

ALEXA PENNAVARIA | FRANCE, 2015

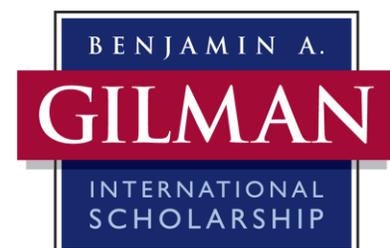
- Anthropology major at Florida State University
- Increased French language skills
- Gained greater understanding of chosen career path
- Promoted study abroad and the Gilman Scholarship at local high school

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Alexa knew she wanted to study anthropology from an early age, but by the end of her sophomore year of college she still wasn't sure what *kind* of anthropology she wanted to study. Due mostly to her adventurous spirit, she resolved there was no better way to find out than to jump right in. In summer of 2015, she traveled to southwestern France and participated in an archaeological field dig investigating a homo sapiens/neanderthal crossover site. On the field site, she conducted lab work to add to the research of paleo stone tools, nutrition and living environments.

Not only did she get to explore a foreign country and immerse herself in the French language, but much to her delight, she was finally given the opportunity to obtain hands-on experience in anthropology beyond textbook and classroom learning. Since her international experience, she has used the connections and experience she gained that summer to acquire other internships, references for applications, and even her current job at the Florida Bureau of Archaeological Research.

“A lesson learned from my study abroad experience is that it’s amazing how much you can learn by putting your fears aside and changing your environment.”



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.