

Metzin Rodriguez

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
South Korea, 2021



“My Gilman Program experience influenced what I do now because, thanks to their array of opportunities and information, I learned about the possibility of studying abroad. Thanks to Gilman Program seminars on different topics, I met other scholars and alumni whose careers and stories inspired my own innovative and creative ideas.”

Metzin studied abroad as a Gilman scholar during the summer of 2021 through the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) Study Abroad program at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea. Her time in South Korea taught her to not be afraid to ask questions because it helped her connect with others, learn new things, and change her experiences abroad and back at home. The answers to her questions—whether from her university advisors, fellow students, or locals—always made her feel more confident, and she would then help other students. She became friends with Korean students, learned more about their experiences and favorite foods, and was introduced to their culture. She also learned to be spontaneous and get out of her comfort zone as she was trying to speak a new language and remain resilient while many changes occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Looking back, Metzín is happy to have met remarkable and kind people with whom she made unforgettable friendships.

Metzin credits her Gilman Program experience with her personal and professional growth. Some of the skills she acquired while abroad include the ability to collaborate and network with peers that have similar goals but are from diverse backgrounds; learn about a new culture through lectures, books, and hands-on experiences; and understand sustainability through an international lens. Metzín also completed a social media internship with CIEE during her time abroad, blogging and writing stories about the program and her experiences for future CIEE applicants. She enjoyed sharing her perspectives and stories as it taught her to narrate and sequence a story while also helping others learn more about different cultures and languages.

Metzin works as a Climate and Environmental Justice Policy coordinator at Unite Oregon, where she focuses on public policy and service around environmental justice. Previously she worked as a staff assistant and a legislative intern for U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley for nearly two years. Metzín is excited to be a Gilman Alumni Ambassador and to continue leveraging the importance and meaning of the intersectionality of resilience and bilingualism abroad. She is especially interested in advocating for international educational opportunities for underrepresented student communities.

- Hometown: Coos Bay, Oregon
- Earned a Bachelor of Science in bioresource research and a minor in Spanish from Oregon State University (2021)
- Climate and Environmental Justice Policy coordinator at Unite Oregon
- Participated in the Gilman Program’s Climate Leaders Overseas Seminar in Sheffield, United Kingdom

