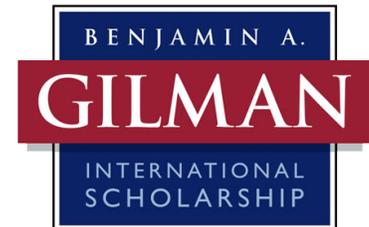


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After studying abroad in Salzburg, Austria for eight months, Desmond Tutu's assertion that "one learns how to be through the aid of other humans," was realized in my own life.

My study abroad program provided me opportunities in which I was able to build relationships with others and better understand their cultures and their views of life. I studied abroad in Salzburg, Austria for eight months. In addition I served as a kitchen assistant as part of federal work study, provided by my study abroad program. My supervisor did not speak any English, but demonstrated how a

close bond can form between foreigners and Americans, despite language barriers.

My experiences in Austria not only strengthened my career goals, but also changed my academic goals as a Communications major and German Languages and Literature minor. As most of my interactions occurred with Austrian or German nationals, I had the most exposure to German culture and developed an even greater interest in it. Consequently, it has led me to declare German as a second major rather than just a minor. Additionally, my experiences have sparked a desire in me to pursue the Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship. These academic changes will offer me more opportunities to identify with this culture I have fallen in love with while also affording me more experiences to better identify with my future audience as a recruiter for a cultural exchange company.

My own time abroad reaffirmed my belief that studying abroad is one of the best ways to immerse oneself in a differing culture rather

than just learn about it in the classroom. In essence, while I have always been intrigued by differing cultures, my experiences studying abroad in Salzburg strengthened my longing to utilize this interest in both my academic and career goals.

International education is of utter importance in understanding not only ourselves but others. I know that my own time abroad bestowed me such understanding. Every step towards understanding is a step closer to unity.

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FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

As a pen pal to fourth and fifth grade students at Manzanita Elementary School, I was able to share my own cultural endeavors as part of my Follow-on Service Project. I did not realize how much of a positive impact these

letters had and how interested the students were in this new culture, until I ventured to the school to give my presentation.

Prior to my presentation, I wrote to them about the food I ate, the

holiday traditions I participated in, and the places I explored. The students had endless questions about Austria and how they too could study abroad.