only was it important for me to experience the urban culture of Shanghai, but I wanted to explore rural Chinese villages and other countries within Asia. Being on an academic year program, I had more time to explore such areas and interests. For example, I studied religions throughout

northern India during holiday, volunteered in Cambodia, ran the Seoul International Marathon in South Korea,

“Appreciating and learning from a difference perspective enhanced my experience and understanding of life.”

My experience abroad served to further cultivate my passion for both learning and traveling. Today, I am fortunate to have tied these pursuits with my professional career at Delta Air Lines. Studying abroad was instrumental in my professional, academic and personal success. I will always appreciate its profound impact on my academic and personal achievements.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I had the unique opportunity of completing my Follow-on Service Project while studying abroad. I was selected as a Gilman-Reach the World Travel Correspondent for which I documented life abroad for elementary students in New York City. This project

allowed me to make an immediate impact while abroad. By sharing my experiences with younger students, I inspired creativity and the desire to attend college for many children that never considered the opportunity. I completed a combination of

weekly journal entries, field observations, and occasional Skype interviews with the classrooms to enhance their learning experience. The Follow-on Service Project was a great way to give back and inspire others to study abroad.

SILVINA DI PIETRO, PERU, 2011

Florida International University
Florida



Traditional study abroad programs involve immersion in language or art studies, but Florida International University's Honors Amazon Program was an exception. I chose this alternative study abroad program because it emphasized two components: service and research (also known as research service learning, RSL). As a future scientist, this program encouraged me to develop my own research project in a unique environment: the largest tropical rainforest in the world!

During my studies abroad, I spent four weeks in the city of Iquitos, Peru working with the Madre Selva biological station on the Orosa

River. This station is located in the heart of the Amazon, the homeland of the Yagua tribe and several mestizo communities. This was definitely not your typical classroom setting, and that is exactly why this study abroad program was so exclusive. I was able to experience the incredible biodiversity first-hand. My project involved examining the quality of water available to residents of these communities while working side by side with members of the tribe. Specifically, conducting interviews with tribe members regarding how they treat their water supply. These interactions proved to be invaluable as I gained knowledge I would not have been able to gather otherwise.

Although my focus was more scientific-research based, visiting and interacting with the different indigenous communities was another way my program was very unique. Such communities are not found in the U.S., which made me appreciate their culture even more through observing how they lived. Despite the scarcity of material

things, they were content, their big hearts and genuine smiles humbled me and made me grateful for the work I was doing.

"I would not have been able to participate in this unique opportunity without the Gilman program. My experience abroad confirmed my path as a scientist while broadening my horizons."

I would not have been able to participate in this unique opportunity without the Gilman program. My experience abroad confirmed my path as a scientist while broadening my horizons.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

As a member of my university's Honors College, I wanted to work closely with my fellow classmates. Since Florida International University's Honors College encourages its students to attend *Honors Hours*, informative 75-minute talks, I decided to give a

presentation promoting study abroad amongst students similar academic interests. With photos, a PowerPoint presentation, and my rainforest rain boots on my feet, I talked about my experience. I also encouraged students to study abroad and ended my presentation

with a Q&A session. I wanted my audience to realize that even under financial constraints it is possible to enhance a higher education degree through studying abroad and to seek out such opportunities as the Gilman Scholarship.

DANIELLE EHRNSTEIN, MOROCCO, 2013

Simmons College
Colorado



Due to my deep love of books, I have always been interested in exploring the various realms of imagination. This could be attributed to the long car trips I had with my mother as a child while she read to me from the front seat. Once enrolled in college, I realized that I didn't actually need to use my imagination to experience people and places that appeared far beyond my reach.

As a sociology major, I studied cultures and subcultures daily but studying a subject and truly understanding it is not the same. Studying in Morocco allowed me to better understand Islamic

culture and living with my host family proved to be very beneficial. It was wonderful to be in an environment that allowed me to ask questions about Islam, study Arabic, hear the Islamic call to prayer while feeling free to ask questions. My host family was extremely accommodating and truly made me feel at home.

The opportunity to study transnationalism in a transnational setting enabled me to see the world in a broader scope. I was forced to look at social and political issues in a new light, such as immigration in the U.S. With a Moroccan context I was able to find more balance in discussion regarding immigration and politics. Every time I visit a new place, I learn so much from the experience and the same happens when I return home to reflect. Due to the Gilman Scholarship, I was able to learn that there is so much to discover wherever you go and that life is not static.. I look forward to the changes and the knowledge and experience change brings. Should the opportunity to

study or work abroad again arise, I would definitely take advantage of it, as I know the positive impact that studying abroad has had on my life.

