

Abbi Olliff

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Ghana, 2023



“The Gilman Program has had a bigger impact on my life than I ever imagined possible. It has given me many amazing opportunities to travel and experience a new culture. I have grown as a person and a professional through my international experiences.”

- Bachelor of Social Work
- Ambassador for the School of Social Work
- Kilgo Howard Endowed Graduate Scholarship

Abbi’s experience as a Gilman scholar in Ashaiman, Ghana, exposed her to a culture different from any she had encountered in the United States, and she is now more comfortable interacting with others from varying backgrounds. While abroad, she enjoyed experiencing new places, ways of living, and cuisine that pushed her beyond her comfort zone. Abbi remains appreciative of the Gilman Program and says she would not have been able to achieve her goal of interning abroad without it. This experience sparked a love of traveling and has inspired her to continue traveling the world to experience different cultures and continue to grow.

Her Gilman Program experience was instrumental in influencing her perspective on topics in the classroom and at a global level, which led to a deeper understanding of both the global and personal effects of government policy. She is currently obtaining her Master of Social Work at the University of Alabama, and after her graduation she hopes to pursue a career in foreign affairs or policy.

She is looking forward to serving as a Gilman Alumni Ambassador and encouraging students to realize that they too can study abroad despite their financial background. She is excited to help as many students as possible learn more about the opportunities available to them.

