



# Alexander Elias Azar

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni

Ambassador

*Belgium, 2019*

*“Living independently taught me a lot about the world and myself.”*

While at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium, Alexander studied how Belgian elections work differently from American ones. He met a diverse group of people through the EuroScholars program and learned a lot about the world while sharing his own experiences.

Alexander is pursuing a Master of Business Administration at Bryant University and believes programs such as the Gilman Scholarship and EuroScholars can build bridges in communities for sustainable development.

- ★ Served as a Reach the World correspondent
- ★ Participated in a Model United Nations North Atlantic Treaty Organization simulation and debated European students on simulated security issues
- ★ Conducted political research comparing party systems in the United States and Belgium.

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Anyssa Q. El-Manfaa

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Japan, 2018*

***“An international experience is for everyone — not just for a small demographic. Support and encouragement is here for you — within the Gilman Scholar community and beyond!”***

Anyssa’s academic experience as a Gilman Scholar in Hiroshima, Japan, was inspired by her interest in nuclear power policy, and recovery and resilience after nuclear crises. Alongside various peers with dynamic talents and interests, Anyssa visited the World Friendship Center and attended lectures on nuclear policy. During this visit, she listened to the testimony of an atomic bomb survivor, an experience that profoundly impacted her life and routed her career trajectory toward international conflict mitigation and politics.

After returning from this experience, Anyssa transferred to Swarthmore College as a McCabe Scholar. She is pursuing a degree in linguistics, and peace and conflict studies. Anyssa’s Gilman experience has inspired her to continue pursuing international learning opportunities. She has since participated in the Critical Language Scholarship Program, traveling to Azerbaijan. Anyssa hopes to become a Foreign Service Officer.

- ★ Received the Gilman Scholarship while attending Community College of Philadelphia
- ★ Studied U.S.-Japan nuclear umbrella policy abroad and analyzed Japan’s reconstruction efforts after the dropping of the atomic bomb, and the re-integration experiences and generational trauma of Hibakusha
- ★ Explored resilience amid crisis, peacekeeping and humanitarianism in Hiroshima and applied that lens to Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi, and examined Hiroshima’s impact on nuclear power regulation and policy

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Ayyad Algabyali

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Saudi Arabia, 2018*

***“My experiences taught me that diversity is what makes one’s circle stronger.”***

Ayyad interned as a Gilman Scholar at the United States embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he worked closely with career diplomats in the political, consular and management sections. He witnessed and experienced diplomacy in action, negotiations and conferences with international diplomats.

The exposure Ayyad had at the American embassy in Saudi Arabia, in addition to major shifts in the political climate in the United States, inspired him to make a difference at a more local level. Therefore, upon returning to the United States, Ayyad focused his Follow-on Service Project on introducing diplomacy to high schoolers, sharing how it shapes our international political spectrum and affects our daily lives.

Ayyad joined the Yemeni American Merchants Association (YAMA) as the Director of Advocacy where he served as the organization’s principal advocate on city, state and federal government affairs. He advocated policy priorities and strategies serving the Yemeni-American community.

Currently, Ayyad is working with the New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs as a Neighborhood Organizer. He connects immigrant New Yorkers to city resources and services, and amplifies their concerns and needs to the mayor’s office.

- ★ Earned bachelor’s degree in political science, international studies and history from the City College of New York
- ★ Interned at United States embassy in Riyadh
- ★ Was Muslim Student Organization Project Leader
- ★ Worked as Director of Advocacy at the Yemeni American Merchants Association
- ★ Served as Neighborhood Organizer for the New York City mayor’s office

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# Christal Juarez

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Argentina & Chile, 2019*

***“Being abroad helped me connect with myself at a deeper level [and with] what I am interested in and how I want to apply practices and innovations to my own communities.”***

While abroad, Christal studied human rights in Argentina and Chile. In both countries, she lived with local families, eating homemade meals and discussing current events. As social movements emerged during her stay, Christal learned about the dictatorships of the late 20th century and witnessed how a nation's history continues through cultural memory. The experience helped her further value her native Spanish language: She learned more about how to apply it professionally in the context of human rights.

Christal plans to pursue graduate school to study anthropology, with a focus on the human right to education.

