

# Lydia Lara

Gilman International Scholarship  
Alumni Ambassador  
Ecuador, 2017



*“The Gilman Scholarship is a galvanizer for students like me, who may never experience studying abroad without financial support. This scholarship changes lives and has positioned me to be a true global citizen in the U.S. and abroad.”*

During their summer abroad in the Andes Mountains, Lydia immersed themselves in the Spanish language and culture of Ecuador and Peru. While abroad, Lydia enhanced her Spanish language skills while witnessing Indigenous cultural practices and urban revolution. These life-changing experiences have greatly influenced her choice to become a politician in the United States one day.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in both Political Science and Spanish in 2019, Lydia served two AmeriCorps terms in the field of college access. They hope to give back and aid minority and first-generation students on their path to college. Lydia hopes to continue their work within the Chicago community with the hope of one day returning to school and eventually using her firsthand knowledge to create change as a public servant.

- Received the Gilman Scholarship while attending Augustana College
- Interned at the CEDEI Center for Interamerican Studies with EducationUSA
- Led the Conservation Club and dedicated time to organizing community-based events for CEDEI
- Learned the sociopolitical history of Ecuador and its relationship with Indigenous folk while fully embracing their bilingual and Latinx roots
- Plans to advocate for Indigenous rights and resources in the U.S. and push for equity for all people in her future career

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