

Troy Blackwell

Gained a passion for civic engagement through volunteer work abroad

United Kingdom, 2012



“My experience in the Gilman Program ignited the desire for me to pursue my current line of work in advocacy and civic engagement.”

As a Gilman Scholar in Spain, Troy researched immigration patterns in the Latino and Arab communities and the participation of those immigrant communities in democratic processes such as voting. Upon returning to the United States, he volunteered with CUNY Citizenship Now, which provides free immigration law services to help individuals and families on their path to U.S. citizenship. His experience in Spain, coupled with his volunteer work, ultimately landed him an internship in the White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs, where he liaised with America’s top 100 cities.

Troy is the Founder of “Ready for Change,” an organization dedicated to making democracy more representative in New York State by increasing voter participation among youth ages 18-35. Through targeted outreach, text banking, and door-knocking efforts, Ready for Change has contacted over 26,000 voters in New York City alone.

- Earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the City College of New York
- Holds a Certificate in Ecovillage Design Education from the UNESCO Global Action Programme
- Pursuing a Master of Science in Strategic Communications at Columbia University
- Founder of “Ready for Change,” an organization dedicated to making democracy more representative in New York State

