



THE BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Evaluation Report

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Evaluation of the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program

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To download a full copy of this report and its executive summary visit
<http://eca.state.gov/impact/evaluation-eca>

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Abbreviations and Acronyms



ECA – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

ESL – English as a Second Language

HBCU – Historically Black Colleges and Universities

HSI – Hispanic Serving Institutions

IHI – Institutions of Higher Education

MBA – Masters of Business Administration

SES – Socioeconomic Status

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

TEFL – Teaching English as a Foreign Language

TESOL – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

UNC – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Executive Summary



Evaluation and Program Overview

Since 2001, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has administered the Congressionally-mandated Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program (Gilman Scholarship, Scholarship) to offer grants for U.S. citizen, undergraduate students of limited financial means to participate in study and internship programs abroad.

Gilman Scholarships are intended to help prepare these students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world. In 2013, ECA commissioned an evaluation by Research Solutions International, LLC to investigate whether the program's goals were being met. The evaluation studied the medium- and longer-term outcomes for recipients of the Gilman Scholarship between the years 2003 and 2010, and also considered the impacts of the scholarship on U.S. higher education institutions, and on the family and communities of scholarship recipients. According to the data collected, representation of minorities among Gilman Scholarship recipients well exceeds that of the U.S. study abroad population as a whole. Participation in the Gilman Program from African-American, Latino and Asian communities is two to three times greater than their participation in U.S. study abroad overall. Just under half of Gilman Scholars (Scholars) in the cohort examined were part of the first generation in their families to enroll in higher education.

The Evaluation data shows that the Gilman Scholarship is diversifying the kinds of students who study and intern abroad and the countries and regions where they go by offering awards to U.S. undergraduates who might otherwise not participate due to financial constraints. From changed perspectives on the world and new interests in working on global issues to focusing academic pursuits on international topics and deepening foreign language skills, the Gilman Scholarship has enabled students of limited financial means to develop the knowledge and competencies required to compete in a global economy. The evaluation also uncovered many ways in which the Gilman Scholarship experience influences Scholars' professional paths.

KEY FINDINGS

SHIFTS AND EXPANSION IN PERSPECTIVES

- Two-thirds of Gilman Scholar survey respondents (66 percent) found opportunities to serve as a bridge between Americans and people from different countries and cultures when they returned to the United States.
- While more than half of the survey respondents (52 percent) said they had had concerns about living in a foreign culture prior to participation in the program, after the Gilman Scholarship, seventy-nine percent of survey respondents continued to follow media coverage on the country or geopolitical region where they studied and nearly three quarters (74 percent) kept up an active interest in the culture of the country where they studied.

SHIFTS AND EXPANSION IN ACADEMIC CHOICES

- Of the 1,441 survey respondents who returned to undergraduate studies after their Gilman Scholarship, 87 percent (1,253) reported taking a greater interest in international or cross-cultural topics, and more than one-third indicated that they had chosen an academic major or minor field of concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus.
- Seventy-nine percent of survey respondents studied a foreign language while on their academic study program overseas. Among Scholars who had studied a language while abroad, more than three-fourths (82 percent) sought opportunities to speak the language they had studied when they returned home.
- Of the 819 survey respondents who were attending or already completed graduate or professional school at the time of the evaluation, almost half (48 percent) had chosen a concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus, and more than one-third (36 percent) had studied abroad again or pursued international field research.
- Eighty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that the Gilman Scholarship had enabled them to undertake academic activities overseas that they could not have taken at their home institutions.

SHIFTS AND EXPANSION IN PROFESSIONAL CHOICES

- Eighty-three percent of survey respondents found jobs where they could interact with people from different backgrounds or nationalities, and more than half (54 percent) reported working in a field that includes an international or cross-cultural component.
- Almost three-quarters (73 percent) of survey respondents reported that the Gilman Scholarship experience caused them to broaden the geographic range of locations where they were willing to work in the future.

EFFECTS ON U.S. HIGHER EDUCATION

- One-third of university representatives interviewed, across all types of institutions, credited the Gilman Scholarship directly for changes in their school's study abroad program offerings and for contributing to their internationalization efforts. Many stated

that the Gilman Scholarship had allowed them to expand their study abroad programs to more diverse, non-traditional locations, including Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

- Several study abroad representatives, primarily at minority-serving institutions, reported using the Gilman Scholarship parameters as a model for revising their study abroad programs. Other effects included adaptation of campus study abroad programs to meet Gilman Scholarship parameters, attracting new sources of funding for study abroad in general, expanding course offerings to help students prepare for a wider array of study abroad opportunities, and promoting professional development of study abroad professionals.

Gilman Scholars on the Program's Impact on their Academic and Career Goals

Former Gilman Scholars:

- *My current employer told me that my international experience and the internship I held while abroad was a deciding factor in my getting hired. —Scholar, 2010*
- *I am a Naval officer and always focus on problems with global implications. I was able to get a job in this field largely because of my study abroad. —Scholar, 2007*
- *For the first time in my higher education experience, it allowed me to focus completely on my academics and study abroad experience instead of worrying about [how] to pay for school. It provided me with a stress-free environment to fully embrace the study abroad experience. —Scholar, 2008*
- *[The Gilman Scholarship experience was] crucial and definitely a pivotal [point] for me... the first big step in figuring out how I wanted to contribute to the world. —Scholar, 2005*
- *I have committed my life to helping U.S. citizens gain greater self-reliance so that we can be positive contributors to globally shared resources.... —Scholar, 2008*
- *(Now) when there is a problem of international concern, I try to think about it from a comprehensive point of view knowing that the current state of a country, an event, or a conflict is probably the result of years and years of different decisions and events.... —Scholar, 2010*

University Administrators on the Gilman Scholarships:

- *They've really had to fight hard to get where they are (just to pursue higher education). [The Gilman Scholarship] makes something that seemed like an out-of-reach dream become a reality for them.*
- *[The Gilman Scholarship] allows some of our highest need students to think about their [undergraduate] academic experience, their international experience in the same way as other students do.*

EVALUATION DESIGN

In designing this evaluation, the research team focused their inquiry on whether the Gilman Scholarship addressed Department of State priorities, including increasing opportunities for students of limited financial means, improving Americans' understanding of other countries, increasing U.S. global economic competitiveness, and supporting the internationalization of U.S. institutions of higher education.

In order to assess medium and longer-term outcomes, the evaluation focused on collecting information from Gilman Scholars who had studied abroad from the 2002-03 to 2009-10 academic years.

This evaluation gathered data from former Gilman Scholars and representatives from colleges and universities. Data was also gathered from Scholars' family or friends. In all, the research team electronically surveyed 1,591 Scholars, conducted 17 focus groups with Scholars in six cities, conducted phone interviews with 25 Scholars individually, and interviewed representatives at 42 colleges. Thirty family or friends of Gilman Scholars were also interviewed.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Gilman Scholars: Under-represented in Study Abroad

The Gilman Scholarship aims to support students who have been traditionally under-represented in academic study abroad programs. The results from this evaluation confirm that the Scholarship successfully targeted students in this population and provided additional insight into how the program assists them in overcoming challenges to pursuing international opportunities.

Financial Obstacles: More than three-fourths of survey respondents (79 percent) reported that financial considerations were a significant challenge in studying abroad. This included both the cost of travel and lost income from leaving a position of employment.

Not the “Typical” Study Abroad Student: In focus groups and interviews, Scholars spoke about seeing themselves differently from “typical” study abroad participants, primarily by virtue of their lower socioeconomic status (SES). Other self-identified characteristics distinguishing them from usual study abroad students included race/ethnicity, older age, having a physical disability, and being a parent. Forty-four percent of survey respondents indicated they were part of the first generation in their families to attend college.

New Academic Opportunities Overseas: In addition to giving recipients access to other countries and cultures, Gilman Scholarships also supported their enrollment in a variety of academic study abroad programs, providing experience with different academic structures, students, activities, academic topics and extracurricular experiences than their home institutions. Eighty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that the Gilman Scholarship had enabled them to undertake academic activities overseas that they could not have taken at their home institutions.

Shifts in Perspectives

The evaluation results indicate that the Gilman Scholarship supported Scholars in expanding their knowledge of other peoples, cultures and perspectives.

Shifts in Worldview and Perspective: More than half of the survey respondents (52 percent) said they had concerns about living in a foreign culture prior to their study abroad experience. After coming home, the majority (74 percent) kept up an active interest in the culture of the country where they studied. Seventy-nine percent followed media coverage on the country or geopolitical region where they studied. In focus groups, Scholars said that the Gilman Scholarship provided an opportunity for them to develop an analytic framework through which to observe the world and scrutinize information about it.

International Engagement: After returning home from studying abroad, Scholars sustained their international engagement through a wide range of activities. Eighty-four percent reported maintaining relationships with people from the country where they studied. Seventy-four percent remained actively interested in the culture of the host country. Two-thirds of survey respondents found opportunities to serve as a bridge between Americans and people from different countries and cultures when they returned to the United States.

In addition to influencing their peers at school, some Gilman Scholars targeted their educational efforts on their communities back home, taking the time to share their experiences with people who have less access to international opportunities.

Gaining a Greater Understanding of and Representing American Diversity: In focus group discussions, several Scholars also described the study abroad experience as clarifying their own American identity, and discussed how this understanding influenced their role as American ambassadors. Scholars who were children of immigrants, raised in the United States but identified with their parents' cultural heritage, found themselves representing American diversity in other countries.

