

DY'ANNA AUGUSTUS | CHINA, 2015

- Music and Mandarin Chinese at Knox College
- Increased Chinese language skills
- Gained cross cultural understanding by working with diverse populations
- Hosted radio podcast for Chicagoland High School radio stations about her study abroad experience

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

With her Gilman Scholarship, Dy'Anna studied Mandarin Chinese at one of Beijing's most prestigious universities. There she participated in the Immersive Chinese Language Program through the China Studies Institute. The program required that she sign a language pledge promising to only speak in Chinese throughout the school week. This program pushed Dy'Anna out of her comfort zone and challenged her both personally and academically.

Dy'Anna's experience in China not only provided her with strong language skills, but also developed in her a sense of confidence. These new skills have encouraged her to apply to for other opportunities to develop her interest and knowledge of Chinese culture and language.

"I left China not only having gained a sense of confidence in my language skills, but also in myself and the impact that I can have on the world."



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BRANDY BIPPES | CHINA, 2013

- Anthropology at Eastern Washington University
- Interned with an international corporate training organization
- Gained confidence and experience to pursue her dream career
- Shared her experience through a series of presentations at her home university

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Brandy was awarded the Gilman Scholarship to partake in her dream internship in Shanghai, China. She interned with LifePower Team Building Training, an international organization that offers team building training to Fortune 500 companies such as Microsoft and Hewlett-Packard. As an intern, Brandy edited the organization's website and printed material, and co-developed a training exercise for one of LifePower's clients. Additionally, Brandy studied Mandarin at a local language school.

The intercultural skills and experience Brandy gained through her internship gave her the confidence to pursue a Master's degree and now doctoral work in her field. She is pursuing a career in teaching English and technical communication to non-native speakers of English. Interning abroad gave Brandy the opportunity to understand her audience of students as a teacher.

"By maximizing every opportunity I received in China, I have been able to accomplish things I previously had only dreamed were possible."



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HILLARY BLUNT | INDIA, 2013

- American Studies and Sociology majors at Goucher College
- Gained experience working with people of different backgrounds and cultures applicable to her teaching profession
- Choreographed independent dance piece based on inspiration from India

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her study abroad experience, Hillary took a course related to her sociology major in addition to several elective classes such as Bollywood dance, yoga, and Indian cooking. Through these experiences Hillary gained a true understanding of aspects of India's culture that lie beneath the surface, such as body language, understandings of time, and concepts of fairness.

In addition, Hillary developed her self-conception as a white woman and being a part of the minority enabled her to experience unique dynamics of race. She grew a deeper and more complex understanding of her identity as a white woman and the privileges that come with that identity. Hillary brings these experiences and realizations to her work as a teacher of a diverse population of students in Kansas City, Missouri.

When she returned to her home campus, Hillary shared her experiences in India by choreographing a five-part dance composition that was performed at her senior showcase concert. Her choreography was reflective of walking through the streets of India. Hillary promoted the Gilman Scholarship to audience members by describing the program's goals in the concert's pamphlet.

"My time in India was the first time I was forced to examine my race and to feel the implications of my race. This knowledge is something I purposefully bring with me wherever I go in the world."



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NAPHTALI BRYANT | CHINA, 2015

- Business Management at Alamo Colleges
- Lead team of students that inspired the study abroad program
- Gained experience in multicultural advertising and global cultural competencies
- Became an Alamo Colleges Study Abroad Student Ambassador, presented to High Schools and Colleges

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Naphtali selected a study abroad program in China that was geared toward learning leadership on a global scale. The students and faculty in his program were from the leadership institute at Alamo Colleges and leadership activities were incorporated into their experience abroad, including informing his peers through reports on the history, tourism and UNESCO sites in each city they visited. This experience gave him a new found zeal to travel abroad and see the world. He also gained valuable international experience which he feels makes him more marketable in the job market and helped him attain additional scholarships.

As an ambassador for the Alamo Colleges when he returned, Naphtali encouraged community college students to study abroad. He held several workshops on the Gilman Scholarship where he shared his personal experience of studying abroad as a community college student as well as best practices for applying to the Gilman Scholarship. His and his fellow ambassadors' efforts led to a historic amount of study abroad participants for the Alamo Colleges in 2016.

“The most significant attribute I gained from my experience abroad was a sense of diversity in the global community and an ability to be sensitive to the differences in other cultures.”