I am currently using the skills and knowledge I acquired abroad in my current profession of mentoring students, as well as in my graduate studies.

"The opportunity to study transnationalism in a transnational setting enabled me to see the world in a broader scope."

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I had the fortunate opportunity to be a Gilman Global Experience blog correspondent. I was able to write weekly blogs describing daily activities in Morocco, as well as how I was adjusting to living in a foreign country. I believe that

those who were able to read my blog felt inspired to travel the world seeing that I was able to do so. I know that for many of my friends who read my blog, this was how they experienced the world: by living vicariously through me

and seeing the world through my words.

MEGAN FINCK, SPAIN, 2001

Messiah College
Pennsylvania



Studying abroad in Spain had a profound impact on my professional and personal life. Growing up and attending college in small towns in Pennsylvania did not afford much opportunity to experience cultural diversity. That is why it was important for me to incorporate that learning into the university curriculum. Studying abroad made this task much easier due to being immersed in Spanish culture and language.

In considering career paths after graduation, I knew that I wanted to play a part in providing these international opportunities for others and am thrilled to be doing so on a daily basis. I accepted a position with NAFSA: National Association of International Educators, a non-profit entity that supports international student and

study abroad advisors, upon returning from my study abroad program. In addition to that, I currently manage international executive degree programs at Georgetown University. This position has provided me the opportunity to work and travel with U.S. and international participants, giving me a truly global experience at work. It has been a very unique and thrilling opportunity.

I believe the most challenging aspect from my time spent in Barcelona is what I would call “city shock.” Having spent the vast majority of my life in rural towns, it was quite a contrast to find myself living in a European metropolis, and the adjustment was not an easy one. However I learned to adapt very quickly and was able to maneuver around the city like a pro. In fact, as a direct result of the time I spent in Barcelona, I have made the deliberate choice to live in a city ever since. It is this exposure to life beyond the confines of our backgrounds that I find so thrilling about the experience of studying abroad

I’ve found one of the most rewarding aspects of studying abroad has been the exposure to

different ideas and different cultures. In times of uncertainty across the globe, it is more important than ever to continue cultivating international experiences so that we can share these stories with our friends, families, classmates, coworkers, and communities when we return.

In my opinion, this is the real value and the true strength of the Gilman Scholarship Program to offer individuals from various backgrounds access to international exposure which they would not have otherwise. This is the essence of international education, and I am grateful to have been afforded the opportunity to be part of the Gilman story.

“In times of uncertainty across the globe, it is more important than ever to continue cultivating international experiences so that we can share these stories with our friends, families, classmates, coworkers, and communities “

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I was a Gilman Scholar in the days of dial-up Internet and before social media tools like Facebook and Instagram made photo-sharing an instant and easy option. So for my Follow-On Service project I prepared a photo album to share at

study abroad fairs on my college campus and with high school students in my hometown to encourage them to incorporate an international learning component to their educational pursuits. This allowed students to see what it was

like for me to study in a different country and help show them that they too could pursue education abroad.

PATRICE FRANCIS, JAPAN, 2012

Hampton University
Pennsylvania



Ever since I started learning Japanese in the summer of my sophomore year of high school, I knew I wanted to study abroad. After graduating I matriculated to Hampton University. I was excited to continue learning the language, but I discovered Japanese classes were no longer offered. I was disappointed, but not discouraged. I maintained my lessons through tutoring and self-study. I was able to finally go to Japan during my junior year when I received the Gilman Scholarship. I studied at Kwasei Gakuin University (KGU) in Osaka, Japan through the United Study Abroad Consortium (USAC) for an academic year. This was my first time in Asia and it was the longest period of time that I have spent outside of the United States.

I arrived in Osaka with the goal of learning about Japanese culture while improving my language proficiency.

With this goal in mind, I began my academic year abroad. I decided to take the intensive language track, which meant that most of my classes focused on Japanese. I was taking three Japanese classes my first semester alone: Listening and Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

Outside of my formal language study I had many opportunities to learn about Japanese culture. What really helped me get acclimated to life in Japan was the Nihongo Partner system, a unique aspect of my program. This system pairs each student with a KGU student volunteer to provide support and help study abroad students acclimate to the new environment. I became great friends with my Nihongo Partners. They introduced me to different foods and aspects of Japanese culture, and provided amazing insight and perspective into Japanese life. I was also able to stay in a home stay for my first semester.

Living in a home-stay was nothing short of a memorable experience. Learning Japanese in a classroom environment alone would not have helped me reach the level of proficiency I have now. Japanese was not just a language I was learning, it became a part of my daily life. As a result, I gained the confidence to use Japanese in a variety of situations.

My experiences from my academic year abroad have strengthened my interest in International Relations and becoming a Foreign Service Officer. Currently I am in my final year at Hampton University working towards receiving my bachelors degree. Once I graduate, I plan on attending enrolling in a graduate program for International Relations and then apply to enter the U.S. Foreign Service. Sharing my culture while learning about Japanese culture helped me to form a new perspective regarding what it means to be an American. It was truly an amazing experience that would not have been possible without scholarships like the Gilman Scholarship. I am truly thankful to have been a recipient.

“Japanese was not just another language I was learning, it became part of my daily life. As a result I gained the confidence to use Japanese in a variety of situations.”

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I created my Follow-on Service Project because I wanted to encourage more psychology majors to study abroad at my university. Working with my department and the study abroad office, I created a study abroad timeline that can be used to help psychology majors plan for a semester abroad without having

to worry about not graduating on time.

Without worrying about a delayed graduation, more psychology students will be open to considering a study abroad experience. For the second part of my project I decided to give a presentation to discuss

specific aspects of international study such as the application process, choosing a program, and scholarship opportunities like the Gilman Scholarship. Additionally, I created a Twitter account for students to ask questions about studying abroad.

ELIZABETH HUNT, COSTA RICA, 2012

Arizona State University
California



Participating in the Costa Rica Community Health Research Internship during the summer 2012 semester was an incredibly rewarding experience. I was able to apply my studies to real life situations relating to health behaviors and health issues within an underrepresented population. Not only did my research skills grow tremendously, but my personal strength, independence, and world view did as well.

As a first-generation college student and the first in my family to study abroad, receiving the Gilman Scholarship allowed me an amazing opportunity to represent the scholarship, my family, my university and my country while abroad in Costa Rica.

While abroad, I lived in two home-stays, one family in San Jose and another family in the Ngöbe Territory in southern Costa Rica. In San Jose, I attended Spanish classes at the Costa Rican Language Academy, learned about the history of Costa Rican health care, and prepared for my research. In the Ngöbe Territory, I conducted research that consisted of participant observation and studying health behaviors as they relate to the presence of intestinal parasites.

With this experience, I gained exposure to the real world setting of health care and health research. This directly related to my education and career goals of working in public health within American Indian and Hispanic communities. My study abroad program and the research I conducted provided me the necessary research skills and real world experience, which will aid me as I progress towards these goals. Additionally, upon returning home, I enjoyed sharing information about another culture

and the research I conducted with my family and friends.

As am a senior Global Health B.A. candidate, with an Anthropology minor, at Arizona State University I will be graduating soon. My plan is to pursue a Master's in Public Health. Once I obtain my graduate degree, I plan work in tribal public health.

“With this experience, I gained exposure to the real-world setting of health care and health research. This directly related to my education and career goals of working in public health within American Indian and Hispanic communities.”

I want to encourage my family, friends, and community to pursue a study abroad program and apply to the Gilman Scholarship. The opportunities provided by both are incredible and life changing! You never know what you are capable of until you try.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I presented to Hispanic and American Indian students at my university. I chose to present about my study abroad experience and being a Gilman Scholar associated with these specific

groups (I am Mexican and Cherokee), I felt it was important to reach out to my peers of similar backgrounds and encourage them to pursue their educational and career goals.

Sharing my experience as a Gilman Scholar to my peers was incredibly rewarding and I continue to promote study abroad and encourage everyone to apply to the Gilman Scholarship.

PATRICK LAM, HONG KONG, 2011

Creighton University

Hawaii



As a Gilman Scholarship recipient, I spent the summer of my junior year studying management at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. During my study abroad, I learned the fundamentals to successful management, met with physicians and administrators at hospitals and clinics, interacted with the locals, and volunteered at schools. It was an amazing study abroad experience because I not only developed professionally, but also personally.

My course in management focused on projects and presentations, and it offered the students more first-hand experience into different management scenarios and issues.

Because the students were diverse, class discussions were lively as every student offered a different point-of-view in support of their argument regarding issues in management of healthcare and foreign security.

