



Gilman Alumni Representative

Katrina Walker

South Africa, Spring 2008

Santa Monica College



Thanks to the Gilman International Scholarship Program, I can honestly say that there is nothing else more liberating to me than my time spent abroad. While studying abroad I explored the role of the media in South Africa and its affect on the people who live there. I made positive contributions through two organizations called Next Aid and Hope Worldwide by volunteering to provide and distribute educational resources to less advantaged children. I was also educated regarding the prevalence of AIDS, HIV and the disturbing epidemic of sexual assault and rape. Because I can relate to the torment of that experience, I was filled with empathy and more determined to implement a positive change. So I committed myself abroad to the service of those less fortunate, and learning the true meaning of global citizenship.

For my Gilman Follow-on Project my fellow study abroad classmates and I started a club at Santa Monica College (SMC) called Hope International (Ubuntu Club). While serving as President of the Hope International (Ubuntu Club) at SMC, I committed myself to increasing awareness regarding the destitution in South Africa. By doing so, the organization raised close to a thousand dollars, which was donated through Next Aid to an Aids orphans' village in Dennitlon, South Africa. This not only encouraged students to study abroad and become global citizens; but it also promoted the services of the Gilman International Scholarship Program. With the help of SMC students and staff that had studied abroad as well, this organization became a success.

Looking back, I realize that since studying abroad, I have accomplished so much. I had the opportunity to complete my Associates Degree at Santa Monica College in the Spring of 2008. I am now attending Spelman College and I am filled with inspiration to do something great for others. At Spelman my major is Human Services/Premed. Deciding on my major was the most exciting moment of my life. My desire is to contribute to the cure of many terminal illnesses that are affecting populations of people all over the world. It is my desire to work in the areas of medicine that are saving lives and moving people forward in life. I made this decision while abroad, working within the villages and townships that were highly affected by the spread of HIV and AIDS in South Africa. I now volunteer at Grady Hospital and I will be graduating from Spelman College in May of 2010. Looking forward to my future in the field of medicine, I plan to have more experiences abroad, so that I may continue to study in other places of the world, fighting to implement change and development as a global citizen.



Katrina volunteering in South Africa.

Katrina's experience in South Africa has given her direction and passion for providing "good hope" to those in need, especially when she enters the medical field.



Katrina visited the South African Broadcasting Corporation's News Center as her class explored the role of media on the people and culture.