- ★ Connected family history in Mexico to customs and traditions in Argentina and Chile
- ★ Learned human rights discourse in Spanish
- ★ Gained multicultural skills and awareness

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# Daniela Castro

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*France, 2017*

*“My experiences abroad taught me that the sciences make life livable, but the arts make life worth living.”*

Daniela spent the summer of 2017 in Paris, France, at the Institut Catholique de Paris. There, she joined international students in an Intensive French Program, where she graduated in the top 5 percent of her class. She returned to France in 2019 as an exchange student, studying French at the Centre Universitaire d'Études Françaises in Grenoble, France, where she gained native-level fluency. As the first Florida State University exchange student at the Université Grenoble Alpes, she became the liaison facilitating future exchanges.

Currently, Daniela teaches Advanced Placement calculus and precalculus through Teach For America in Dallas, Texas. She earned her educator's certification from Southern Methodist University and is working toward a master's in computer science, with a focus on computational linguistics. Her goal is to bridge the gap in STEM education.

- ★ Earned Bachelor of Science in biomathematics and Bachelor of Arts in French, with a minor in chemistry, from Florida State University
- ★ Worked as Kode With Klossy Web Development Instructor
- ★ Has native fluency in Spanish and French
- ★ Led Gilman workshop at Florida State University College of Medicine, emphasizing the need for medical professionals to study foreign languages

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# Daniel Oliveira

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Taiwan, 2018*

*“Studying abroad helped me gain confidence and empathy.”*

While in Taiwan, Daniel conducted research at Academia Sinica — one of Taiwan’s premier research institutes — where he learned about the synthesis, purification and applications of inorganic compounds called polyoxometalates. His Ph.D. mentor facilitated cultural interactions with other international students, and Daniel spent time outside the lab learning about global influence in Taipei. He also visited a bilingual church and hiked the Gaoxiong perimeter.

Daniel is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy at the University of California, San Francisco, where he intends to incorporate cultural sensitivity into health care practices.

- ★ Utilized computer simulation to optimize an antidepressant
- ★ Attended religious services while abroad and engaged with host community
- ★ Worked as Biological Science Technician at SRI International

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# Gio Albert Caballero

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Taiwan, 2018*

*“Invest in relationships and experiences, and view the world with gratitude.”*

At National Taiwan University’s College of Medicine, Gio participated in cancer treatment research. His project aimed to demonstrate that a newly synthesized drug bound to a novel target site in cells induced cell-senescence.

His study abroad program included field trips that highlighted Taiwanese culture and growing industries at the forefront of the global market.

Intrigued by Taiwan’s utilization of small- to medium-sized businesses for its growing economy, Gio developed an interest in consumerism. Currently a graduate student at New York University, he studies consumer psychology. Gio’s goals are to be proficient in consumer behavior research and to gain a foothold in the technology industry. He hopes to run a consulting firm that can help small- to medium-sized companies compete against larger, dominant companies.

- ★ Veteran of the United States Army
- ★ Volunteered for American Institute in Taiwan as a Youth Camp Mentor
- ★ Conducted career-oriented cancer research in Taiwan
- ★ Researched with the New York University Motivation Lab

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# Isaac James

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Morocco, 2018*

*“My experience helped me see the beauty of diversity in this world and its people.”*

Isaac studied at Al Akhawayn University in Morocco as a Gilman Scholar. He learned Arabic, studied African politics and joined the choir. On the weekends, Isaac assisted in teaching English to Sub-Saharan migrants. He will always appreciate the enlightening conversations he had with fellow students, teachers and community members of different nationalities and cultures.

After returning from Morocco, Isaac volunteered and advised students at competitive scholarship workshops at his university, Rollins College. He currently works with migrant and refugee communities in Tennessee. Isaac hopes to one day work for an international organization or the United States government.

- ★ Studies public policy and political economy at Rollins College
- ★ Created Friends of Migrants program to foster relationships between Moroccan college students and migrants
- ★ Visited the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees office in Rabat, Morocco
- ★ Met with political officer at United States embassy in Morocco
- ★ Volunteered and advised at competitive scholarship workshops at Rollins College

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>





# Jeydelyn Martinez

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Spain, 2015*

***“My study abroad semester taught me that there is no real growth without discomfort.”***

While abroad, Jeydelyn studied at the Saint Louis University in Madrid, a Jesuit institution like her home institution, Marquette University, in Wisconsin. She committed to taking nearly all of her courses in Spanish, including those in business, contemporary short stories, and global health. One of her most memorable classes was the one on advanced English that she co-taught weekly to local students through the Community English as a Second Language (ESL) program at her university. This ignited a passion for teaching ESL and would prove transformative when she graduated.