As a Health Administration and Policy major, I took advantage of my time abroad by visiting facilities around Hong Kong to learn about healthcare management, patient communication, and preventative medicine from physicians. I also visited Macau to learn about preventative medicine and financial policies from administrators.

“During my study abroad, I learned the fundamentals to successful management, met with physicians and administrators at hospitals and clinics, interacted with the locals, and volunteered at schools.”

Outside of academics, I was given the opportunity to volunteer at

the elementary and middle schools by helping to teach students English. I also visited different villages and markets around Hong Kong to improve my Cantonese, try local cuisine (the most odd being snake soup), and learn about the culture in general. I also took to cycling and had the opportunity to try mountain biking.

Since my time abroad, I have graduated from Creighton and will be pursuing a Master of Science in Public Administration at the University of Hawaii. My goal is a career in management and geriatric care, where I will improve the quality of elder care.

The Gilman Scholarship gave me the opportunity to study abroad in Hong Kong, to learn more about my cultural heritage and Hong Kong’s healthcare system. My experience is one that I will always treasure.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I held presentations during Open House and Jays Days at Creighton University to hundreds of students. My presentation highlighted my study abroad experience, steps to applying for a

study abroad program, and the Gilman Scholarship as one example of financial aid. I also worked with the Office of International Programs to promote studying abroad to incoming students and to seek out

the Gilman Scholarship as a source of financial aid. My project was a success as many students showed eagerness to study abroad the following year.

DARRYN LEE, SPAIN, 2010

Temple University
California



Ever since I represented Long Beach, California as a Student Ambassador in Yokkaichi, Japan during high school, a deep desire to become a truly global citizen was developed, being well versed in international affairs. My interest in Latin American and Spanish culture specifically stemmed from the influence of my aunt, who is of Mexican descent, and my frequent exposure to various Mexican foods, along with conversation and education. Such exposure drove me to major in International Business and Finance at Temple University, with a concentration in Spanish and Latin American Studies.

Studying abroad in Madrid was a transformative experience for me in many ways. The experience not

only allowed me to develop a better understanding of Spanish culture, and the cultures of several European and North African nations, but it also helped me see the importance of embracing the dynamism of each culture. I had a wide range of experiences that contributed significantly to my personal growth, from engaging, progressive political discussions with my host mother to witnessing Islamic prayer at the Sultanhmet Mosque during a visit to Istanbul.

Academically, I was able to learn from some renowned professors in the area of International Monetary Economics, Operations, Business Spanish, and Investments, equipping me with the knowledge of successful business practices. Currently, I work in analytics at BlackRock, developing my financial and technical acumen. I consistently seek out Latin American humanitarian experiences, of which I have ventured on a few over the past couple years.

I pursued a homestay while abroad, instead of a residence hall, because I wanted to get an

accurate view of Spanish culture and candid responses to my many questions. My host mother and host father did just that. Given my host father's occupation, as a divorce lawyer, he would leave us with pearls of wisdom through our conversations. Also, my host mother shared her honest opinions about her views on Franco's dictatorship, the current fiscal state of Spain, and the U.S.

"I had a wide range of experiences that contributed significantly to my personal growth, from engaging, progressive political discussions with my host mother to witnessing Islamic prayer at the Sultanhmet Mosque during a visit to Istanbul."

Her mentality made for interesting conversations and set the foundation for a long-lasting bond, which I still cherish three years after living in Spain.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

My Follow-on Service Project focused exclusively on educating Black American males in the Philadelphia public school and higher education system on the benefits to studying abroad, and

the financial assistance available through scholarship programs. I was able to further this cause through my work as a Study Abroad Ambassador on campus, partnering with ethnic student

organizations around the university. The interactions were very humbling and made me appreciate the opportunities that have been afforded to me.

JOSUE LOPEZ CALDERON, THAILAND, 2010

University of California, Los Angeles
California



During my time at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand, I dedicated myself as a hard working student and enjoyed exploring the food, land and culture.

While at Thammasat, I took six fantastic classes over the span of six days per week. I also had the opportunity to participate in an English tutoring program called TU2U, where we worked with children ages 6-10 years old. In addition, I took an International Business Marketing Course and a Thai Cuisine course which gave me the opportunity to visit a local beverage bottling factory and to

cook in the Bolan Restaurant, which was owned by my professor.

