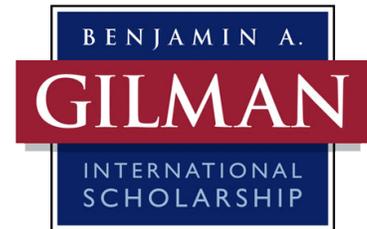


DANIELLE EHRNSTEIN, MOROCCO, 2013

Simmons College
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Due to my deep love of books, I have always been interested in exploring the various realms of imagination. This could be attributed to the long car trips I had with my mother as a child while she read to me from the front seat. Once enrolled in college, I realized that I didn't actually need to use my imagination to experience people and places that appeared far beyond my reach.

As a sociology major, I studied cultures and subcultures daily but studying a subject and truly understanding it is not the same. Studying in Morocco allowed me to better understand Islamic

culture and living with my host family proved to be very beneficial. It was wonderful to be in an environment that allowed me to ask questions about Islam, study Arabic, hear the Islamic call to prayer while feeling free to ask questions. My host family was extremely accommodating and truly made me feel at home.

The opportunity to study transnationalism in a transnational setting enabled me to see the world in a broader scope. I was forced to look at social and political issues in a new light, such as immigration in the U.S. With a Moroccan context I was able to find more balance in discussion regarding immigration and politics. Every time I visit a new place, I learn so much from the experience and the same happens when I return home to reflect. Due to the Gilman Scholarship, I was able to learn that there is so much to discover wherever you go and that life is not static. I look forward to the changes and the knowledge and experience change brings. Should the opportunity to

study or work abroad again arise, I would definitely take advantage of it, as I know the positive impact that studying abroad has had on my life.

I am currently using the skills and knowledge I acquired abroad in my current profession of mentoring students, as well as in my graduate studies.

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FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

I had the fortunate opportunity to be a Gilman Global Experience blog correspondent. I was able to write weekly blogs describing daily activities in Morocco, as well as how I was adjusting to living in a foreign country. I believe that

those who were able to read my blog felt inspired to travel the world seeing that I was able to do so. I know that for many of my friends who read my blog, this was how they experienced the world: by living vicariously through me

and seeing the world through my words.