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My experience studying abroad in Germany was one of the most influential and exciting periods of my life. I studied abroad for an academic year at the Universität Bonn in Germany. This program was unique because it allowed me to enhance my German language skills through language classes that were taught “GSL” style (German as a second language). In addition to this, I was also able to take classes with the university's English department which allowed me to earn credits towards my English Literature major. This proved to be an interesting experience as all of my

assigned readings were in English, whereas the class discussions and lectures were in German. This helped me learn how to seamlessly navigate between two languages.

I went abroad with the intention to continue studying German and eventually become a German professor. Studying abroad in Germany was so imperative to accomplishing my future goals. Feeling at ease within a new culture while understanding the German conversations I had with the people I encountered, allowed me to make strong connections and friendships.

I also had the opportunity to travel independently to Trier, Aachen, and Berlin. Without a doubt I would not have been able to study abroad if I did not receive a Gilman Scholarship. I was able to enjoy the many opportunities that Germany had to offer because I was receiving financial support.

Overall my study abroad experience was better than I could have ever imagined. In the end, my study abroad experience really lit a fire in me to encourage others to study abroad which inspired several friends and family members to study abroad after they saw how successful my experience was.

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My career goals have changed since my experience abroad and I am currently in a Master of Arts program studying College Student Development with a focus on international education. I recently interned for the study abroad office at St. Edward's University coordinating a buddy program between visiting students from Japan and American students at St. Edward's, and I look forward to a career working in study abroad!

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

When starting my application for the Gilman Scholarship my initial career goal was to pursue a Doctorate degree in German Language to eventually teach German. I believe instilling an interest in foreign languages and cultures should be introduced at an early age in order to ensure that these experiences are truly

meaningful. With that in mind, my Follow-on Service Project involved visiting German classes for children 5-10 years old at a local German Heritage Center in Austin. I assisted the students with their language classes for several weeks and also did a presentation for them in which I showcased pictures of my time in Germany

and talked about my overall experience studying abroad. The students were very excited and even talked about going to another country someday. I truly believe that the excitement of that day will stay with them as they get older.