Today, my experience in Thailand has motivated me to create triangulation opportunities by building partnerships between the U.S., Latin America and Asia. I believe there are great untapped synergies between the U.S. Hispanic diaspora and regions such as Asia and the Middle East. As a result, I not only aspire to cultivate those relationships, but to encourage all U.S. diasporas to create triangulation opportunities between the U.S., their country of origin and another region, because our greatest asset is the power of our diversity.

I am very fortunate to have served our country during one of the most challenging economic periods in our history. I worked for the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board at the U.S. Treasury Department, the Presidential Personnel Office at the White House and for the

Treasury Department Recreation Association. Additionally, I have become a member of the National Press Club and an entrepreneur. I am very thankful to the Gilman Scholarship and the University of California Education Abroad Programs office for assisting me to study abroad in Thailand. My study abroad experience helped me stand out in my job search as a recent graduate, and my first job out of college has opened doors for the rest of my career endeavors.

"I aspire to encourage all U.S. diasporas to create triangulation opportunities between the U.S., their country of origin and another region, because our greatest asset is the power of our diversity."

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I had a feeling I was not the only first-generation college student who did not know about the Gilman Scholarship and other international education opportunities. Therefore, my Follow-on Service Project, focused on reaching student groups underrepresented in

education abroad through a two-part PowerPoint presentation. I presented to student groups, such as the Latino Business Student Association, in order to spread the word about how they could study abroad with the Gilman Scholarship.

In my first presentation, the meetings were more informational and included photos of Thailand. In my second presentation, I gave in-depth information on websites, who to contact at the university and important application deadlines.

HECTOR SANTIAGO, JAPAN, 2012

Brookdale Community College
New Jersey



I learned something new every single day in Japan; whether it was about the people, the food, the culture, or myself. I loved learning Japanese and I spent a lot of time studying. Although I am not a "natural" language learner, I surpassed even my own expectations. I feel much more comfortable and confident reading and writing in Japanese than I do speaking, but that could be because I practiced writing nearly three times as much.

Living with my homestay family, I learned about family values and traditions in Japan. On weekends, we went for picnics in the park, sang karaoke, and did some shopping at the department store. At home, we had dinner every night at 7pm. I took my shoes off as

soon as I entered the house and I announced myself when coming or going from the house. All of these customs were new to me; yet, I have continued practicing in America.

I took several cooking classes, in which I learned how to prepare some of the most amazing food I have ever eaten. In those classes, I also made friends with Japanese college students, some of whom I still communicate with. These classes taught me to work in a group with strangers and work together to complete tasks. It was a lesson in cooperation and adaptation that has helped me work with people even better at home in the U.S.

When I was in Japan, I also attended a lecture on Japanese psychology by a Japanese professor. The professor said to us, "Japanese people are horrible at communication. We know we are. But we communicate well with each other because we understand how we communicate." After hearing this, I could sort of recognize what he was saying and it gave me a better understanding of how to communicate with Japanese people.

I have absolutely grown as a person. My will to communicate with others has grown tremendously. I learned a new language and was able to assimilate into another culture. I worked harder than ever in my classes, and overall, I just feel much better about myself.

"Since studying abroad, not only have my goals become clearer, but I am more motivated than ever."

Since studying abroad, not only have my goals become clearer, but I am more motivated than ever. I have decided that not only do I want to work in International Education, but I want to work in a community college. There, I plan to increase cultural awareness on a larger scale and advocate for funding for international programs in community colleges; a group that is largely underrepresented in education abroad.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

My Follow-on Service Project was to give presentations to students, sharing my experience abroad and promoting the Gilman Scholarship Program. I presented for the International Education Centers at both my community college and

Kent University, where I transferred to, my former Japanese class, and the students at my karate school. Also, I have received a lot of emails from students from all over the country who were very interested in my

blog, asking for information and tips about their upcoming journey abroad. I love reaching out to students and inspiring them to go after their dreams, like I did. If I can do it, I know they can do it too.

DANAE SCHUFELDT, ITALY, 2012

University of Nebraska, Lincoln
Nebraska



My time in Italy impacted all aspects of my life. I received the Gilman Scholarship to study studio art in Florence, one of the world's art capitals. The photography course I enrolled in gave me more insight into the Italian culture than any book or lecture class could. I spent my days meandering the cobblestone streets and photographing locals; effortlessly absorbing their culture. The class exposed my passion for photographing people and international experiences.