Expanding Disciplines and Degrees of Study: The Gilman Scholarship influenced Scholars' choices to pursue study of international topics that they might not have previously considered. In some cases, the Scholarship catalyzed a desire to pursue graduate studies or professional degrees.

Enhancing Interest in International Study: Of the 1,441 survey respondents who returned to undergraduate studies after their Gilman Scholarship, over 1,250 reported taking a greater interest in international or cross-cultural topics, and more than one-third indicated that they had chosen an academic major or minor field of concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus.

A Decisive Factor in Graduate/Professional Study: Scholars who went on to pursue graduate studies or professional degrees described the Gilman Scholarship experience as a decisive factor in their choice of what to study.

Of the 819 survey respondents who were attending or already completed graduate or professional school at the time of the evaluation, almost half (48 percent) had chosen a concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus, and more than one-third (36 percent) had studied abroad again or pursued international field research. Almost one-third (31 percent) had written or were writing a thesis/dissertation on an international or cross-cultural topic.

Fellowships, Scholarships, and Certificates: Thirty percent of all survey respondents reported having pursued educational activities inspired by their Gilman Scholarship experience. Of these, 34 percent received fellowships or scholarships—the largest portion of that group going abroad again as Fulbright Students (14 percent). Twenty-three percent reported having pursued professional certificates, including Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Enabling Graduate Study: In addition to influencing their academic choices, some Scholars believed that the Gilman Scholarship was the reason they were accepted to graduate school. Whether through the coursework or the international experience—or both—the Gilman Scholarship provided them with the qualifications to make them competitive and better prepared graduate students.

Foreign Language Study

Foreign language skills are critical to improving Americans' understanding of other countries and increasing U.S. global economic competitiveness. Language learning gives young Americans tools that will allow them to better engage with foreign counterparts in international settings. The Gilman Scholarship affords recipients the opportunity to pursue language study while abroad. However, in some cases where foreign language study was not the focus of the international experience, Scholars returned home and participated in language study that was inspired by their time in a foreign country.

Foreign Language Learning Overseas: Seventy-nine percent of survey respondents studied a foreign language while on their academic study program overseas. They studied a diverse group of languages, with forty-three percent studying romance languages and twenty-eight percent studying Asian languages.

Foreign Language Study after Returning Home: Scholars were asked if they had undertaken specific language-related activities during the period of time that they were undergraduates or graduate or professional school students. A majority of the undergraduates (64 percent) had either continued or started taking language courses. More than a quarter of graduate/professional students (29 percent) had taken more foreign language courses. Among Scholars who had studied a foreign language while abroad, more than three-fourths (82 percent) sought opportunities to speak the language they had studied when they returned home.

Expanded Professional Choices

The Scholarship enabled U.S. undergraduates with limited financial resources to develop competencies required to compete in a global economy, helped focus their academic pursuits on

international topics, and encouraged recipients to deepen their foreign language skills. In this section we will see how the Gilman Scholarship experience influences Scholars' professional paths.

Gilman Scholars' Professional Visions: Scholars found that the experience of studying abroad gave them a new perspective on their career possibilities. For example, almost three-quarters (73 percent) of survey respondents reported that the international experience afforded by the Gilman Scholarship caused them to broaden the geographic range of locations where they might work in the future. Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents reported wanting to work in a cross-cultural or international field. In addition, more than half (59 percent) reported having applied for positions at companies that included an international or cross-cultural focus. For nearly half of the survey respondents (48 percent), the Gilman Scholarship experience clarified their professional direction. In some cases, Scholars were introduced to new academic fields, for example, various science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, which became their professional focus.

Seeking Diversity in the Workplace: As a result of their Gilman Scholarship experience, most survey respondents (83 percent) found jobs where they could interact with people from different backgrounds or nationalities, and more than half (54 percent) reported working in a field that includes an international or cross-cultural component. In addition, 47 percent of survey respondents said they had sought out a company or organization with a diverse workforce. In focus groups, some Scholars elaborated on this preference and its connection to their Gilman Scholarship experience. Further, nearly half (45 percent) reported working in an environment where they could use a foreign language. Many reported that the Gilman Scholarship had allowed them to acquire the language skills necessary for specific positions. Almost one-third of Gilman Scholars (30 percent) reported taking a position where they could travel internationally.

Effects on Scholars' Family and Friends

Survey responses from Scholars revealed that they are sharing their international experience with family and friends. Interviews with family and friends provided evidence of how they are being changed by their Scholars' experiences.

How Scholars Shared Their Experience: The most frequently reported activity (over 80 percent) was offering a first-hand perspective on a country or an international issue; notable numbers of Scholars encouraged their family and friends to directly participate in cross-cultural activities.

Changes in Family and Community Members: Virtually all interviewed family and community members believed that Scholars' experiences had affected them in varying degrees. Some family members responded to their Scholar's desire to discuss international topics by developing more of an interest in foreign news. A few interviewees who had only traveled domestically in the United States reported a new eagerness to go to another country. Community members testified to the educational opportunities offered by Gilman Scholars.

A small number of family members reported hosting international students, either because they were interested in “giving back” the kind of experience that their Scholar had while abroad, or to support their family member’s new interest in hosting foreign exchange participants.

Influencing Family and Friends to Study Abroad or Seek other International Experiences:

Just over half of the survey respondents (53 percent) reported influencing someone else to study abroad or participate in an international exchange. Of those survey respondents, 40 percent said they influenced friends, 34 percent said they had influenced fellow students, and 27 percent had influenced either a sibling or other family member.

Other family members, especially siblings, observed the example set by Gilman Scholars and became motivated to undertake study abroad themselves or to pursue other international opportunities.

Encouraging Family and Friends to Apply for Gilman Scholarships: In focus groups and interviews, some Scholars—especially those who identified themselves as atypical study abroad students—recognized that study abroad is a less obvious option for their peers and felt a particular responsibility to encourage others similar to themselves.

Effects on U.S. Higher Education

The Department of State also seeks to support the internationalization of American colleges and universities through the Gilman Scholarship and other educational exchanges and related programs. This evaluation probed effects of the Gilman Scholarship on higher education by speaking with university representatives at 42 colleges and universities from a wide range of school types and student populations.

Making Study Abroad Available to a Much Broader Range of Students: University representatives who were interviewed regarding the impact of the Gilman Scholarship on their institutions said that it had contributed to changing perceptions about the kind of student who can study abroad.

Support for Short Term Programs and Flexible Approaches to Study Abroad for Working Adults: For students who must work during their studies or have familial obligations year-round—including many enrolled in community colleges, in particular—spending a semester or academic year in another country is difficult or impossible. To allow more students to participate, the Gilman Scholarship has instituted offerings for summer (and now also winter) that are a minimum of four weeks in length (now two weeks for current community college students.)

According to university representatives interviewed for this evaluation, STEM majors had difficulty fitting study abroad into their schedules during the regular academic year because of the high number of courses and labs that are required to complete their degree. For some STEM majors, a shorter summer session is the only opportunity to study abroad. According to interviews with university representatives, the Gilman Scholarship Summer Program awards

made it possible for low-income STEM majors to overcome both financial and curricular obstacles.

Changes to Study Abroad Offerings: About one-third of university representatives, from all types of institutions, credited the Gilman Scholarship directly for changes in their school's study abroad program offerings. Many stated that the Gilman Scholarship had allowed them to expand their study abroad programs to more diverse, non-traditional locations, including Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Reorganizing Study Abroad Programs: Several study abroad representatives, primarily at minority-serving institutions, reported using the Gilman Scholarship parameters as a model for revising their study abroad programs.

Other effects on higher education included adapting study abroad programs to meet Gilman Scholarship parameters, attracting new sources of funding for study abroad in general, expanding course offerings to help students prepare for a wider array of study abroad opportunities, and promoting professional development of study abroad professionals.

University representatives also featured Gilman Scholars prominently in study abroad information sessions, particularly as a way to educate other "less traditional" potential study abroad students about the possibilities available to them.

1| Introduction



About the Evaluation

This evaluation seeks to understand the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program’s (Gilman Scholarship) contribution to advancing U.S. Department of State priorities and fulfilling Congressional objectives for the Program.

FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES UNDERPINNING THE EVALUATION DESIGN
INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS OF LIMITED FINANCIAL MEANS
IMPROVING AMERICANS’ UNDERSTANDING OF OTHER COUNTRIES
INCREASING U.S. GLOBAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS
GREATER INTERNATIONALIZATION OF U.S. INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In designing this evaluation, the research team developed the following overarching research questions to guide their inquiry:

1. How did the Gilman Scholarship change and enhance Scholars’ global perspectives and worldview and prepare them for a more interdependent world?
2. How did the Gilman Scholarship influence Scholars’ educational achievements and educational choices?
3. How did the Gilman Scholarship influence Scholars’ professional paths?
4. How did the Gilman Scholarship impact the Scholars’ home institutions of higher education?
5. What was the impact of the Gilman Scholarship on family members and friends?

The evaluation focused on collecting information from Gilman Scholars (Scholars) who had studied abroad from the 2002-03 through 2009-10 academic years.

Looking at this period of Gilman Scholarship experience allowed for the immediate effects of studying abroad to develop and express themselves as deeper, lasting outcomes.

REPORT STRUCTURE

Any evaluation must start with an in-depth understanding of the program. As such, this evaluation report opens with an overview of the Gilman Scholarship, with a special focus on facts and figures for the program during the research period of academic years 2002-03 through 2009-10 (As shorthand in this report, we will refer to the calendar year in which the Scholar completed their experience abroad. For example, academic year 2002-03 will appear as 2003 in this report).

