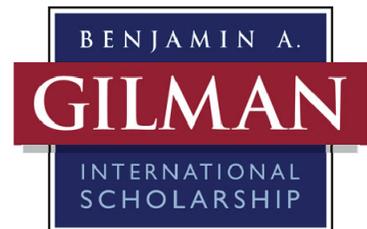


BRENNA CAMERON, CHILE, 2013

University of Puget Sound
Colorado



Receiving a Gilman Scholarship to Santiago, Chile in the Spring semester was an experience that changed my life. It allowed me to learn so much about myself and another culture and sparked new career interests and goals. While abroad, I stayed with a host family. They were so warm and welcoming that I instantly felt like I was a part of the family.

I learned a lot about the culture and the daily lifestyle of the Chilean citizens. Academically, I was enrolled in a health focused program where I was able to take a Spanish class for healthcare practitioners and do clinical observations in local hospitals. This was definitely one of the

most rewarding experiences of going abroad.

Before I went abroad, I knew I wanted to go to medical school and these observations allowed me to explore some of the different healthcare fields. It also gave me a better perspective on healthcare systems and infrastructures of other countries. Studying in a foreign country and making friends from all over the world, really opened up my own world in a very personal and intrinsic way. I began to explore how I dealt with certain situations and challenges through the many unique obstacles I had to face while living abroad in a foreign country. This forced me to adapt to a more simplistic lifestyle.

I came to truly appreciate all the amenities that I have access to in the States and how in many parts of the world people struggle to maintain their basic needs. It made me refocus on what is important in my own life and to take life along with challenges a little less critically. My mindset began to change, allowing me to grow from every experience rather than

letting challenges or obstacles dictate my success. I loved my time on my program so much in Santiago that I decided to stay an extra month in the country in order to explore a research opportunity. For a month I worked in a lab with graduate students, analyzing cells and viruses.

“Academically, I was enrolled in a health focused program where I was able to take a Spanish class for healthcare practitioners and do clinical observations in local hospitals.”

It was an experience that allowed me to explore avenues of health and medicine I had never had the chance to look at before. It also made me consider going into research as well as medicine as a career prospect. Overall my experience abroad has completely transformed my life and I am so thankful to the Gilman Scholarship for giving me the opportunity to explore who I am and also gain a broader perspective of the world.

FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I organized a study abroad fair for science students at my university. While many students at my university choose to study abroad, I noticed that many science majors were not able to choose to study abroad. I wanted to change this and

show students that not only was it possible to study abroad while studying science, but that it was vital to the furthering of their education. I had students who had previously studied abroad give short presentations about their experiences, including pictures of

them abroad. After the presentation students mingled in order to ask questions and learn more about studying abroad. Overall, I think the fair opened the minds of science students and encouraged them to study abroad. I hope that the fair will continue in the future.