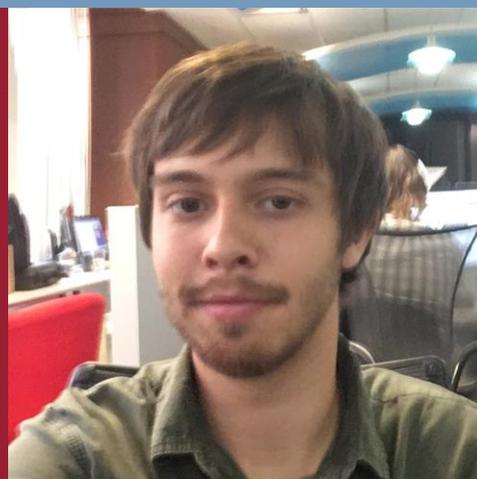


**DON COURTER | RUSSIA, 2015**

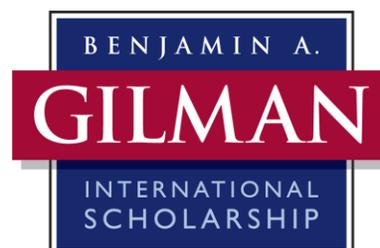
- History and Russian Language & Literature double major at Rutgers University
- Developed an interest in journalism and international education
- Achieved near fluency in the Russian language
- Gave presentations to college-bound seniors at low-income high schools across New Jersey

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

While studying abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia, Don's studies consisted of daily Russian language classes, guided excursions to the city's numerous cultural landmarks, and informal excursions with his peer language tutors and host family. It was during dinners with his host family that Don made huge strides in Russian conversational competency and developed a close bond with his host family. These experiences allowed Don to achieve near fluency in the Russian language and a cultural understanding that helped him comprehend Russian political relations and the contemporary context of the former Soviet Union.

When Don returned to the United States, he shared his experiences with high school seniors with whom he shared a similar low-income background. Today, Don is completing his studies at Rutgers University and continuing to promote the Gilman Scholarship through his role as a Gilman Alumni Ambassador.

“My experiences allowed me to achieve a level of cultural understanding that would have been impossible to conceive without studying abroad.”



[www.iie.org/gilman](http://www.iie.org/gilman)



The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship is a program of the U.S. Department of State, supported in its implementation by the Institute of International Education (IIE). The Program offers grants for U.S. citizen undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies or credit-bearing, career-oriented internships abroad. Such international exchange is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world.