

**TAMARA CASTELLÓN | RUSSIA, 2013**

- Studied Russian at Lomonosov Moscow State University
- Gained research experience abroad through a partnership with a native student at her host university
- Went on to become a Fulbright ETA to Moldova
- Employs her skills and knowledge of Russian culture and language into enrichment activities for her American elementary students

**Gilman Alumni Ambassador**

During her time in Russia, Tamara was introduced to the warmth of the Russian people. Sincere friendships were formed, language skills were dramatically increased, and the “travel bug” bit hard as cultural excursions took her all around Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Vladimir, and Suzdal, Russia. A music educator, Tamara partnered with a Russian student interested in her research efforts. The two visited numerous conservatories and music schools to compare Russian and American pedagogical styles and philosophies. The experiences abroad led her to consider using her skills in education toward a position in the foreign service, for which she is now preparing to attempt to enter.

Tamara’s time in Russia not only clarified her career potential in education and foreign service, but also led to a fond new love of working with unexpected, ever-changing situations. Post Gilman, she was encouraged to apply for and be accepted to teach English through a Fulbright English Teaching Assistance grant in Ceadâr-Lunga, Moldova. While there, she became a Reach the World mentor, an EFL blogger, and the director of a female youth chorus/activist group that promoted female empowerment.

“My grandmother used to always say that people are this world’s greatest resource. This experience has validated that concept in more ways than I can count.”

BENJAMIN A.

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