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BRENT BUFFONE | COSTA RICA, 2013

- Inter-disciplinary Studies at University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Enhanced his Spanish language skills
- Learned about himself, his identity and his culture
- Created a video compilation of himself and other students he studied abroad with explaining the benefits achieved from studying abroad

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During his program in Costa Rica, Brent studied Spanish and the local culture and history. He also had the opportunity to intern with a local glass recycling center and led a community service cleanup project in the city with other students in his program. He also took the opportunity to visit where his mother grew up and was able to reconnect with one of his uncles. He also gained a deeper understanding about himself, his identity and his own culture.

When he returned from abroad, he was ready to blaze through the remainder of his studies. His time abroad was a catalyst to help him focus on making the most out of the rest of his undergraduate career. He knew that if he could complete his goal of studying abroad, he could complete many other goals he set for himself. This gave him the confidence to pursue and ultimately obtain various other opportunities that followed and helped him to develop professionally, as potential employers were impressed with his tenacity, courage and ability to take the initiative to study abroad.

“When you put yourself in a new environment, it is certain that you will evolve and a new you will be created.”



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WANERH CHEN | TAIWAN , 2016

- Economics at University of New Mexico, Main Campus
- Increased Chinese language skills
- Gained professional experience through volunteering at the Taipei 101
- Promoted study abroad and the Gilman Scholarship through a personal blog

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Wanerh's international educational program changed her as a person and a student; it made her realize her passion for travel and getting to know other people and cultures. She met many other exchange students who shared her passion. As someone who was born in Taiwan but moved away at a young age and became a United States citizen, study abroad meant more to her than just academics or the experience. She reconnected with her roots and found a part of herself that she always thought was missing.

Her time in Taiwan inspired her to explore and develop parts of herself that she didn't know were there. At Taipei 101, she acted as a mediator between English and Chinese speakers because of her fluency in both languages. She realized that her unique background of being Taiwanese and American has set her up perfectly to be a bridge between two different places and culture. Since coming back from abroad, she seeks out opportunities where she can use this newfound ability, including encouraging and supporting others to study abroad. She plans to pursue a career as a Foreign Service Officer, where she can continue with her passion for law while traveling and interacting with people internationally.

"I realized that my unique background of being Taiwanese and American has set me up perfectly to be a bridge between two different places and culture."



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CANDICE COLDLY | CHINA, 2012

- Sociology & Business Management at Central State University
- Increased Mandarin language skills
- Gained academic experience at Shanghai University
- Journaled about benefits of studying abroad and shared with university students through a presentation

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her tenure as a student at Central State University, Candice had always dreamed about studying in Shanghai, China. When she was presented with the opportunity she was elated! The Gilman Scholarship allowed her gain a truly remarkable academic experience. She was able to accomplish a goal that was important to her and her academic career, something she feels would not have been possible if not for receiving the Gilman Scholarship.

Candice's time as a student at Shanghai University opened the door to a new world of opportunities. She immersed herself in Chinese culture and was able to gain an understanding of how the Chinese provide for their families and became an economic superpower amongst the world. She cultivated new relationships that will last a lifetime and this has given her the courage to accomplish any goal she sets her mind on. After she graduated, she felt confident that she could move anywhere in the country since she had successfully lived in Shanghai. This influenced her to take a chance and take the next step in her career and moved across the country from Ohio to Georgia.

"The most significant attribute I gained from my experience abroad was a sense of accomplishment and courage that I can do anything."



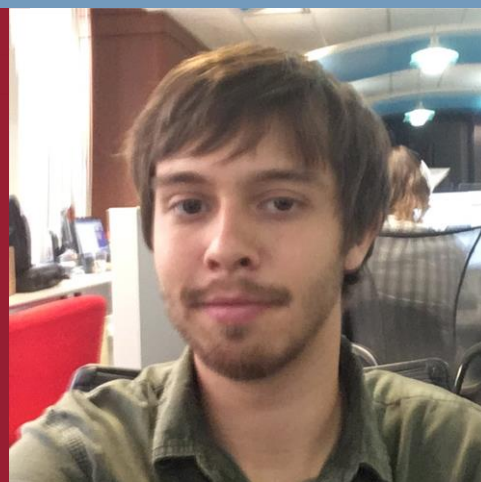
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DON COURTER | RUSSIA, 2015

- 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."