Section two describes the Scholars, including their motivations for applying to the Gilman Scholarship, their experience studying abroad, and their role as international ambassadors. The third section discusses Scholars' shifts in world perspectives as a result of studying abroad.

The report then follows Scholars on their academic and professional trajectories. In sections four, five, and six, the report discusses how the Gilman Scholarship affected Scholars' educational choices and prepared them to join a 21st century global workforce.

Outcomes of the Gilman Scholarship extend beyond individual students. In section seven, the report highlights changes taking place on American college and university campuses as a result of the Scholarship.

While overseas, Gilman Scholars serve as informal ambassadors of the United States, and then as ambassadors for increased international engagement when they return home. In section eight, the report provides insight into the influence of Scholars on their community members.

A note on charts contained in the report: All titles and data within the charts refer *only* to the respondents of a survey administered to Gilman Scholars from the 2002-03 through 2009-10 cohorts. The reader should also take note of the N (N=1,591 total survey respondents) listed beneath each table and note that the survey was administered in 2013 as a part of this evaluation study.

EVALUATION DESIGN

Looked at Scholars who had studied abroad 5 -10 years ago (2002-03 to 2009-10 academic years)

Total survey respondents:
1,591

17 focus groups with Scholars in DC, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, LA, and Seattle

25 telephone interviews with Scholars residing in rural areas

30 interviews with Scholars' family and friends

Interviews with University Representatives at a sample of 42 colleges and universities representing 4-year institutions, 2-year institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI)

Exhaustive review of program documentation and electronic databases

Research conducted in 2012 and 2013

For in-depth details about the evaluation methods, see the last section of this report.

ABOUT THE GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM¹

The Gilman Scholarship offers grants for U.S. citizen, undergraduate students of limited financial means to pursue academic studies abroad. Such international study is intended to better prepare U.S. students to assume significant roles in an increasingly global economy and interdependent world.

The Gilman Scholarship aims to support students who have been traditionally under-represented in academic study abroad, including but not limited to, students with high financial need, community college students, students in under-represented fields, such as the sciences and engineering, students with diverse ethnic backgrounds, and students with disabilities.

Gilman Scholarship applicants must be a recipient of a U.S. Federal Pell Grant or provide proof that he/she will receive a Pell Grant during the study abroad period. The U.S. Federal Pell Grants program provides need-based grants to low-income, undergraduate students, to promote access to postsecondary education.

The Gilman Scholarship seeks to assist students from a diverse range of public and private institutions from all 50 states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico².

Award recipients are chosen by a competitive selection process and must use the award to defray eligible study abroad costs. These costs include program tuition, room and board, books, local transportation, insurance and international airfare. Award amounts will vary depending on the length of study and student need, with the average award being approximately \$4,000.

¹ The following program description comes from the Institute of International Education website: “About the Program,” *Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, Institute of International Education*, accessed June 5, 2015, <http://www.iie.org/en/Programs/Gilman-Scholarship-Program/About-the-Program>.

² It is important to note that the diversity of Gilman Scholarship recipients has increased over the life of the program. During the 2014-15 academic year, the Gilman program awarded 2,799 scholarships to undergraduates from 623 colleges and universities. Sixty four percent of Gilman Scholars represented ethnic minority groups, including African Americans and Blacks, Asian/Pacific Islander-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Native Americans.

PROFILE OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

69% female, 31% male

64% White
16% Asian/Pacific-Islander
14% Black/African-American
15% Hispanic/Latino

4% reported a having a physical disability

97% attended 4-year school (public or private)
3% attended a two-year public school
11% attended a HBCU or HSI

73% studied abroad for a semester
15% studied abroad for full year
9% studied abroad for one-quarter or less time

Scholar cohorts from 2005 to 2010 made up the majority of survey respondents. Earlier scholars—who studied abroad before 2005 still made up about one-quarter (23%) of survey respondents.

34% studied in Europe
27% studied in East Asia
21% in the Western Hemisphere
10% in Africa
2% in the Middle East & North Africa
2% in South & Central Asia

Awards for summer study abroad scholarships are \$3,000.

Students who apply for and receive the Gilman Scholarship to study abroad are then eligible for the Critical Need Language Supplement in selected countries, for an award total of up to \$8,000. The critical need languages include: Arabic (all dialects), Chinese (all dialects), Bahasa Indonesia, Japanese, Turkic (Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish, Turkmen, Uzbek), Persian (Farsi, Dari, Kurdish, Pashto, Tajiki), Indic (Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Sinhala, Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Sindhi), Korean, Russian, Swahili.

2 | Gilman Scholars: Reaching Students who Otherwise Would Not Study Abroad



The Gilman Scholarship aims to support students who have been traditionally under-represented in academic study abroad. The results from this evaluation confirm that the Gilman Scholarship successfully targets students in this population and provides additional insight into the challenges they faced in pursuing international opportunities. The research also reveals how the Scholarship helps recipients overcome various barriers to study abroad.

Applicant Circumstances During Time of Application

When asked to reflect on the time leading up to their application for the Gilman Scholarship, Scholars described a variety of challenges they faced while making the decision to study abroad.

As shown in Table 1, financial constraints predominated: most survey respondents (79 percent) reported that financial considerations were a significant challenge. Very few said that finances presented only a slight challenge (4 percent) or none at all (less than 1 percent).

The need to leave a job, and the income it provided, posed a challenge for 44 percent of survey respondents.

Also notable is that more than half of survey respondents (52 percent) described having had concerns about living in a foreign culture prior to participation in the program. Similarly, a majority of survey respondents (62 percent) said they had had concerns about academic challenges in their study abroad programs.

**FORTY-FOUR PERCENT OF
SURVEY RESPONDENTS
INDICATED THAT THEY WERE
PART OF THE FIRST
GENERATION IN THEIR FAMILIES
TO ATTEND COLLEGE.**

Table 1: Challenges to Studying Abroad at Time of Application			
Challenges	Not at all a challenge*	A slight/moderate challenge*	A significant challenge*
Financial considerations	1	20	79
Difficulties meshing the study abroad program with the academic schedule or requirements at home institution	35	59	7
Concerns about the academic challenges to be faced	39	58	4
Lack of support or encouragement to study abroad from family members	63	31	6
The need to leave a job	56	39	5
Concerns about living in a foreign culture	48	49	3
Caregiving responsibilities for family members or others	71	24	4
Lack of support or encouragement to study abroad from friends or peers	79	20	1
N range=1,580–1,589 (Differences in total N are due to question non-response) *Numbers displayed in percentages			

How Gilman Scholars Define Themselves

Financial constraints made up a large part of how Scholars identified themselves. In focus groups and interviews, Scholars spoke about seeing themselves differently from “typical” study abroad participants, primarily by virtue of their lower socioeconomic status (SES). Scholars were aware of their families’ specific economic status and how it had affected their educational paths.

Interviewed scholars made a point of speaking about their family’s financial circumstances and income, often noting that they were the first in their families to attend college. At times they referred to themselves as poor.

...MY PARENTS ARE FROM GUATEMALA...MY DAD WORKS IN A FACTORY, SO WHEN HE HEARS HIS KID WANTS TO GO TO SWITZERLAND—HE [LITERALLY SAID], “THAT’S WHAT RICH KIDS DO. YOU’RE NOT A RICH KID.” —SCHOLAR, 2002

Forty-four percent of survey respondents indicated that they were part of the first generation in their families to attend college. Along with their SES, these Scholars also identified their race or ethnicity as other factors that made them “atypical” of U.S. study abroad participants.

In addition, Scholars who had a disability, were older students, or had children mentioned these situations as factors that had made them “atypical” of the U.S. study abroad population.

Scholarship's Role in Easing Financial Constraints

Several themes emerged from focus groups and survey responses about how the Gilman Scholarship funds had helped survey respondents deal with financial constraints. Some Scholars reported that they would not have been able to study abroad without the Gilman Scholarship:

I definitely couldn't have afforded it. My family didn't have a lot of money. I had to support myself for school... I had to pay for everything on my own. There's no way I would have been able to go abroad without that. —Scholar, 2004

Gilman Scholarship funds also gave Scholars the opportunity to focus on their studies without constantly worrying about money:

For the first time in my higher education experience, it allowed me to focus completely on my academics and study abroad experience instead of worrying about [how] to pay for school. It provided me with a stress-free environment to fully embrace the study abroad experience. —Scholar, 2008

The Gilman Scholarship funds allowed Scholars to attend cultural events and travel to other countries in the region:

The Gilman Scholarship allowed me to study abroad the way a curious student should—with the ability to travel. Had I not received this scholarship, I would not have been able to study abroad, and certainly would not have been able to leave the village where I lived very often. I was able to travel to many different areas of Morocco, giving me greater perspective into the range of experiences available there. This improved my knowledge of the country, as well as my own savvy. —Scholar, 2008

New Academic Opportunities Overseas

In addition to giving recipients access to new countries and cultures, Gilman Scholarships also supported their enrollment in a variety of academic study abroad programs offering different structures, students, activities, academic topics and extracurricular experiences than their home institutions. Some of these (such as language study) are explored further in this report. The vast majority (88 percent) took courses on the history/culture of the host country; about half participated in service learning/volunteer project. A smaller percentage had internships as part of their programs.

