



Gilman Alumni Representative

Zudina Hidrobo

Morocco, Fall 2008

Miami Dade College



I am pursuing a Bachelor's in International Relations at Miami Dade College because understanding systematic structures and interactions of human species as a whole is of great interest to me. One of the most important aspects of society today is cultural diversity, hence my reason to study abroad. I wanted to deepen my experience and knowledge in the Middle Eastern culture. Growing up, I was always surrounded by this amazing culture. In my country of birth, Venezuela, there are several Lebanese and other Middle Eastern people that have made beautiful contributions to my hometown's culture.

Living in Morocco for four months was more than life changing. Not only did I learn two new languages, French and Arabic, but my experience made me become a messenger of what I saw and what I experienced in a land so far and distinct from my life in Miami. While abroad, I immersed myself completely into the Moroccan culture. I had the wonderful opportunity to come across extraordinary people and places that I had only dreamed of ever seeing. The Gilman International Scholarship made my journey a reality. One of my fondest memories comes from my community service, when I visited a grammar school in a small town. My interaction with the children opened a whole new perspective for me; I became more aware of people as a whole and not so focused on solely what I see around me every day. The children were so open and eager to learn about me without any judgment whatsoever, and it was rewarding to see how important it is to have a humble approach to one another regardless of who we may be.

Upon my return to the U.S. and to complete my Gilman Follow-on Project, I conducted a series of presentations to share my experience with my community and bring that awareness back to others. I wanted to create a positive impact among the people that surround me. My future academic goals have been highly influenced by having received a Gilman Scholarship. Not only do I want to focus more on spreading the message about the benefits of receiving a scholarship, but overall will continue to encourage students to explore other cultures, to search for a deeper understanding and break free of assumptions by experiencing diversity on their own. I am a living example of the remarkable contribution that the Gilman International Scholarship Program is providing to scholars. I will never cease to express my gratitude for having received the Gilman Scholarship and how essential a component it has been in my academic success.



During her semester abroad as a Gilman Scholarship recipient, Zudina explored Morocco, as well as learned two languages and met new people and friends.