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ROBERT DAVIS | GREECE, 2013

- First-generation college student, Global Studies major at Arizona State University
- Learned the inner-workings of a U.S. Embassy
- Engaged with revered American diplomats and Greek foreign government officials and business leaders
- Encouraged first-generation college students to study abroad

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Robert served as the Economic Section Intern at the U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece. The U.S. Department of State Student Internship Program provided Robert with the platform to network and engage with leading officials in American foreign affairs. These experiences included running a 5k marathon with embassy staff, meeting Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker during her high-profile visit to Athens, and preparing the comprehensive briefing materials for the new incoming ambassador.

Upon returning to the United States, Robert presented a portfolio at the annual School of Politics and Global Studies International Experience Consortium. As a Dorrance Scholar, Robert is connected to a network of first-generation college students who he was able to share his personal experience with and how he overcame certain obstacles to study abroad.

Robert plans to pursue a lifelong career with the U.S. Foreign Service, but not before earning his master's degree from a reputable international affairs program. Now an avid traveler, Robert also considers himself to be a 'global citizen' and life-long advocate for study abroad.

"I lived the life of a foreign service officer, observed high-level negotiations, and witnessed the art of diplomacy first-hand."



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SELWAN FADHIL | UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 2014

- First-generation college student, Electrical Engineering major at University of Nebraska
- Met professional leaders through the U.S. Embassy
- Became more confident in facing new situations and renewed his academic motivation
- Presented the Gilman Scholarship to local high school seniors and engineering students at his university

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

While abroad, Selwan took math courses towards his degree and experienced teaching methods different than those in the United States. This helped him to learn how to adapt and analyze problems from a different perspective. Personally, he learned how to handle challenging situations on his own, which he had not had the chance to do at his home institution. His time abroad inspired him to work harder at his academics, enhanced his time management skills, and helped him determine the type of person, student and professional he wanted to be. Professionally, Selwan expanded his network by attending events at the U.S. Embassy and U.S. Consulate, where he met Foreign Service Officers who provided useful advice on how to improve his own leadership skills.

When he returned to the U.S., Selwan sought to inspire high school students in his local area, encouraging them to consider studying abroad when they go to college. In addition, he always encourages other engineering students at his university to fit study abroad into their curriculum.

“The most important lesson
I learned from my
experience abroad was
how to adapt to new
environments.”



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VIVIAN GARCIA | RUSSIA, 2015

- Linguistics at the University of California, Santa Cruz
- Increased Russian language skills
- Gained volunteer experience teaching English and Spanish at host university and local youth centers
- Shared her experience abroad with a U.S. classroom as a Gilman-Reach the World Traveler

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During Vivian's Russian language program in St. Petersburg, her language skills were challenged, developed, and strengthened. She became fully immersed in the language and culture by having her own Russian conversation partner, and living with a host family who helped her better understand the local culture. Vivian also volunteered as an English and Spanish tutor at her host university.

As a Reach the World Traveler, Vivian engaged with a sixth grade classroom in the United States about her experience abroad through video conferences. This allowed her to document her experience in Russia through rich digital media storytelling on the Reach the World website.

Through studying abroad, Vivian learned to adapt to a completely different environment that was unlike anything she was accustomed to. These new experiences encouraged her to work as a resident assistant at the International Living Center at her home university and pursue degrees in TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) and International Relations upon graduation.

"My experience in Russia helped me discover my passion for international education and made me reflect on my cultural identity as a Latina in both Russia and the United States."

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GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI PROFILE

LEA GOBER | UNITED KINGDOM, 2010

- Fashion Merchandising at Virginia Commonwealth University
- Increased cultural understanding in relation to business practices and customs
- Gained professional experience through internship at a public relations agency
- Educated students about study abroad and the Gilman Scholarship Program at College Bound Inc.



Gilman Alumni Ambassador

During her study abroad experience in London, England, Lea interned with the public relations agency Brower Lewis where she gained a broader sense of the fashion industry and the careers available in the field. The internship allowed her to put her education and skill set in fashion to work in projects from preparing public relations packets, to merchandising the showroom for client visits, to making weekly sample drops at locations ranging from small showrooms to media power houses, such as Vogue.

Upon her return from London, she was selected as a member of the public relations planning committee for the Virginia Commonwealth University Annual Juried Fashion Show. Her study abroad experience gave her the conviction and skills to contribute to the vision of the team and execute an excellent show. Today, Lea is a Production Associate for a wholesale jewelry company which requires her to interact with partners in Asia on a daily basis. The cultural exposure she received in London uniquely prepared her to excel in this position.