83% OF RESPONDENTS INDICATED THAT THE GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP HAD ENABLED THEM TO UNDERTAKE ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES OVERSEAS THEY COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN AT THEIR HOME INSTITUTIONS.

Eighty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that the Gilman Scholarship had enabled them to undertake academic activities overseas that they could not have taken at their home institutions.

Table 2: Academic Activities while Studying Abroad	
Academic and extracurricular activities¹	Percent
Took course(s) on history/culture of host country or region	88
Studied a foreign language	79
Participated in service learning/volunteer project	45
Carried out an internship	15
Participated in extracurricular activities sponsored by the host institution	2
Took other academic courses	3
Conducted a research project or independent study	2
Other (e.g., student teaching, academic trip, thesis, video project)	4
N range=1,585-1,591	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	

3 | Shifts and Expansion in Perspectives



The evaluation demonstrates how the Gilman Scholarship supported Scholars in expanding their knowledge of other people, cultures and perspectives.

Shifts in Worldview and Perspective

As discussed in the previous section, more than half of the survey respondents (52 percent) said they had concerns about living in a foreign culture. Yet after coming home, the majority (74 percent) kept an active interest in the country where they studied. In focus groups, when asked how the Gilman Scholarship shifted their worldview, some Scholars said they came to see themselves as members of a global community or described themselves as having a “*global perspective*,” or being “*citizens of the world*.” Scholars developed a greater ability to analyze world affairs and the international arena from a non-U.S. perspective. One Scholar described seeing his community’s role differently: “*[The Gilman experience] helped me be more active in my immediate community and encouraged me to think about my community’s place in the global community.*” —Scholar, 2002

Scholars also described feeling better prepared to engage in the international arena. Seventy-nine percent followed media coverage on the country or geopolitical region where they studied. In focus groups, Scholars said that the Scholarship provided an opportunity for them to develop an analytic framework through which to observe the world and scrutinize information about it.

...[S]TUDY ABROAD CHANGES THE LENS THROUGH WHICH YOU SEE THE WORLD... WHEN THERE IS A PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN, I TRY TO THINK ABOUT IT FROM A COMPREHENSIVE POINT OF VIEW KNOWING THAT THE CURRENT STATE OF A COUNTRY, AN EVENT, OR A CONFLICT IS PROBABLY THE RESULT OF YEARS AND YEARS OF DIFFERENT DECISIONS AND EVENTS... —SCHOLAR, 2010

International Engagement

After returning home from studying abroad, Scholars sustained their international engagement through a wide range of activities, as illustrated in Table 3. Eighty-four percent of Scholars reported maintaining relationships with people from the country where they studied. Seventy-four percent remained actively interested in the culture of the host country. More than half (66 percent) found opportunities to serve as a bridge between Americans and people from different countries and cultures when they returned to the United States.

Activity ¹	Percent
Maintained relationships with people from the country where studied	84
Followed media coverage on the country or geopolitical region where studied	79
Kept up active interest in culture of the country studied	74
Took on bridging roles between people from different countries/cultures	66
Returned to the country where studied	36
Hosted someone from country	15
N=1,591	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	

Diverse Ambassadors

In focus group discussions, several Scholars also described the study abroad experience as clarifying their own American identity, and discussed how this influenced their role as unofficial American ambassadors.

[THE GILMAN SCHOLARSHIP EXPERIENCE WAS] CRUCIAL AND DEFINITELY A PIVOTAL [POINT] FOR ME... IT SORT OF WAS THE FIRST BIG STEP IN FIGURING OUT HOW I WANTED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORLD, DEFINITELY. —SCHOLAR, 2005

One African-American Scholar commented, *“I would say that I didn’t think of myself as atypical until I went to South Africa and [faced questions] like, ‘You’re not African?Black people don’t come over here.’ Okay. So that started to [make me think about] why it was so important to have this scholarship....”*

The Gilman Scholarship helped to develop Scholars’ knowledge of specific areas of the world, as well as broadened their perspective on global issues. Studying abroad also gave some recipients an opportunity to see themselves—in some cases for the first time—as representatives of American diversity in their host countries. These expansions and shifts in thinking were first steps in helping Scholars consider how they want to contribute to the world.

4 | Shifts and Expansion in Academic Choices

The Gilman Scholarship gives participants access to a broader array of academic courses than they would have at their home institutions. It also influences their choices to pursue international topics that they might not have previously considered. In some cases, the Scholarship catalyzed a desire to pursue graduate studies or professional degrees.

ACADEMIC PROFILE

At time of the survey

- 65% had a Bachelor's
- 27% had a Master's

- 21% degreed in STEM field
- 23% in Humanities
- 33% in Social Sciences
- 10% Education/English Language Instruction

When asked to project into the future, 77% of survey respondents envisioned pursuing advanced degrees:

- 43% Master's
- 25% Doctorate
- 9% Other professional such as MD, JD or DDS

One-third were still enrolled at full-time students. More than half of these were pursuing Master's Degrees and one-quarter were pursuing a Doctoral Degree.

Ninety-two percent of survey respondents had obtained a Bachelor's or a Bachelor's and a Master's degree since studying abroad. Of particular note, of the 51 survey respondents who had attended 2-year colleges at the time of their applications, 35 percent had gone on to complete an Associate's degree and 43 percent had obtained Bachelor's degrees. A further 12 percent had gone on to attain a Master's degree.

Table 4: Highest Degree Eventually Earned by Scholars who Attended 2-year Colleges at Time of Gilman Application

Degree	Percent
High School degree or GED	10
Associate's Degree	35
Bachelor's Degree	43
Master's Degree	12
Total	100
N=51	

Keeping in mind that many of the surveyed Gilman Scholars were the first in their families to attend undergraduate colleges and universities (44 percent), it is notable that more than three-fourths (77 percent) of survey respondents planned to pursue advanced academic or professional degrees (Table 5). At the time they were surveyed, 43 percent planned on pursuing a Master's degree, 25 percent a Doctorate and 9 percent some other professional degree.

Degree	Percent ¹
Bachelor's Degree	10
Master's Degree	43
Doctorate	25
Other professional degree (MD, JD, DDS)	9
Not sure	13
Other (High School, Associate's)	<1
Total	100
N=1,581	
¹ Column percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding	

Effects on Undergraduate Study: Supplementing Core Studies with International Topics

Of the 1,441 survey respondents who returned to undergraduate studies after their Gilman Scholarship experience, 87 percent (1,253 respondents) reported taking a greater interest in international or cross-cultural topics, and more than one-third indicated that they had chosen an academic major or minor field of concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus.

Academic activities ¹	Percent
Took a greater interest in international/ cross-cultural topics	87
Chose major and/or minor with international/cross-cultural focus	35
Undertook research project with international /cross-cultural focus	31
Pursued undergraduate thesis on an international/cross-cultural topic ²	25
N=1,441	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	
² Not all of respondents wrote, or had the option of writing, an undergraduate thesis.	

In focus groups, Scholars reported taking on new academic courses, supplementing their major core studies with international and cross-cultural topics. This approach enabled some to continue exploring particular subjects in depth, while others studied new subject areas of interest on the macro-level:

There was one class in particular that immediately sparked my interest in the social sciences. I took a socio-politics class in Spain and when I was done with that course, I knew I wanted to change my major to sociology. Upon returning to [my school], I changed my major and fell in love with sociology. It expanded my mind and I now see the world through a macro lens. —Scholar, 2009

Another approach these Scholars described was to select a minor field of concentration that reflected their interest in the foreign language they had studied while abroad.

Scholars also reported that they had taken an increased interest in specific sets of issues, as a result of their experiences abroad. For example, one Scholar created her own undergraduate major:

My experience in Ghana inspired me to pursue a degree in human rights and social justice. —Scholar, 2008

For undergraduate study, the Gilman Scholarship experience was often the catalyst for a broader interest in multiple international topics, or a more specific exploration of knowledge within a particular undergraduate discipline.

Effects on Graduate/Professional Study: A Decisive Factor in Academic Choice

While undergraduates expanded their academic horizons upon returning home, Scholars who went on to pursue graduate school or professional degrees described the Gilman Scholarship experience as a decisive factor in their choice of academic field.

Of the 819 survey respondents who were attending or already completed graduate or professional school at the time of the evaluation, almost half (48 percent) had chosen a concentration with an international or cross-cultural focus, and more than one-third (36 percent) had studied abroad again or pursued international field research. Almost one-third (31 percent) had written or were writing a thesis or dissertation on an international or cross-cultural topic (Table 7).

Activities ¹	Percent
Chose concentration or specialization with international /cross-cultural focus	48
Studied abroad and/or pursued international field research	36
Pursued an international /cross-cultural thesis or dissertation topic	31
Participated in internship or externship with international /cross-cultural focus	27
N=819	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	

Influence on Medical Studies

A number of Scholars who had gone on to study and practice medicine said that they had done so because of the Gilman Scholarship experience. Of those in the medical profession, a small sub-group described the experience as helping to affirm their commitment to serving low-income, underserved populations, both in the United States and abroad.

For others in the medical field, the Gilman Scholarship had exposed them to new areas of learning, such as medical ethics or national differences in health care delivery. This influenced subsequent educational choices, adding international, political and socioeconomic dimensions to their understanding of medicine and health care.

