

Emerson Johnston

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Germany (virtual), 2021



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Emerson studied abroad virtually in Germany as a Gilman Scholar in summer 2021. Her Gilman Program focused on human rights communication and rhetoric in World War II-era Germany. She was surprised to find that her sexual orientation became a significant part of her studies as she learned about the treatment of sexual minorities in Nazi Germany. Learning about the role anti-gay rhetoric played in building the Third Reich was very interesting. Additionally, it was interesting for Emerson to learn about the difference in how lesbians and gay men were treated given how significant the difference in perceived sexual deviance was. Emerson’s own identity added a personalized perspective during these classroom conversations.

Emerson believes that studying abroad is a beneficial experience for any student and a must do for students of international affairs or political science. The Gilman Program showed her how important working with people in other countries was to her career and how to network with those communities. She hosts meetings with people around the world almost every week, and that is something she would have found impossibly daunting prior to her Gilman experience. The Gilman Program and the courses it helped fund helped solidify Emerson’s path for graduate school. Before studying abroad, she was unsure how much of an international element she wanted to add to her political science background, and now she is applying to master’s programs in international affairs.

- Pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Philosophy, Politics, and Economics and a Bachelor of Arts in History, Culture, and Law at Northeastern University
- Sergeant and Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps Cadet with the U.S. Army
- Global Partnerships Manager at HUMAN Security

