

Josephine Mbaye

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Chile, 2023



“The Gilman Program taught me that I am worthy and deserving of once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Ever since I received my Gilman Scholarship, I always apply for any opportunities I am interested in and I take the time to truly experience and take in the opportunities I do receive.”

- Science Engagement Fellow at the University of Iowa
- Iowa State Education Association Aspiring Educators Chair-Elect
- Gilman Foreign Policy in Focus: Global Food Security, New Zealand Seminar participant

Josie participated in the Cultural Identity, Social Justice, and Community Development Program in Valparaíso, Chile, through the School for International Training (SIT). While abroad, she was able to significantly improve her Spanish skills by taking coursework and completing an internship fully in Spanish. She moved beyond her comfort zone by attending many different local events with her host family and fully immersing herself in Chilean culture. She is now motivated to continue learning other languages and connecting with people from other cultures. She credits her Gilman Program experience with sparking her interest in global education and fostering her confidence to live and work outside of the United States. She is considering pursuing a graduate program in resilience in education and is exploring career options in international education.

Josie is a fourth-year student at the University of Iowa (UI), where she is pursuing a B.A. in environmental science and an MAT in secondary education. She works as a pedagogical partner in the UI’s Center for Teaching, where she collaborates with professors to increase equity and accessibility in large-enrollment courses. She also volunteers as an English tutor for refugee and immigrant adults through two local organizations in her community. She is excited to serve as a Gilman Alumni Ambassador and looks forward to sharing the opportunity with student populations that are underrepresented in study abroad programs. She also looks forward to mentoring future Gilman applicants and improving Iowans’ access to study abroad.