Developing International Focuses

A number of Scholars said that their experiences had encouraged them to study international fields or topics in graduate school. For example, one Scholar described how the Gilman Scholarship experience inspired him to focus his interest in international relations on sustainable agriculture:

I'd always wanted to pursue a graduate degree in international relations, but studying abroad in a third world country showed me how interested I was in international development and helping the impoverished of the world raise their quality of life. I'm now more interested in pursuing a degree in international development with a focus in sustainable agriculture and/or horticulture as opposed to security studies as I'd planned before. —Scholar, 2008

International Education Studies

The Gilman Scholarship experience led some Scholars to study international education at the graduate level, with the aim of eventually serving international students and Americans studying abroad:

For my Master's thesis, I interviewed international students about their experiences studying in the United States. My experience studying abroad as a Gilman Scholar informed my research and let me connect with my research participants about their intercultural experiences. —Scholar, 2006

Now, I am pursuing a Master's in higher education and hope to work with study abroad offices to send students abroad as well as welcome international students to campus. —Scholar, 2008

Other Scholars pursued teaching English and foreign language credentials:

I earned my ESL (English as a Second Language) program specialist certificate... after graduation, inspired by my desire to continue working with Latinos after studying abroad. —Scholar, 2003

Studying in Morocco pointed out to me the differences in how cultures approach the teaching of second/foreign languages, and this is partly why I am pursuing my PhD on the topic. —Scholar, 2010

Fellowships, Scholarships and Certificates

Thirty percent of all Gilman Scholars survey respondents reported having pursued educational activities inspired by their Gilman Scholarship experience. Of these, 34 percent received fellowships or scholarships—the largest portion of that group going abroad again as Fulbright Students (14 percent). Twenty-three percent received certificates in specific professional fields—the largest portion of that group obtained TEFL/TESOL certification (9 percent).

Enabling Graduate Study

In addition to influencing their academic choices, some Scholars believed that the Gilman Scholarship had been the reason for their acceptance to graduate school. Whether through the coursework or the international experience—or both—Gilman provided these Scholars with the qualifications to make them competitive, prepared graduate students:

I have recently been granted acceptance into an international executive MBA program offered through UNC, Kenan-Flager Business School in conjunction with four other premier universities, representing four other continents. [The universities] work together to create a truly global executive MBA experience. I can trace my acceptance into this prestigious program directly to the opportunities afforded me through the Gilman [Scholarship]. —Scholar, 2007

Whatever their undergraduate field of study, Gilman Scholars reported that the opportunity to study abroad expanded their academic horizons by cultivating their interest in international topics. Some enriched their coursework through other classes or research projects with an international focus. For those students who went on to pursue graduate or professional degrees, a notable portion chose academic areas that would develop the skills needed to address global challenges including food security, medical services for the poor, and the internationalization of higher education.

In a later section, we will investigate how Scholars applied the skills they acquired as a result of the Gilman Scholarship to the labor market.

5 | Foreign Language Study



Foreign language skills are critical to improving Americans’ understanding of other countries and increasing U.S. global economic competitiveness. Language learning gives young Americans tools that will allow them to better engage with foreign counterparts in international settings. The Gilman Scholarship affords recipients the opportunity to pursue language study while abroad. However, in some cases where foreign language study was not the focus of the international experience, Scholars returned home and participated in language study that was inspired by their time in a foreign country.

Gilman Scholars are also eligible to receive a \$3,000 Critical Need Language Supplement in addition to their regular scholarship award. This scholarship, established by ECA as part of the National Security Language Initiative of 2006, was designed to increase the number of U.S. citizens learning high-priority languages, such as Arabic, Mandarin, and Russian.

Foreign Language Learning Overseas

Seventy-nine percent of survey respondents studied a foreign language while on their academic study program overseas. They studied a diverse group of languages, with 43 percent studying romance languages and 28 percent studying Asian languages.

Table 8: The breakdown of languages studied by Gilman Scholar survey respondents		
<i>Critical Need Languages are denoted by italics</i>		
Romance Languages: 43% Spanish: 28% French: 8% Italian: 4% Portuguese: 2% Catalan: <1%	Asian Languages: 28% <i>Chinese: 12%</i> <i>Japanese: 10%</i> <i>Korean: 3%</i> Thai: 2% Other: 1%	Semitic Languages: 7 % <i>Arabic: 7%</i>
Other European Languages: 13% German: 4% <i>Russian: 3%</i> Czech: 1% Swedish: 1%	African Languages: 6% Twi: 3% <i>Swahili/Kiswahili: <1%</i> Other: 3%	Other: 5% <i>Indic Languages: 1 %</i> <i>Turkic Languages: 1 %</i> Native American Languages: (Aymara, Tzotzil) <0.5 % Oceanic/Polynesian Languages: (Maori) <0.5 % Other (not specified): <0.5 %
N= 1,251 Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding		

Foreign Language Study After Returning Home

Survey results revealed that many respondents kept up their new foreign language skills upon returning home. For a few who had not studied a foreign language while abroad, the Gilman Scholarship experience led them to language studies after returning home. Scholars sought continuing language opportunities through their academic studies or in their personal lives outside of class.

Scholars were asked if they had undertaken specific language-related activities as undergraduates or graduate or professional school students. A majority of the undergraduates (64 percent) had either continued or started taking language courses. More than a quarter of graduate/professional students (29 percent) had taken more foreign language courses. Among Scholars who had studied a language while abroad, more than three-fourths (82 percent) sought opportunities to speak the language they had studied upon returning home.

Activity	Percent
Sought opportunities to speak language studied	82
Took foreign language courses outside formal setting	28

N=1,251
¹Respondents could give multiple answers

Scholars also mentioned using strategies such as conversing with language partners, participating in culture clubs, watching foreign dramas, reading foreign newspapers and novels, and taking private language classes.

One Scholar used this multi-pronged approach to maintaining her French language skills:

I started a French circle at my college after I got back and went on to do the Peace Corps in a French-speaking country and then... started a French circle at my [next] employer. Then I've just kept working in places where you speak French. —Scholar, 2003

While foreign language study is not required under the Gilman Scholarship, it is a critical part of many Gilman Scholars' study abroad experiences. For some Scholars, it established a foundation from which they continued language study during undergraduate and graduate studies. The next section discusses some of the ways in which foreign language skills have influenced Scholar's professional paths.

6 | Shifts and Expansion in Professional Choices

As discussed in previous sections, the Gilman Scholarship can be a transformative experience for award recipients. The Scholarship enabled U.S. undergraduates with limited financial resources to develop competencies required to compete in a global economy, helped focus their academic pursuits on international topics, and encouraged recipients to deepen their foreign language skills. In this section we will see how the Gilman Scholarship experience influences Scholars' professional paths. In this section we will see how the Gilman Scholarship experience influences Scholars' professional paths.

Employment Profile of the Gilman Scholars

Almost all survey respondents (97 percent) had worked in at least one job since returning home from their Gilman Scholarship experience, and eight in 10 (79 percent) were working full-time at the time of the survey. Scholars were working in a diverse set of professional fields. The most common professional fields were in Education, Training, and Library (26 percent); Business, Financial Operations and Sales (15 percent); STEM fields, such as Engineering, Computer Science, and Life Sciences (13 percent); Healthcare (9 percent); and, Community and Social Services (6 percent).

The most common employers of Gilman Scholars included Private Sector (39 percent), Colleges and Universities (17 percent), and NGO/Non-Profit Organizations (16 percent). Thirteen percent of Gilman Scholars were employed by the U.S. Federal Government or State or local governments.

Field	Percent
Education, Training, and Library	26
Business and Financial Operations	10
Healthcare	9
Community and Social Services	6
Engineering, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture	5
Sales and Related Occupations, including Marketing	5
Computer and Mathematical	4
Life, Physical, and Social Science	4
Other (e.g., Legal, Media, Arts, Design, and Entertainment, Military, Management, Office and Administrative Support)	30
Total	100
N=1,257	

Employment Type	Percent
Private Sector	39
College/University	17
NGO/Non-profit Organization	16
Elementary/Middle/High School	9
U.S. Federal Government	7
State or Local Government	6
Self-Employed	4
International Entity	1
Other	1
Total	100
N=1,238	

Impact of Gilman on Career Perspective

Scholars found that the study abroad experience gave them a new perspective on the possibilities for their careers. For example, almost three-quarters (73 percent) of survey respondents reported that the international experience afforded by the Gilman Scholarship caused them to broaden the geographic range of locations where they might work in the future. Sixty-seven percent of survey respondents reported wanting to work in a cross-cultural or international field. In addition, more than half (59 percent) reported having applied for positions at companies that included an international or cross-cultural focus.

