

## Gilman International Scholarship Program



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During my study abroad, I took language classes taught in the context of economic and social geography, law and politics, and business. These classes allowed me to better understand the history of the country in which I was studying and the impact France has in the international political arena. Several of my classes focused on France's role in not only the European Union and the United Nations, but also its role in the global economy and as an exporter of intellectual culture.

While studying in France, I taught English in a middle school located just outside of Caen. Additionally, I joined the International Junior Chamber of Commerce in Caen. Through this organization, I was able to secure an internship with a member of French Parliament and of the United Nation's Committee to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) after my program had ended. During my internship, I put together several reports on U.N. member states, prepared for interviews with BBC News, translated several documents from French to English, including the Law Banning the Burqa (2010), and was able to attend a CEDAW session at the United Nations in New York. My study abroad helped me to not only secure this internship but also feel qualified to do so. Because of this, I was able to gain a valuable advantage which is very beneficial in pursuing a professional career or in applying to graduate and law schools both in the U.S. and abroad. Furthermore, this experience provided me with the language skills to become a French teaching assistant at Texas A&M.

Upon my return, I began the French teaching assistant position and became a tutor in the Department of Classical and European Languages at Texas A&M. For my Gilman Follow-on Service Project, I was able to present my experiences in France and promote the Gilman Scholarship to the department. In addition, I spoke on a study abroad panel affiliated with the Study Abroad Programs Office. As a panelist, I spoke about my program and the financial means I utilized to help fund it. I also passed out flyers containing information on the Gilman Scholarship and added information to the student's manual for my program, which included the promotion of scholarships along with useful information on adjusting to life in France. I confidently feel that my Follow-on Service Project inspired my peers to seek an international experience, which is important and necessary in the globalized world of today.

My study abroad was a mind-opening experience that allowed me to effectively communicate with other cultures, and therefore see things from a different, more open perspective. As I hope to pursue a career in international affairs, this experience has given me the valuable skills to accomplish my goals, both academically and professionally.

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