“Studying and interning abroad not only granted me a passport to different cultures, but also deepened my sense of identity and understanding of my place in the global community.”



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WILFREDO GOMEZ | JORDAN, 2013

- Law, Jurisprudence, Social Thought and Asian Languages and Civilizations at Amherst College
- Increased Arabic language skills
- Gained exposure to Jordan and Circassian culture
- Partnered with a club on home campus to spread awareness of the Gilman Scholarship

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Wilfredo spent his summer study abroad experience in the Wadi Seir neighborhood of Amman, Jordan where he lived with a host family. They took him into their home as if he were one of their own and introduced him to two sides of Jordanian society. He attended a Circassian festival in the northern town of Jerash, where he witnessed a magnificent display of music and dance unique to Circassian culture, all while seated in a repurposed Roman amphitheater.

Wilfredo's experience in Jordan provided him the opportunity to sharpen his spoken Arabic through his daily interactions with native speakers of the language. This exposure to colloquial Jordanian Arabic dramatically improved his understanding and fluency of the language, laying the foundation for advanced coursework upon his return to Amherst College.

"As a first-generation college student, studying abroad had always been a dream of mine. The Gilman Scholarship gave me the opportunity to turn that dream into a reality."

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CHELSEA JAMES | GHANA, 2016

- Biology and Spanish at Howard University
- Gained professional experience interning in the public health field
- Acquired functional knowledge of the Twi language
- Discussed her study abroad experience with her church's teen group

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her internship with the West African AIDS Foundation, Chelsea was able to explore new aspects of the health field. Much of her internship focused on public health and grant proposal research. Chelsea's hand-on experience communicating with patients and staff at the Foundation clinic gave her insight into what a career in this field entails. Additionally, Chelsea headed up a committee that was tasked with gathering background information for a World Food Program grant that would supply food aid to impoverished HIV positive patients.

Through these experiences, Chelsea discovered her passion for public health. With this new found passion, Chelsea, a pre-medical student, has decided to pursue a combined MD/MPH graduate program after completing her undergraduate degree.

"My study abroad experience taught me how to be flexible and adapt to new environments and situations quickly."



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GRACE LEE | TURKEY, 2015

- Art History at the University of California, Davis
- Studied ancient architecture and artifacts dating back as far as the 2nd millennium B.C.E
- Gained technical knowledge about the science of preserving/restoring archaeological discoveries
- Created a custom domain to share with UC Davis' art history department

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Because of its location at the crossroads of the ancient Western and Eastern worlds, Turkey boasts an abundance of unique artistic forms. By studying underwater and terrestrial archaeological remains of the Greco-Roman era in Turkey, Grace's program helped her gain a more thorough understanding of the ideological exchange between the Western art history canon and smaller indigenous nations in the East.

Grace likes to think of art historians as story-weavers who piece together the available facts in order to create a subjective narrative for an image. As such, she believes that any serious art historian should learn the context of the artworks they study by familiarizing with the people/cultures to whom they belong. Turkey opened Grace's eyes to the way in which art is viewed and handled across the world; with her recent art history B.A, she wants to take her undergraduate studies to another field. Currently, she is studying to take the LSAT in order to pursue a career in Art Law.

"Studying abroad helped me to retain otherwise complex information easily through experience—for example, I will always remember the layout of an ancient Lydian pit tomb after accidentally falling into one."



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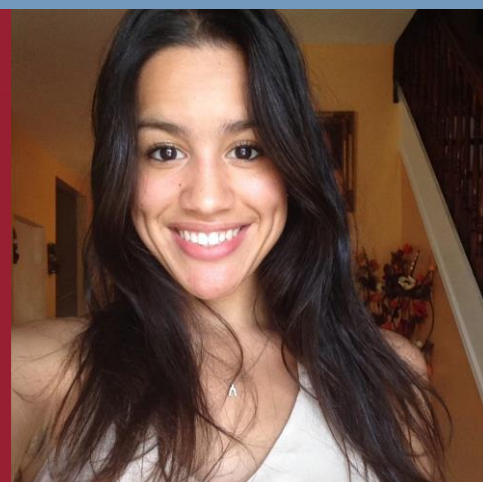


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GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI PROFILE

ROSYBELL MARIA | MOROCCO, 2014

- International Relations and Diplomacy, French, and Arabic at Seton Hall University
- Increased Arabic language skills
- Gained a deeper understanding of Moroccan culture and traditions
- Led a panel discussion on the importance of minority students studying abroad



Gilman Alumni Ambassador

During her study abroad experience in Rabat, Morocco, Rosybell participated in an Intensive Summer Arabic program where she studied Modern Standard Arabic and Darija, the Moroccan dialect. While in Rabat, she lived with a host family where she experienced various Middle Eastern traditions first-hand and fully immersed herself within the Moroccan culture. The daily conversations and interactions she had with her host family reinforced her ability to establish cross-cultural connections and strengthened her intercultural communication skills. Her experience abroad further inspired her to pursue opportunities that promote the importance of global leadership and cultural awareness.

Rosybell not only gained a new perspective on the complexities of the Middle East region, but also networking opportunities to continue working in the international sector. Upon returning from her program abroad, Rosybell worked as a U.S. Student Ambassador for the World Expo in Milan, Italy in 2015. Utilizing the professional skills and experience she gained abroad, Rosybell worked as an agent for public diplomacy and engaged corporate executives, political leaders, and the general public in an effort to advocate for various human rights issues.

“My experience abroad as a Gilman Scholar reinforced my ability to establish cross-cultural connections and strengthened my intercultural communication skills.”



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DAWIT MARTIN | COSTA RICA, 2015

- First-generation college student, Communication major at University of Maryland, College Park
- Gained intensive field study experience through conservation coursework
- Learned conversational Spanish through cultural immersion
- Promoted the Gilman Scholarship at his university's study abroad fair

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Dawit studied abroad to learn how to apply his multimedia skills to his interest in nature and the environment. In Costa Rica, he became familiar with tropical ecology and the issues surrounding conservation of biodiversity in struggling communities. Additionally, his unique experiences living with a host family and engaging with the local community as an English tutor helped him improve his intercultural communication skills.

With the help of the Gilman Scholarship, Dawit was able to learn that he has a passion for sustainable urban development. As a recent graduate, he has used this passion to complete multimedia projects highlighting economic, social, and environmental issues in Puerto Rico.

When Dawit returned to his home campus, he collaborated with a fellow Gilman Scholar to promote the Gilman Scholarship. Together they spoke to students at their university's study abroad fair, sharing stories and information about their host countries and impactful experiences.

"I was able to study tropical ecology in one of the world's greatest rainforests while finding my passion for conservation and growing as a student and professional."



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DYLAN MCDOWELL | TANZANIA, 2012

- Fisheries and Wildlife and Education double major at Oregon State University
- Developed Swahili language skills
- Blogged about abroad experience, which led to writing positions at Oregon Sea Grant and other outlets
- Presented on African wildlife management in addition to general study abroad support for freshman

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

Dylan studied wildlife conservation and political structures throughout several national parks in Tanzania. His program included field research, as well as two homestays to experience both urban and rural life. Learning about the communities living around national parks inspired Dylan to conduct a research project on the impact of micro-loans to villages. He used interviews and focus groups to hear from villagers, and transitioned the project into his undergraduate thesis when he returned to the U.S.

Being immersed in political discussions while in Tanzania caused Dylan to shift his professional focus to making complex science accessible for decision-makers. He learned about the disconnect between science and policy abroad, and recognizes similar problems in the U.S. Dylan now works at the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators where he supports state legislators nationwide as they enact strong environmental policies that benefit both people and nature.

“Studying abroad taught me about the interconnectedness of science and policy, and how to work in ways that complements both areas.”



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GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI PROFILE

INDIA ORMAN | FRANCE, 2016

- Biology at Warren Wilson College
- Increased French language skills
- Fostered cross-cultural connections
- Shared her experience abroad with a school classroom in the U.S as a Gilman-Reach the World Traveler



Gilman Alumni Ambassador

During her semester studying abroad in France, India studied the French language and Political Science. She participated in the European Union's exchange program where she developed lasting friendships and professional connections with other European students. This experience broadened her understanding of the world and perspective of American culture.

Additionally, India's experience in France inspired her to be an English tutor, something she still does today in the United States. Through meeting new people and seeing new teaching techniques in France, India was inspired to further develop her language skills to express her knowledge to French-speakers around the world. This renewed point of view taught India about the infinite variations in the transmission and acquisition of knowledge and ideas, gaining insight and inspiration for her professional goals.

"The most significant attribute I gained from my experience abroad was the ability to listen closely, from a point of humility and empathy."