Professional Vision¹	Percent
Broadened the geographic locations where they are willing to work	73
Promoted desire to work in cross-cultural/international field	67
Broadened range of employers they would consider	60
Led them to applied for positions at companies with international/ cross-cultural focus	59
Clarified desired career	48
Led them to seek company/organization with diverse workforce	47
Changed their career direction to more international/cross-cultural focus	39
N=1,591	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	

For nearly half of the survey respondents (48 percent), the Gilman Scholarship experience clarified their professional direction. In some cases, the experience introduced Scholars to new

academic fields, for example, in various STEM fields, which became the focal point of their professional lives:

[Studying in Spain] exposed me to a different world [neuroscience] that I didn't know existed as a field and as a career. And, after that it definitely changed how I was thinking about myself and what I wanted to pursue for my professional career. —Scholar, 2010

Before the Gilman experience, I did not have a clear career focus. The Gilman began my transition toward my current career path pursuing an advanced degree in Geography – Scholar, 2003

Scholars gained awareness of issues such as global poverty and social inequality and this had an impact on their professional choices:

I [had] never thought about a lot of social issues that were brought up when I was in Cape Town, South Africa. They're sort of in your face, and it really, I guess, really sparked an interest in me in social justice and actually changed the course of my career from there. —Scholar, 2009

Working with Disadvantaged Communities

For some Scholars, their Gilman Scholarship experience proved a catalyst for their desire to work with underserved or disadvantaged communities, in a variety of fields, both internationally and domestically:

The Gilman, along with my home university, gave me the much-needed encouragement to pursue my passion of working within the realm of international higher education. My ultimate goal is to help other low-income minority students explore all options to make it possible for them to study abroad as well. —Scholar, 2009

Their desire to serve disadvantaged communities was evident in the pursuit of employment and careers in medicine, public health, education, public service, the Peace Corps, domestic violence prevention and services, involvement with migrant agricultural workers, immigrant communities and related research and study:

It [Gilman] reinforced my commitment to work as a physician with the poorest and most needy communities around the world. —Scholar, 2008

My experience as a Gilman Scholar inspired me to pursue a career in public health. While abroad I interned for an organization that provides support services to pregnant and parenting teens in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Upon returning to the United States, I continued to work with this population. —Scholar, 2008

Gilman... gave me a taste for working internationally and working on the ground and being involved in the community. I've since started working in global health, and I have

used what I've learned when I was in Mali whenever I go on work trips and try to get more involved with what's going on in the community. —Scholar, 2003

Scholars described how their Gilman Scholarship experiences had committed them to work locally within their own communities:

Actually, my Gilman experience influenced me more strongly with regard to the fact that I am more committed to working locally, as opposed to internationally... I have committed my life to helping U.S. citizens gain greater self-reliance so that we can be positive contributors to globally shared resources... —Scholar, 2008

I loved my time abroad and hope to go back to Brazil someday, but studying abroad (and subsequent international trips) actually made me realize that I'm just as passionate about giving back to my community here at home. This means that I am currently inclined to work domestically, but it doesn't rule out future work abroad. —Scholar, 2006

Seeking International Workplaces

As a result of their Gilman Scholarship experience, Scholars had taken positions in workplaces where they could use their international and/or cross-cultural competencies. As shown in Table 13 below, most survey respondents (83 percent) found jobs where they could interact with people from different backgrounds or nationalities, and more than half (54 percent) reported working in a field that includes an international or cross-cultural component.

Table 13: Work Environments of Gilman Scholars¹	
After returning home	Percent
Interacted with people of different backgrounds/nationalities in the workplace	83
Worked in a field that includes an international/ cross-cultural component	54
Took a position where they can utilize international/ cross-cultural expertise	50
Took a position where they can use a foreign language	45
Took a position where they can travel internationally	30
N=1,532	
¹ Respondents could give multiple answers	

In addition, 47 percent of survey respondents said they had sought out a company or organization with a diverse workforce (see Table 12). In focus groups, some Scholars elaborated on this preference and its connection to their Gilman Scholarship experience:

I realized I must, and need, to work for a firm which is open to diversity. I didn't realize how important diverse cultural and life experiences are in a workforce until I returned from Gilman. I also want to be in an organization that recognizes the significance in being global and understanding diverse cultures. —Scholar, 2010

Further, nearly half (45 percent) reported working in an environment where they could use a foreign language. Many reported that by receiving the Gilman Scholarship, they had acquired the language skills necessary for positions that required them:

I am a Naval officer and always focus on problems with global implications. I was able to get a job in this field largely because of my study abroad. I am currently en route to returning to Japan in a professional position where I will have the chance to interact with Japanese counterparts. I was selected for this because of my language ability.
—Scholar, 2007

Speaking in a second language has presented me with unique opportunities of advancement at work... Each of my employers valued my language skills and called on me as a Spanish-speaking employee to help them retain customers. —Scholar, 2006

Other survey respondents explained that they had actively sought positions where they could use the language they had studied while a Gilman Scholar:

I knew when I returned that I wanted to have a career where I utilized the language on a daily basis. —Scholar, 2004

Almost one-third of Gilman Scholars (30 percent) reported taking a position where they could travel internationally (see Table 13).

Scholars reported that the Gilman Scholarship experience made them stronger candidates for professional positions. Virtually all Scholars agreed that having the Gilman Scholarship on their resumes had been an asset, illustrating profession-enhancing qualities, such as passion for a subject, and commitment to international work.

MY CURRENT EMPLOYER TOLD ME THAT MY INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE AND THE INTERNSHIP I HELD WHILE ABROAD WAS A DECIDING FACTOR IN MY GETTING HIRED. — SCHOLAR, 2010

The Gilman Scholarship addresses the U.S. foreign policy goal of providing young Americans with the skills and opportunities that will allow them to succeed in a global economy. Receiving a Gilman Scholarship was instrumental for many Scholars in helping them clarify and select their career paths, and led many to a greater set of professional opportunities domestically and internationally.

7 | Effects on U.S. Higher Education

Thus far, the evaluation results have highlighted effects on Scholars. However, given the priority to internationalize American colleges and universities, the evaluation also sought to capture what influence—if any—the Gilman Scholarship has on U.S. higher education.

This section presents the findings from the interviews conducted with representatives of 42 colleges and universities that had sent Gilman Scholarship recipients to study abroad during the evaluation period (see Table 14). The sample of institutions represents two-year and four-year institutions, public and private institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). Those interviewed included university representatives of study abroad and/or international education offices, Gilman Scholarship faculty advisors, former Gilman Scholarship faculty advisors, representatives of financial aid and/or scholarship offices, and school administrators. In some cases, there was only one respondent for the institution and in others the research team spoke with up to five respondents at the same institution, interviewed separately or together. In these interviews, participants were not limited to discussing the period covered by this evaluation of the Gilman Scholarship, but were free to discuss their observations and experiences with the Gilman Scholarship at any time.

Type	Number	Percent
4-year public	967	62
4-year private	554	35
2-year public	51	3
Total	1,572	100
Non-HBCU or HIS	1,401	89
HSIs	130	8
HBCU	41	3
Total	1,572	100
N=1,572		

Making Study Abroad Available to a More Diverse Range of Students

When asked about the impact of the Gilman Scholarship on their institutions, many university representatives said that because the program opens up opportunities for students who need financial aid to study abroad, the Gilman Scholarship has contributed to redefining ideas about the kind of student who can study abroad. According to most university representatives at all types of institutions, students who are eligible for the Gilman Scholarship rarely start out believing that study abroad is possible for them. A study abroad representative from a two-year college explained:

It is really important that scholarships like this exist. Most of the students I see are disadvantaged in a lot of ways. They are very disadvantaged financially... but they also often have had really difficult lives and the very fact that they have gotten to college at all is a bit of a miracle. It's not just that they've grown up in homes without a lot of money. Many of them have had to leave home at an early age because of less-than-ideal circumstances. They've really had to fight hard to get where they are. [Gilman Scholarship] makes something that seemed like an out-of-reach dream become a reality for them.

At one four-year institution with a relatively high percentage of Pell Grant recipients, an interviewee noted that all U.S. Federal Pell Grant recipients who plan to study abroad are now required to apply for the Gilman Scholarship, not with the expectation that they will necessarily win one, but to get the students accustomed to filling out these kinds of applications. The institution found the application process in and of itself to be good practice for students who do not usually view themselves as “*scholarship material*,” yet sometimes surprise themselves by receiving one. Subsequently at this institution, the number of successful Gilman Scholarship applicants has risen considerably over the years.

In the setting of resource-rich private colleges, the Gilman Scholarship has helped to equalize differences between Pell Grant recipients and their more affluent peers. An interviewee at a private college with a low percentage of Pell Grant recipients observed:

[The Gilman Scholarship] allows some of our highest need students to think about their [undergraduate] academic experience, their international experience in the same way as other students do. They can choose to spend a semester away for curricular reasons or other reasons, just like other students.

The Gilman Scholarship has also allowed these students, in the words of an interviewee from another resource-rich, private college, to “*live like everybody else*” when they go abroad. They can pursue opportunities that may not have been affordable without the Gilman Scholarship, for example, travelling and experiencing the local culture. Along similar lines, at one HBCU, the respondent reported that the Gilman Scholarship was helping to equalize the difference in the costs of studying abroad between in-state students, whose families tend to have lower incomes, and their out-of-state peers, who are used to paying out-of-state tuition, which is higher, and more in line with the cost of most study abroad programs.

University representatives featured Gilman Scholars prominently in study abroad information sessions, particularly as a way to educate other atypical study abroad students in the possibilities available to them. For the students' peers, many of whom are low SES as well and who have not previously considered studying abroad—the Gilman Scholarship enabled them to “*see the possibility of studying abroad*” (representative from a 2-year college). A respondent from a four-year private college noted that even if Gilman Scholars' peers do not study abroad as undergraduates, they might do a program like Peace Corps after graduation.

Support for Summer Programs and STEM Majors

For students who must work during their studies or have familial obligations year-round—a situation faced by many enrolled in community college in particular—spending a semester or academic year in another country is challenging. The Gilman Scholarship Program offers scholarships for summer programs that are a minimum of four weeks in length (two weeks for current community college students), and coincide with the home institution's or international program's summer calendar.

According to interviewed university representatives, a shorter stint abroad during the summer may have been the only opportunity for these kinds of students to have an international experience. Representatives at all institutions also noted that the Gilman Scholarship is one of the only financial support mechanisms for students who want to study abroad during the summer semester.

