

Gilman Alumni Representative

Abike Kamson

Egypt, Fall 2009
George Washington University



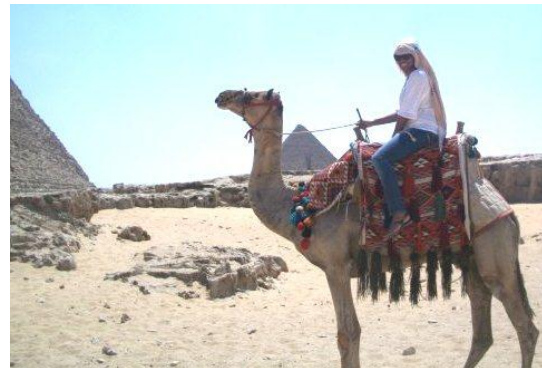
My study abroad experience in Cairo impacted me tremendously. I discovered that I truly do have a love and a passion for the Middle East and the Arabic language. I not only was able to take Arabic language courses and courses pertaining to the Middle East at the American University in Cairo, but I was also able to explore Cairo and other Egyptian cities. This allowed me to interact with the Egyptian people and expand my learning outside of the classroom as I learned first-hand about the opinions of the people as well as the Egyptian Arabic dialect. I made amazing relationships this way that will no doubt be lifelong friendships.



Abike with friends at the Fayoum Oasis

For my Follow-on Project, I wrote a featured article in the multicultural newspaper at my university called *The Ace*. Through this article I wanted to encourage more minority students to study abroad and to do so in less common or non-traditional countries, because I was shocked by how few minorities were studying in Cairo. I also wanted to share what I had learned about relationships and the Egyptian social culture that I felt would be relevant

to the students at my school. I wanted my project to reach freshman and sophomore college students, those both considering and not considering studying abroad. I received a lot of positive feedback from my article and I will now be serving as the Senior Editor of Culture for the newspaper. I hope to feature several different cultures from the George Washington University class in each issue as well as write several pieces on political, cultural, and religious news going on internationally.



Camel riding at the Giza pyramids

My study abroad experience has certainly influenced my decision to pursue academic studies and a career in the Middle East. I am currently in the process of applying for the U.S. Student Fulbright grant and I hope to receive my masters in Arabic studies at the American University in Cairo and conduct research pertaining to orphans. I truly wish I could work and live in the Middle East and I hope both my academic and professional endeavors will lead me back there, particularly to Egypt. I am forever grateful to the U.S. Department of State and the Institute of International Education for providing me with the Gilman Scholarship. It allowed me to have a most unforgettable experience and helped to cement my hopes for the future.



In November 2010, Abike was one of five Gilman Scholars who had the honor of kicking-off International Education Week in Washington D.C. at events hosted by the U.S. State Department, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Institute of International Education.

Abike and other international scholarship recipients with Assistant Secretary Ann Stock, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs