



Gilman Alumni Representative

Marvin Alfaro

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University of Miami



Studying abroad during college has been one of my greatest desires since I first began thinking about life after high school. As a Latino growing up in a predominantly El Salvadorian town, the dominant cultural influences of my everyday environment paralleled those within my home. Needless to say, exposure to a new culture and new way of life made my semester abroad at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom a transformative experience. Living in a different country and engulfed in an educational system that I was not accustomed to, enhanced my self-awareness and changed my outlook on what I had seen as the normality of life. Academically and professionally, taking classes in the Atmospheric Science field helped me to fully grasp and understand the importance of a scientist's work on a global scale.

As a Meteorology and Mathematics major, it was a challenge to make space in my academic schedule and to have my major courses approved to study abroad but it was well worth it! The Meteorology program at the University of East Anglia is one of the best programs of its kind in the United Kingdom. The school of Environmental Sciences is the largest, most established and comprehensive school of its kind in Europe. Recognized for its science programs, the University of East Anglia has robust research facilities, where I was able to work in the Climate Research Unit and later able to present my work at research conferences back home.

For my Follow-on Project, I conducted a number of informative presentations about the Gilman Scholarship and my study abroad experience. At my home institution, I targeted and reached nearly 5,000 students. In my presentations I found it imperative to share the importance of science on a global scale. Nearly all science related fields depend on cooperation between scientists working around the world and the open exchange of information.

My semester abroad expanded my post-graduation goals. I now aspire for more, strive farther, and to that end hope to volunteer and attend graduate school abroad.

Marvin at the March for Climate Change in London during the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference



Marvin showing his support for England with his custom jersey at the England v. Belarus soccer game