Many university representatives also discussed the attractiveness of the Gilman Scholarship Summer Programs for STEM majors. In essence, STEM majors face two sets of challenges—financial and curricular—when considering studying abroad. Historically and currently, STEM majors have had difficulty fitting study abroad into their schedules during the regular academic year because of the high number of courses and labs that are required to complete their degree. For some STEM majors, a shorter summer session is the only opportunity to study abroad. According to interviewed university representatives, the Gilman Scholarship Summer Program awards made it possible for low-income STEM majors to overcome both financial and curricular obstacles.

Changes to Study Abroad Offerings

About one-third of university representatives credited the Gilman Scholarship directly for changes in their school's study abroad program offerings. Many stated that the Gilman Scholarship had allowed them to expand their study abroad programs to more diverse, non-traditional locations, including Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. A representative from a four-year public university stated that Gilman had helped him to “advocate for a broader portfolio” of study abroad options. A representative from an HSI reported that as a result of one student winning a Gilman Scholarship to study in China, there has been a subsequent stream of students traveling to China from their school.

University representatives pointed to several ways that the Gilman Scholarship had affected faculty members at their institutions. Interviewed staff members, especially those at two-year

colleges and HBCUs, explained that increases in the number of students studying abroad also led to increases in opportunities for faculty to teach in study abroad programs and to develop their own study abroad courses. This experience made faculty more positive about study abroad in general and more open to allowing, or even encouraging, study abroad options for students in their programs and departments, thus contributing to an overall advancement in the internationalization of their campuses. Other university representatives noted that the prestige of the federally-funded Gilman Scholarship had drawn the administration's attention to the importance of study abroad, which made it easier to talk to deans or other administrators about integrating international programs into academics.

Reorganizing Study Abroad Programs

Several study abroad representatives, primarily at minority-serving institutions, reported using the Gilman Scholarship parameters as a model for revising their study abroad programs. The most common adaptation was to extend the length of their shortest programs to match the Gilman Scholarship's minimum study abroad period of four weeks, thus making students in those programs eligible for the Scholarship funds.

New Sources of Study Abroad Funding

A few university representatives also noted that the Gilman Scholarships had precipitated other changes at their schools. One representative from a resource-rich, private university stated that their school's advertised success with the Gilman Scholarships had helped to attract donor support for the creation of new institutional study abroad scholarships that could support students on the basis of merit or financial need.

At one public HBCU, Gilman Scholarships were reportedly an important impetus for the establishment of a per-student fee assessed of every undergraduate that goes toward an international education fund available to any member of the study body wishing to study abroad.

Helping to Internationalize the Curriculum

A small number of university representatives cited new additions to or extensions of their curriculum, which they regarded as due, at least in part, to the Gilman Scholarship. These included the establishment of a new Asian Studies Program, the offering of more advanced Arabic language classes, and growth of new requirements for international experience for International Business or other majors. University representatives credited the Gilman Scholarship with helping to make these changes possible because Gilman Scholars' specific experiences, such as studying abroad in Japan or taking intensive Arabic classes while abroad, helped create a demand for new programs and courses to accommodate their needs upon return. Similarly, knowing that the Gilman Scholarship afforded students the opportunity to enroll in a shorter-term course of study abroad made it easier for certain programs to establish an international experience/internship requirement.

Promoting Professional Development of Study Abroad Professionals

In addition to opportunities for students, the Gilman Scholarship offered professional development for study abroad staff. Many interviewees cited their participation on Gilman Scholarship selection panels as a valuable opportunity giving them insight into successful candidates and informing the advice they gave to future Gilman applicants. A few university representatives also believed that the selection panels helped them build ties and exchange information with study abroad professionals at other institutions. One interviewee noted that relationships with colleagues at other schools expanded his knowledge of study abroad programs, particularly opportunities for students in the STEM fields—which were previously under-represented in the study abroad population at his institution. The increased capacity to advise Gilman applicants, in addition to increased knowledge of diverse study abroad opportunities, helped study abroad professionals better promote international experiences for their student population.

In addition to its impact on award recipients, the Gilman Scholarship has made inroads in changing the landscape for international opportunities on some American college campuses, including expanded study abroad offerings, revisions to the structure of study abroad programs to match Gilman Scholarship requirements, diversified academic curricula, identification of new funding for study abroad, and increased professional development for college and university staff.

8 | Effects on Scholars’ Family and Friends



In addition to college students, a priority for U.S. government-funded exchange programs is to connect American citizens with opportunities and people around the world. Besides Scholars and their colleges, the evaluation investigated effects of the Scholarship opportunity on Scholars’ family and friends. Survey responses with Scholars revealed that they are sharing their international experience with family and friends. Interviews with family and friends provide evidence of how they are being changed by their Scholars’ experiences.

The findings in this section supplement data from the online survey, focus groups, and one-on-one Scholar interviews, with 30 interviews of Scholars' family and community members.

How Scholars Shared Their Experience

After returning home from their study abroad country, Gilman Scholars shared their experience with family and friends in a variety of ways. While the most frequently reported activity was offering a first-hand perspective on a country or an international issue, notable numbers of Scholars encouraged their family and friends to directly participate in cross-cultural activities, such as a cultural festival or international travel to the country where the Scholar had studied (see Table 15). As one Scholar's brother explained, *“he would talk about how easy it is to get stuck in our little bubbles. The way we view our world and ourselves..... He would encourage those back at home who were born and raised in Southern California...challenging them to take that risk and put yourself in a place...you’re not used to.”*

Table 15: How Scholars Shared Their Experience with Family and Friends

Activity	Family	Friends
Debunked myths or stereotypes about other countries	81	88
Presented new/different perspective on media coverage of an international issue/event	66	75
Went together to a cultural or sporting event from country	25	56
Traveled to the country together	19	24
Encouraged participation in new activities	63	88
Encouraged them to join an organization or group	20	41
Other	2	2
N=1,574		

Changes in Family and Community Members

Virtually all interviewed family and community members believed that Scholars’ experiences had affected them in varying degrees. Some family members responded to their Scholar’s desire to discuss international topics by developing more of an interest in foreign news events. A few interviewees who had only traveled domestically in the United States reported a new eagerness to go to another country. Many of these people visited their Scholar or accompanied the Scholar back to the study abroad country at a later date. One Scholar enticed his grandmother to visit

him during his study abroad experience in Costa Rica, in her first trip outside of the United States.

In addition to influencing their peers at school, some Gilman Scholars targeted their educational efforts on their communities back at home, taking the time to share their experiences with people who have less access to international opportunities. In one striking example, as reported by her supervisor, one Scholar, who had become a teacher at an independent middle school located in one of DC’s poorest wards, had established an Middle eastern cultural club open to all students and teachers.

In a few cases, interviewed family members discussed establishing a social relationship with the Scholar’s host family in a foreign country. Through their Scholar’s efforts to discuss their international experience and seek out new cross-cultural activities upon returning home, family and community members also increased their engagement with the world.

Influencing Family and Friends to Study Abroad or Seek other International Experiences

Just over half of the survey respondents (53 percent) reported influencing someone else to study abroad or participate in an international exchange. Of those survey respondents, 40 percent said they influenced friends, 34 percent said they had influenced fellow students, and 27 percent had influenced either a sibling or other family member.

Other family members, especially siblings, observed the example set by Gilman Scholars and became motivated to undertake study abroad themselves or to pursue other international opportunities, such as embarking on international travel or applying for jobs overseas. For example, one Scholar’s brother explained that “[seeing my brother] take advantage and maximize his time there [in China], that also challenged me to maximize the opportunities that I have.” In some cases, Scholars said that their Gilman Scholarship experience had made their parents more open to the idea of similar international experiences for younger siblings and relatives.

I THINK IN THE SUDANESE-AMERICAN COMMUNITY PARTICULARLY THERE’S A LOT OF TABOO, PARTICULARLY FOR THE YOUNG WOMEN TO STUDY ABROAD AND GO TO ANOTHER COUNTRY THAT’S AWAY FROM THE FAMILY FOR CULTURAL REASONS...PART OF MY [GILMAN PROGRAM] SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT WHEN I CAME BACK WAS TO DIRECTLY DO OUTREACH IN THAT COMMUNITY. I ACTUALLY HELPED ONE OF MY FRIENDS GO THROUGH THE PROCESS [OF APPLYING FOR STUDY ABROAD] AND TALKED TO HER PARENTS ABOUT IT TO SHOW THEM THAT IT’S OKAY FOR HER TO DO THIS...SO I THINK ONCE YOU REACH THAT COMMUNITY, YOU HAVE AN ADVOCATE THERE...— SCHOLAR, NEW YORK

Table 16: Influencing Others to Study Abroad

Influenced someone else to study abroad/ participate in international exchange ¹	Percent
Yes	53
No	4
Not Sure	43
Total	100
Who studied abroad/participated in international exchange due to respondents' influence ²	Percent
Friends	40
Fellow students	34
Sibling	15
Other family member	12
General person, no specific details	6
Respondents' students	5
High school students	1
People from other countries	1
Coworker	1
¹ N=1,566 ² N=602 (Note: Respondents could give multiple answers)	

Besides promoting study abroad, Gilman Scholars encouraged family and friends to pursue other international exchange opportunities. Nearly all Scholars have, at some point since returning home, recommended international exchange or travel to friends and a majority has done so with family.