For three years following graduation, Jeydelyn served as a Language and Culture Assistant through the Spanish Ministry of Culture, Education and Vocational Training grant program. Working in primary and secondary schools in Aranjuez, Malaga and Valladolid, she developed further as an educator and bilingual professional. Wanting to expand her language skill set and once again step outside of her comfort zone, she took a position as kindergarten teacher in Shenzhen, China.

Studying and teaching abroad has given Jeydelyn numerous opportunities to enhance her critical thinking, project management and intercultural communication skills. Jeydelyn believes that her international experiences have set her apart as a student and leader, and hopes to pursue a master's degree in international development in 2021.

- ★ Studied social welfare and justice and Spanish at Marquette University
- ★ Learned about global health practices and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- ★ Volunteered as an ESL teacher and as support at a local food bank
- ★ Increased Spanish language skills and developed intercultural communication skills
- ★ Served as a Study Abroad Ambassador through workshops and presentations to share international experience at Marquette University

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# Katherine Cabrera

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Indonesia, 2019*

*“Say yes to every opportunity that comes your way. Even if it doesn’t work out, you took a chance and won’t regret it.”*

Katherine’s study abroad experience included learning a new language, overcoming past fears, and engaging in the local culture, such as dance and music classes.

After returning from Indonesia, she sought opportunities to help master her skills in cultural fluency. Learning how to respect and appreciate other cultures has led to opportunities within her own diverse community of Miami, Florida.

Katherine is currently a senior studying psychology at Florida International University. She also serves as a Peer Evaluator for Behavioral Science Research Institute and volunteers with the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

- ★ Received Gilman Scholarship while attending Miami Dade College
- ★ Studied Bahasa Indonesia, a critical-need language
- ★ Experienced Ramadan in a Muslim-majority country
- ★ Attended different religious services, such as Christian, Buddhist and Islamic ceremonies

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Madeline Aviles

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Thailand, 2019*

*“The moments that molded my experience weren’t those I spent sunbathing by the ocean, but the moments I struggled to communicate at night markets, scurried across busy streets and learned the respectful nature of the local culture.”*

During her internship abroad at the Northern School for the Blind, Madeline was able to work with students in grades two through six. She assisted the English teacher with lessons on proper pronunciation and created engaging in-class activities. When she wasn’t “Khru Maddie,” meaning “Teacher Maddie,” she was studying leadership and organizational behavior at Chiang Mai University.

Madeline’s experience abroad as a Gilman Scholar inspired her to study abroad again. In Costa Rica, she began an English Club at a local orphanage and fulfilled credits for her minor. Shortly after, she worked as a Recruiter Intern at Amazon.com, streamlining programs to reach the company’s mission of hiring and developing the best people. When she graduates in December 2020, Madeline hopes to use her diverse background to pursue a career as a global humanitarian.

- ★ Studied international business and minored in global entrepreneurship and business Spanish at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)
- ★ Gained conversational Thai language skills and an appreciation and understanding of Thai culture
- ★ Served as International Ambassador for the Lee Business School at UNLV

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Nancy Tumbarell

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Japan, 2019*

*“Living abroad taught me how to build communities and tear down stereotypes.”*

As a Gilman Scholar, Nancy studied Japanese language, history and politics at Waseda University’s School of International Liberal Studies. During her time in Tokyo, she was involved in several on-campus clubs that facilitated Japanese-English language exchange. She also engaged with Japanese students and businesses in Spanish and increased awareness of the Latino community.

Nancy, alongside students and professionals from various countries, helped launch Tokyo Period — a nonprofit that advocates for menstruators. Through her work with the organization, she had a firsthand look at English-language journalism and advocacy work being done by Tokyo’s expat community.

Since returning home, she has continued to work remotely on Tokyo Period, seek out other opportunities for internships abroad and promote studying abroad to others.

