

Rui Au

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Ghana, 2009



“I am thankful for the Gilman Program, which continues to affect me to this day. I wouldn’t be working at the Department of State today if I did not study abroad. The Gilman Program gave me the experience and knowledge that are crucial to my work.”

Rui’s time in Ghana was an eye-opening experience that enabled him to fully immerse in a different culture with its traditions, customs, and ways of living and led to significant personal growth. Living abroad independently pushed Rui out of his comfort zone and made him more self-reliant. It helped him gain confidence and learn to adapt to various challenges with ease.

- Sailor of the Year
- Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal
- Co-Chair: The George Washington University Asian and Pacific Islander Alumni Network

Rui credits his Gilman Program experience for opening his eyes to new career pathways. His experience in Ghana led him to an epiphany about the fragility of democracy and freedom, and this inspired him to enlist in the U.S. Navy, where he served in Europe. After being honorably discharged, he continued his commitment to defend freedom and democracy through his involvement in U.S. foreign policy. He now works as a legislative assistant at the Department of State.

Without the Gilman Program, Rui says, he would not have such an interesting career path. He wants to help other students receive the opportunities offered by the Gilman Program and is excited to be a Gilman Alumni Ambassador. He is especially passionate about promoting study abroad to students.