	Percent
Encouraged friends or peers to apply for international exchange/travel abroad	96
Encouraged family member(s) to apply for international exchange/travel abroad	65
N=1,574	

Encouraging Family and Friends to Apply for Gilman Scholarships

In focus groups and interviews, some Scholars—especially those who identified themselves as atypical study abroad students—recognized that study abroad is a less obvious option for their peers and felt a particular responsibility to encourage others similar to themselves.

Scholars encouraged family and friends to apply for the Gilman Scholarship. They focused on the financial benefits of using the Gilman Scholarship to reduce financial burdens and thus make international exchange and study abroad financially feasible. Scholars presented their own Gilman Scholarship experiences as proof that it is attainable, and worth the application effort.

I'VE TALKED TO POOR STUDENTS WHO FELT LIKE THEY COULDN'T AFFORD STUDYING ABROAD, AND I SAID, "WELL, ACTUALLY NO. NEVER USE POVERTY AS AN EXCUSE NOT TO DO SOMETHING ACADEMIC." SO THERE'S MONEY AVAILABLE IF YOU HAVE THE ABILITY TO PUSH YOURSELF IN THE RIGHT POSITION TO APPLY. — SCHOLAR, CHICAGO

The Gilman Scholarship influenced not only Scholars, but the family and friends surrounding them as well. Scholars served as information sources, shedding light on different perspectives from the countries in which they had studied abroad. They encouraged family and community members to engage with foreigners, both in the United States and in other countries. They also encouraged family and friends to apply for the Gilman Scholarship, other study abroad programs, and other international experiences.

Conclusions



The Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program has supported students with financial need who have been traditionally under-represented in academic study abroad since the program's establishment by Congress through the International Opportunity Act of 2000. From 2003 to 2010, the period during which Gilman scholars who were surveyed and interviewed for this evaluation studied abroad, the Department of State awarded Gilman Scholarships to students from nearly one thousand accredited higher education institutions, including four-year institutions, public and private institutions, community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges, Hispanic Serving Institutions and other Minority Serving Institutions. While the program has grown and changed over the years of its existence, by focusing on the 2003-2010 period, the evaluation team was able to study the significant medium- and longer-term impact of the program on individual recipients as well as their educational institutions and even their families and communities.

Gilman Scholarship recipients, who were part of this study, faced a host of obstacles to studying abroad. Beyond the prohibitive financial constraints, they cited concerns about academic challenges and family responsibilities. Describing themselves as “atypical” study abroad students, fully 44 percent of survey respondents identified themselves as part of the first generation in their families to attend college.

Eighty-three percent of survey respondents indicated that the Scholarship had enabled them to participate in academic activities overseas that they could not have undertaken at their schools in the United States. Scholars who were interviewed also described having developed a “global perspective” and interest in continued international engagement.

The individual transformation brought about by the Scholarship experience led Gilman scholars to expand their focus on international topics when they returned to their undergraduate studies at home. For those pursuing graduate education, the Scholarship was a decisive factor in their choice to pursue international or cross-cultural subjects for advanced degrees. In addition to stimulating Scholars' interest in international subjects, they developed increased foreign language skills—both while abroad and after returning home. The global competencies acquired through study abroad also had an impact on work and career choices and opportunities. More than half of survey respondents reported working in fields that include international or cross-cultural components, and almost three-quarters of respondents reported that the Gilman experience caused them to broaden the geographic range of locations where they might work in the future.

In addition to diversifying the population of students studying abroad, the Gilman Scholarship has had many additional outcomes for college campuses. As reported by representatives of U.S.

higher education institutions, the Scholarship is responsible for expanded study abroad offerings, reorganized study abroad programs, new sources of study abroad funding, changes to some curricula, and staff professional development opportunities—all of which advance the continued internationalization of college campuses.

As documented in the Gilman Scholarship’s most recent annual report to Congress, the program is attracting more applicants each year. In the 2014-15 academic year alone, the program received 10,025 applications from students at 966 institutions of higher education in the United States, a nine percent increase in applications from the previous year. Gilman scholars are more diverse than ever: sixty-four percent of Gilman scholars in 2014-15 represented ethnic minority groups, up from 36 percent in the first year of the program. Gilman scholar destinations for study abroad opportunities are similarly diverse, with 71 percent of scholars studying outside Western Europe in 2014-15, compared to the national rate of 50 percent.

This evaluation provides substantive evidence that the Gilman Scholarship is meeting and exceeding its purpose—set out in its founding legislation—to enable U.S. students of limited financial means “to study at institutions of higher education in foreign countries” and “to better prepare such students...to assume significant roles in the increasingly global economy.”

Data Collection Methods and Limitations



For this evaluation of the Gilman Scholarship, the research team used a mixed-methods approach, combining complementary quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. No evaluation study is free of limitations, and this one is no exception.

Understanding the Program

The research team conducted in-depth review of program documents and interviews with the Department of State (DOS), Bureau of Educational and Cultural (ECA), Gilman Scholarship Program Office staff and managers, as well as staff of the Institute of International Education (IIE), which was the grantee during the evaluation period. The research team collected relevant hard copy and electronic documents available within ECA and IIE.

Understanding Scholars' Experiences

The research team administered an on-line survey to all 6,177 Gilman Scholars from the 2002-03 through 2009-10 cohorts. The instrument contained mostly close-ended response items but did include a few open-ended questions offering the Scholars the opportunity to provide free-text responses to questions concerning the influence of Gilman Scholarship on their educational experiences, career plans and paths, their worldview and understanding of the international arena, and their lives overall.

Telephone interviews were conducted with 25 Gilman Scholars who currently reside in rural communities. By including rural-based Scholars in the data collection, the research team hoped to assess whether any differences could be observed in the Scholars' experience and application of skills depending on whether they function in a rural or urban context. To identify rural-based Scholars, the research team used the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) Rural Health Research Center's Rural-Urban Commuting Area Codes (RUCAs) to designate rural addresses by ZIP Code.

Seventeen focus groups conducted as part of site visits to five metropolitan areas (three groups in Washington, DC, four groups in Southern California, three groups in Chicago, four groups in New York, and three groups in Washington State). The focus group participants were asked about the Gilman Scholarship experience, the ways in which it affected their worldview, understanding of the international arena, their academic and career achievements, and what effect it had on their families and friends and home communities.

Understanding Institutions of Higher Education Experiences

Telephone interviews were conducted with higher education administrators at 32 institutions. Rather than attempt statistical generalization to the larger population of all institutions which had Gilman Scholarship undergraduates, in keeping with the principles of purposive sampling, the team sought to identify the most potentially “information-rich cases” that would have the most to tell about the impact of the Gilman Scholarship Program at different types of institutions. In addition, in-person interviews were conducted with administrative staff at 10 higher education institutions. These representatives would have been invited for a telephone interview, but the research team took the opportunity to speak with individuals, in-person, whenever possible.

Understanding Family and Community Members’ Experiences

Interviews were conducted with family and friends over the telephone or in-person during site visits. Interviewees were referred to the research team by Scholars themselves, who identified close family, friends, and colleagues who could best speak to changes in the Scholar as a result of the Gilman Scholarship experience.

Selection Bias of Survey Data, Focus Groups, and Family and Community Members

For the online survey, every effort was made to reach all Scholars. The survey was completed by 27 percent of Gilman Scholars (N=1,591 total survey respondents). While this is a reasonable response, it represents the views of one-quarter of those who received a Gilman Scholarship during the study period. Furthermore, we do not know if the answers reported by the survey respondents would significantly differ from answers reported by Scholars who did not elect to participate in the survey.

When recruiting for focus groups, the research team used an alphabetized list of Scholars and randomized who they could contact. However, contacted Scholars were free to choose to participate in focus groups or not. Scholars attended the focus group gatherings in high numbers and stayed afterward to continue discussions with the research staff, as well as their counterparts. The fact that Scholars participated without being paid an incentive for their time—uncommon in focus group research— can possibly indicate some personal motivation to contribute to the study. Many mentioned that they wanted to participate in this study in order to help make sure that the Gilman Scholarship Program continued to be funded.

To counter this bias, the research team developed a survey, focus group protocol, and interview guide that focused on Scholar experiences and outcomes, rather than judgment or assessment, of the study abroad experience.

Interviewed family and community members were referred to the research team by Scholars. This technique of using referrals to identify key informants could result in overrepresentation of desirable outcomes. To limit this effect of this bias, the research team asked Scholars to identify people who knew them well before and after the study abroad experience, rather than people who might have been greatly affected by study abroad experience. Furthermore this study did not

seek to quantify outcomes from family and community members in statistical terms—instead trying to understand the ways in which the Scholarship might have affected those individuals.

Multiple Factors Affecting Fieldwork Location

The selection of site visit locations was not strictly random. A process was used to select a purposive sample of sites that would provide access to an array of educational institution types and sizes, while also guaranteeing the critical mass of Scholars and institutions required to justify a site visit. Nevertheless, this could have resulted in representation skewed toward schools and individuals with the resources and opportunities available in major metropolitan areas. To limit the effect of this bias, the research team conducted interviews with 25 Scholars living and working in rural areas.

Selection of educational institutions for telephone interviews was based on the premise of purposive sampling, and aimed at identifying the most potentially "information-rich" cases – i.e. educational institutions with at least five Gilman Scholars representing the following five groups: non-Minority-serving four-year institutions; non-Minority-serving two-year institutions; HBSUs and HISs, both two-year and four-year for the latter two groups.

This manner of sampling ensured that the selection process contained diverse institutions based on their minority populations and their curricula (two-year versus four-year).