

Ayo Ellis III

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Hong Kong, 2013



“The Gilman Program provided me with a global perspective that I hadn’t previously experienced, which allowed me to truly focus on the issues that mattered most to me when deciding on my undergraduate career path.”

- Student Citizenship and Community Engagement Award from the American Economic Association
- Office of Multicultural Affairs Outstanding Scholar Award
- Outstanding Academic Achievement — College of Business, University of San Francisco
- Marie Mora Citizenship Award

Ayo’s time abroad was a transformative experience that allowed him to fully immerse himself in a different culture, leading to significant personal and academic growth. This experience encouraged him to explore new perspectives in economics and broadened his understanding of global issues. Living independently abroad pushed Ayo out of his comfort zone, making him more self-reliant and adaptable.

Ayo credits his Gilman Program experience for opening his eyes to new career pathways. Hong Kong not only sparked his curiosity through its dynamic cultural and academic environment, but also enhanced his global awareness and deepened his appreciation for economic and social issues. He became more passionate about international development, economic policy, and public administration, driving him to delve deeper into these areas upon his return to the United States.

After earning his master’s degree in international and development economics from the University of San Francisco, Ayo went on to work for the Federal Reserve as a community development analyst. In this role, he provided critical insights into the challenges faced by low-to moderate-income communities, focusing on the economic and social factors that influence community development.

Ayo is excited to be a Gilman Alumni Ambassador, helping to expand the Gilman Program’s visibility and participation on university campuses. He is dedicated to giving back to communities that may not have had the opportunity to participate in programs like Gilman, aiming to help students who aspire to gain global knowledge and experience.