One day our class took an impromptu field trip to an old mental asylum. A building on the grounds had been turned into an art therapy center. As a psychology, pre-medicine major and art minor, I was extremely excited to get the chance to view the patients'

art work. It was an eerie but amazing experience photographing that small piece of Italian history that has been repurposed for modern-day

Another part of my trip that had a substantial impact on me was my independent visit to Switzerland. I faced my biggest fear in the Swiss Alps: heights. I ran off the side of the mountain and as my feet left the ground, the air filled the parachute and I soared over the city of Interlaken. My confidence in my ability to be completely self-reliant grew tremendously throughout my time abroad and propelled me to further my international and cultural knowledge.

Six short months after coming home from Italy, I went to Lima, Peru on a medical volunteer trip. Our mobile medical clinic provided basic medical care to over 1300 people in one week. The people we served lived in unbelievable conditions. Alongside the locals, our group built a cement staircase in the side of the rocky mountain to help improve safety for the community. The gratitude the citizens showed us was immense and encouraged me to look further into public health, both globally and domestically.

My international experiences have influenced my academic and professional goals. I have decided to take a year off after my undergraduate career to apply for a Fulbright Grant and other opportunities to teach English abroad or intern in public health. I then hope to gain entrance into medical school. My ultimate career goals are to be a transnational healthcare provider, interacting and serving many different cultures along the way. The Gilman Scholarship gave me the support to start my journey as an active global citizen and I encourage everyone to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity the U.S. Department of State and Gilman Program presents.

“My confidence in my ability to be completely self-reliant grew tremendously throughout my time abroad and propelled me to further my international and cultural knowledge.”

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I presented to the William H. Thompson Learning Community on my campus. I am a scholar and previous mentor in the community for low income and first-generation students. I created a guide to all the helpful resources on campus for writing their Gilman essays, extra

financial resources, as well as tips on how to stand out as an applicant.

I also felt it was important to share my experiences with my rural home community. I presented to five art classes at my alma mater and another rural high school. I focused on inspiring an interest in studying

abroad. There are many people from rural Nebraska who have never even left the Midwest, and I wanted to show these kids that they literally have the whole world to explore along with resources, like the Program, are eager to help them to fulfill their dreams.

EMILIE WARDRIP, SOUTH KOREA, 2009

St. Cloud State University
Minnesota



Training with blackbelts in Taekwondo on campus, eating homemade Korean food for breakfast daily at a home-stay, and learning to use the amazing public transportation system in Seoul as a commuting student are some of my favorite experiences from my very first study abroad program in 2009 in South Korea.

The Gilman International Scholarship has done so much more for me than just financially support part of my 2009 study abroad program. When I returned to Minnesota, I was in search of an internship that would compliment my time abroad and Global Studies major. I applied to intern at the U.S. Department of State. I believe

it was my time in Seoul as a Gilman Scholarship recipient that made my application stand out among the others, because I was selected to intern during the fall 2010 semester. I joined the Japan and Korea Affairs desk at the U.S. Department of State as the Public Diplomacy intern. I assisted with preparations for the U.S.A. delegation to participate in the 2012 World Expo in Yeosu, South Korea, and met fellows from the National Security Education Program's Boren Scholarship, also administered by the Institute of International Education.

After the internship, I applied for and received the Boren Scholarship. I returned to Seoul in 2011 and completed nine months of intensive language study. Then I had the amazing opportunity of working at the U.S.A. Pavilion as one of the forty Student Ambassadors during the 2012 World Expo.

At the U.S.A. Pavilion's opening ceremony I was given the honor of translating the introduction speech

to welcome the U.S. Ambassador to South Korea. It was a special moment, especially because I had met Ambassador Kim before he was appointed while at the U.S. Department of State. At the U.S.A. Pavilion I loved engaging with our guests in conversation, appreciated our Student Ambassador community outreach events, and especially enjoyed teaching English at the local boys' high school.

"The Gilman International Scholarship has done so much more for me than just financially support my study abroad program..."

These experiences have confirmed that I will enjoy a career in international affairs and have lead me to pursue a Master's degree from the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies in International Administration.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

My home university has great study abroad partnerships with universities in many different countries. They showcase these programs every semester at study abroad fairs. I worked with the

study abroad office to have an informational table devoted to the Gilman International Scholarship.

I shared details of my experience abroad, handed out informational

flyers, and listened to students' ideas about studying abroad. I also gave presentations to classes of freshmen, encouraging them to look into studying abroad and the Gilman Scholarship.