

Jonathan Blackmon

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Uruguay, 2017



- Received a Boren Scholarship and Fellowship to Mozambique and Brazil
- Federal contractor with the U.S. Forest Service

“The Gilman Program opened doors I never knew existed. I went with the understanding that I wanted to challenge myself and exert influence over my life and left with a deep love for my host country, community, and the language they spoke.”

Professor Jonathan Blackmon is from Miami, Florida. He teaches political science courses at Florida A&M University and received a Gilman award to study in the country of Uruguay in 2017, in a semester-long intensive Spanish language program augmented by an internship. While in Uruguay, he worked at the nonprofit La Casa Afro-Uruguayo and became professionally fluent in Spanish. He made some of his closest friends in Uruguay and continues to maintain contact with them. He marks his Gilman experience in Uruguay as transformative and the cornerstone to his journey as both a professor of political science and an international development practitioner.

Post-Gilman, Jonathan put his language skills to work as a community outreach fellow for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery in rural central Washington state. One of his primary duties in this role was serving as a liaison between the federal government and the Latino communities in the Chelan Valley, connecting them with their public lands and natural resources. This role led to a position as a federal contractor with the U.S. Forest Service.

Jonathan now serves as Gilman Alumni Ambassador and faculty member at the institution where he received his Gilman. He looks back positively on his experience, but his goal now is to make sure his students are aware of and receive similar experiences and opportunities. His goal is and will always be service to his community.

