



## Gilman Alumni Representative

### Cherise Beardsley

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Marquette University



My study abroad experience in Madrid, Spain was everything I thought it would be and more. I lived in a bustling Madrid neighborhood with an amazingly caring Señora and her daughters. I attended Universidad Complutense de Madrid where I took history, grammar, philosophy and theology classes. I was also an English tutor for two young girls twice a week and built a great relationship with their family. My goal to studying abroad was to take in everything I could about the Spanish culture. I spent many days wandering around the city going to parks and museums and trying on shoes just so I could interact with people. I was also lucky enough to get an “intercambio” (university student to *exchange* Spanish and English language practice) who took me under his wing and I learned so much from his family and friends.

Receiving the Gilman Scholarship is something that I will cherish for my entire life. With limited funds for college, I never thought studying abroad could ever be a reality. The Gilman Scholarship allowed me not only the opportunity to study abroad, but travel and grow professionally. I knew receiving the Scholarship was such a blessing but I am amazed at how often I use my experiences abroad in my personal and professional life.

For my Follow-on Project I held informational meetings at my university regarding the Gilman Scholarship. I presented on everything including requirements, applying, my experience with the Scholarship and more. I felt it was so important to spread the word about the scholarship opportunity and it was a great way to give back.

Now that I have graduated, I am a supervisor and coordinator at a local community center and at a local high school. My role at the center and high school allows me to interact with high school and college students on a daily basis. I have taken this opportunity to share my experiences with the Gilman Scholarship and am currently helping one student apply so they can also receive the many benefits from studying abroad.



*While studying at a university in Madrid, Spain, Cherise met new friends, explored Spain and visited other European countries.*