- ★ Studies global and international studies at Michigan State University as a first-generation student
- ★ Gained experience in the nonprofit sector through a youth-led organization
- ★ Improved Japanese language skills
- ★ Studied Japanese and Russian history while abroad

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>





# Phounsith “Quincy” Yangh

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*Nepal, 2019*

*“My trajectory as a budding academic, social and environmental justice activist, and global citizen grew tremendously.”*

Quincy is fascinated by the ways migration and climate change affect international solidarity. This curiosity led him to Nepal, where he studied Tibetan and Himalayan peoples, international fieldwork and geopolitics. While abroad, he had an excursion to Tsum, a valley hidden in the upper Himalayas, where he documented personal stories on how climate change affects the livelihood of the community. He also spent a month in Delhi, India, as an intern at iProbono, an international nongovernmental organization fighting to protect vulnerable populations and to secure equal access to justice.

Using his abroad experience, Quincy became Lead Study Abroad Content and Engagement Intern at the Gustavus Adolphus College Center for International and Cultural Education. In addition, his fieldwork experience in Tsum inspired him to spearhead, along with two local leaders, a climate change education project in the valley. He intends to obtain a master's in international relations.

- ★ Studies geography at Gustavus Adolphus College
- ★ Served as a Reach the World correspondent
- ★ Met the 14th Dalai Lama during an excursion to Dharamshala, India
- ★ Promoted study abroad as an intern at the Center for International and Cultural Education

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Rachel Wong

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*South Korea, 2017*

***“Being abroad as a Hong Konger American gave me clarity about my own intersectional identity through conversations about American society.”***

While abroad in Seoul, South Korea, Rachel studied at the world's largest women's higher education institution, Ewha Womans University. Surrounded by academically driven and empowered women, she completed coursework in the Korean language and East Asian history, politics and economy. Outside the classroom, Rachel had the opportunity to visit the Korea Demilitarized Zone and the Panmunjom, which gave her firsthand experience regarding the physical divide between the two Koreas.

The Gilman experience significantly altered Rachel's career trajectory, leading her to consider a career in international affairs or the United States Foreign Service. After graduating from Macalester College in 2019, she received an English Teaching Assistantship from the Fulbright Association and lived abroad in Yunlin County, Taiwan, for 11 months. Rachel will begin studying for a master's in international affairs in fall 2021.

- ★ Majored in international studies and minored in geography/Asian studies at Macalester College
- ★ Gained knowledge of the geopolitical dynamics among East Asian countries
- ★ Volunteered as an English conversation tutor for local Korean students
- ★ Promoted study abroad experiences to Macalester College students who were Black, Indigenous, people of color and first-generation

 **Gilman Scholarship**★



# Rebecca Lawson

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador  
*Russia, 2019*

*“I stepped out of my comfort zone and it changed me for the better.”*

While abroad, Rebecca studied Russian language and culture. She lived with a host family and interacted with Russian peers. She also participated in weekly discussions with other Russian students about Russian language, culture and social issues. In her free time, Rebecca explored Moscow, tasted local cuisine and spent time with new friends.

Rebecca's time abroad allowed her to focus not only on learning Russian but also on interests outside of Russian. These experiences solidified her passion for helping others, and she will be pursuing a master's in genetic counseling after graduation.

- ★ Double majors in neuroscience and Russian at the University of Iowa
- ★ Plans to pursue a master's in genetic counseling
- ★ Volunteers at a crisis center
- ★ Visited a local school in Moscow to observe teaching practices
- ★ Increased passion to help others while abroad

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Robert J. Lares

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador  
*United Kingdom, 2018*

*“My disability kept me at home for a long time, but now I realize that in the United States of America, I am the limit of my own potential.”*

Robert studied abroad as a Gilman Scholar in the United Kingdom through the University of Southern Mississippi's British Studies Program. As a history major, he could earn credits toward his degree while experiencing world history firsthand.

Due to mental illness, Robert dropped out of high school at age 17. He returned to school later in life and credits the Gilman Scholarship for allowing him to include an international experience in his education.

Returning to Mississippi, he felt wiser and changed. Robert completed his required Follow-on Service Project by presenting twice on the Gilman Scholarship to young people incarcerated in the Forrest County Juvenile Detention Center in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. He now has embarked on a journey to become a screenwriter, studying under Larry Wilson (known for his work on Beetlejuice and The Addams Family).

- ★ Earned Bachelor of Arts in history at University of Southern Mississippi
- ★ Invited to and visited the United States embassy in London
- ★ Influenced by experience abroad to change future education and career plans
- ★ Increased ability to function in a multicultural environment
- ★ Gained stronger understanding of key global issues

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>





# Sarah Geilman

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador  
*China, 2018*

*“While living abroad, I learned that no matter where we live, at our core, we are all people striving to learn, grow and belong.”*

During Sarah’s year abroad, she improved her Chinese language abilities and understanding of Chinese culture as part of the Language Flagship program. She lived with a native roommate and took graduate-level education courses from Nanjing University. She then completed an internship in Shanghai, where she taught classes and tutored students one-on-one in art, athletics, math, music, reading and more. She cherishes the personal relationships she developed. Her favorite moments were when students confided in her and she realized she had not only gained their trust but made a difference in their lives. This gave her the confidence to pursue immersion teaching in Chinese.

Sarah’s experience abroad helped her complete her degree in Mandarin Chinese and prepared her to teach Chinese Dual-Language Immersion at a junior high in 2019. Sarah has paused her professional teaching career and now spends her time as a stay-at-home mom teaching her baby boy.

- ★ Majored in Chinese and minored in family life at Brigham Young University
- ★ Directly enrolled in graduate-level classes at Nanjing University with Chinese students
- ★ Completed an internship in Shanghai at the JiuQian Volunteer Center, tutoring at-risk students in their native tongue
- ★ Taught Chinese Dual-Language Immersion at the junior high level

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Van Reynolds

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador

*France, 2019*

***“Qui n’avance pas, recule.”***

***“If you’re not moving forward, you’re moving backwards.”***

While in France, Van completed a yearlong study abroad program at the ESSEC Business School, where they took business and law courses, some of which were taught entirely in French. In addition to doing coursework, they helped establish the queer club UNITE on campus; joined the rowing club, Aviron; and worked as a part-time private English tutor. This study abroad experience solidified their desire to one day work for a francophone multinational organization.

Since returning to the United States, Van secured a position with a local vacation-home-rental firm and is studying for the GMAT and LSAT entrance exams, to pursue a dual M.B.A.-J.D. degree.

- ★ Received a BA in international business with an emphasis in French and Western Europe (summa cum laude distinction) from San Diego State University
- ★ Interned at the Tariq Khamisa Foundation
- ★ Mortar Board National Honor Society member
- ★ Social Media Liaison for the French Club

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Veronica Tuazon

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador  
*Madagascar, 2018*

*"I gained an invaluable global perspective and an experience I will never forget."*

In Madagascar, Veronica lived and studied at Centre ValBio, an internationally renowned research center on the edge of the rainforest. Her program included a full semester of coursework, completed through hands-on experience in wildlife tracking and jungle trekking. Veronica worked with scientists and nonprofit leaders on ecology and biodiversity research. During the final three weeks of the program, Veronica conducted independent research on voter turnout for the Madagascar presidential election, and she shared her findings through a presentation at a local university. The project helped bolster her research skills and her ability to conduct surveys in the local language.

After returning from her Gilman experience in Madagascar, Veronica was awarded a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship to Malaysia for 2019-2020.

- ★ Earned Bachelor of Science in geology at Stony Brook University
- ★ Conducted independent research on the presidential election in Madagascar
- ★ Served as Virtual Intern for the United States Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Alumni Office
- ★ Awarded 2019 Fulbright English Teaching Assistant to Malaysia

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>



# Vlad Blazhievskiy

Gilman International Scholarship Alumni  
Ambassador  
*Germany, 2019*

***“I was able to customize my experience with my interests and goals; this freedom allowed me to make a positive impression abroad and give back to my home community.”***

While studying at Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Vlad completed a semester of business and German courses. A highlight of his experience was his participation in a consulting case study at one of the Big 4 accounting firms, with students from his Behavioral Finance course. The interactions with students from Germany and other countries helped him build relationships across cultures and establish close bonds.

Upon returning to the United States, Vlad earned his bachelor's degree at Nebraska Wesleyan University. He expanded his passion for community engagement and continues to give back to communities in Nebraska. Moreover, the courses Vlad took abroad gave him valuable insights into tackling business problems. Currently, he interns at a financial services firm and plans to attend graduate school to obtain a master's degree in management.

- ★ Studied international business and German at the Nebraska Wesleyan University
- ★ Honed German language skills through courses
- ★ Promoted study abroad opportunities for student-athletes at Nebraska Wesleyan University and high school students at alma mater who study German
- ★ Kept a blog of stories, pictures and cultural adjustments while studying abroad

 **Gilman** Scholarship<sup>★</sup>