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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

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MANUEL RETANA | UNITED KINGDOM, 2015

- First-generation college student, Mechanical Engineering major at the University of Nevada, Reno
- Took aerospace engineering courses
- Gained research experience abroad with Airbus leading to internships at NASA Johnson Space Center
- Shared his experience abroad with a middle school classroom as a Gilman-Reach the World Traveler



**Gilman Alumni Ambassador
Gilman-Reach the World Traveler**

While studying at the University of Bristol, Manuel took aerospace courses that were not offered at his home university. His research class with Airbus focused mainly on space weather satellite development. He gained skills in Finite Element Analysis as well as advanced materials and vibrations to develop the satellite structure for a hypothetical rocket launch. While abroad, he also participated as a Travel Correspondent through Reach the World, a partner organization to the Gilman Program, virtually sharing his experience abroad to a middle school classroom in New York.

Manuel's study abroad experience challenged him to the limit. It was his first time doing graduate level research at a top research university in the U.K. His experience and the skills he developed prepared him for his future career at NASA and gave him confidence that he was capable of doing research. His study abroad experience opened many doors for him and today, Manuel continues to reach out to students and motivate them to think big and to pursue their dreams.

"Studying abroad allowed me to leave my comfort zone and find my true potential by taking challenging courses with top students in a different country"



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CORTNEY SANDERS | GHANA, 2014

- Government at the University of Texas at Austin
- Studied at the University of Ghana to learn about Ghanaian communities and culture
- Gained professional experience through consulting non-profit and government officials
- Presented about the Gilman Scholarship at schools in the greater Houston area

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her summer abroad, Cortney was involved in Ghana's efforts to enhance their economic development and growth through sustainable outreach, particularly in the tourism and art sector with the Helping Hands Apprentice Program (HHAP). When she was working with HHAP, Cortney realized that public service along with economic prosperity was important to her. After this experience, she decided to apply for policy school and focus on ways in which entrepreneurs could give to communities socially and economically.

Cortney's time in Ghana provided her with a sense of purpose for her community along with a clear vision of what she wants to do in the future. For her Follow-on Service Project, she went to a local charter school in Houston, Texas and facilitated presentations about studying abroad in places like Ghana. Cortney is a Master's in Public Policy student at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and her mission is to spread the word about study abroad to undergraduate students.

"The most significant attribute I gained from my experience abroad was finding my passion in public service and policy."



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GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI PROFILE

LENA TRAN | FRANCE, 2015

- Communication Studies major and double minor in French Studies and Economics at the University of South Dakota
- Developed vital skills to have a better understanding on the worldviews of students outside the U.S.
- Established international relationships with host institution to help U.S. students navigate the study abroad experience



Gilman Alumni Ambassador

During the Spring of 2015, Lena studied abroad in Pau, France to complete her undergraduate requirements and French Studies minor. The endeavor of studying abroad was a path that was hard to envision for Lena because of the financial burdens. However, she knew that a global education was imperative to succeeding in a diverse society. Her study abroad experience validated her career goals of pursuing higher education to assist students that may have similar narratives of being first generation college students and an ethnic minority.

Lena is currently pursuing her M.A. in Adult Higher Education at her alma mater, University of South Dakota, and also a full-time administrator at the university. Lena is also serving on the national advisory council for the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education and an active member in the non-profit organization, SEARAC (Southeast Asian Resource Action Center), located in Washington D.C.

“My study abroad experience has provided me imperative tools to become a better global citizen by obtaining life experiences and knowledge to better serve my communities.”



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GERTI WILSON | SOUTH AFRICA, 2016

- Political Science and Legal Studies at the University of Delaware
- Conducted 40 hours of volunteer work at a local community center
- Held campus workshops focusing on the Gilman Scholarship for her peers

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her study abroad, Gerti took three courses and engaged with South African culture by volunteering as a daycare teacher for youth affected by poverty at the Inkululeko Community Center. She developed cross-cultural communication and competency skills, learned multiple languages, and made lasting friendships.

Upon her return to the United States, Gerti used her new skills gained from studying abroad as a Congressional Intern for Senator Chris Coons in Washington D.C. She also hosted several “Funding Study Abroad” workshops for the Center of Black Culture at the University of Delaware. Today, she has combined her passion for policy and the law as a Legal Assistant for the Center for American Progress.

“The most significant lesson I learned in South Africa was that no matter where you go in the world, the meaning of *ubuntu* holds true. It means ‘I am because you are.’”



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