

Rachel Isaac

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Dominican Republic, 2024



“There is a lot more to anything than the thing itself. There is a lot more to people than their names and majors. There is a lot more to a country than its place on the map. There is a lot more to medicine than the treatments available.”

As a Gilman scholar, Rachel participated in a university-organized public health and health care-focused program. This experience opened her eyes to the vastness of the world and ignited her passion for exploring diverse cultures. The Gilman Program provided her first opportunity to travel abroad, where she learned about the importance of holistic medicine.

Rachel is now deeply interested in understanding cultural attitudes toward medicine across various societies. She is eager to engage with people from different communities to gain their perspectives on healthcare practices. Rachel credits the Gilman Program with shaping her current and future aspirations. She is exploring M.D./Ph.D. programs, intending to become a clinical researcher focused on developing treatments to prevent severe symptoms of genetic syndromes. Her ambition is to create treatments that apply to a wide range of communities.

Currently, Rachel is a junior at Purdue University, majoring in ecology, evolution, and environmental biology, with a second major in genetics. In addition to her academic pursuits, she serves as an enlisted soldier in the Indiana Army National Guard, working as a petroleum laboratory specialist in an aviation support battalion. She also works as a certified nursing assistant at a local assisted living facility, where she assists older adults with their daily activities.

As a Gilman Alumni Ambassador, Rachel is enthusiastic about encouraging other students to see themselves as potential Gilman scholars. She aims to serve as an example for students who may doubt their ability to fit studying abroad into their schedules due to work or academic commitments. She is committed to providing the resources and support necessary for students to access study abroad opportunities.

- Enlisted in the Indiana Army National Guard
- Army Achievement Medal for Distinguished Honor Graduate
- Most Outstanding Sophomore Student
- Overbeck Biology Scholarship

