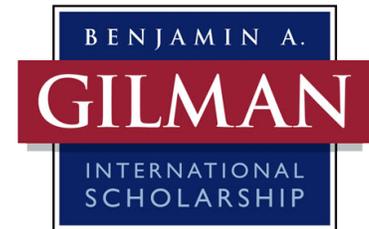


# DANAE SCHUFELDT, ITALY, 2012

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**M**y time in Italy impacted all aspects of my life. I received the Gilman Scholarship to study studio art in Florence, one of the world's art capitals. The photography course I enrolled in gave me more insight into the Italian culture than any book or lecture class could. I spent my days meandering the cobblestone streets and photographing locals; effortlessly absorbing their culture. The class exposed my passion for photographing people and international experiences.

One day our class took an impromptu field trip to an old mental asylum. A building on the grounds had been turned into an art therapy center. As a psychology, pre-medicine major and art minor, I was extremely excited to get the chance to view the patients'

art work. It was an eerie but amazing experience photographing that small piece of Italian history that has been repurposed for modern-day

Another part of my trip that had a substantial impact on me was my independent visit to Switzerland. I faced my biggest fear in the Swiss Alps: heights. I ran off the side of the mountain and as my feet left the ground, the air filled the parachute and I soared over the city of Interlaken. My confidence in my ability to be completely self-reliant grew tremendously throughout my time abroad and propelled me to further my international and cultural knowledge.

Six short months after coming home from Italy, I went to Lima, Peru on a medical volunteer trip. Our mobile medical clinic provided basic medical care to over 1300 people in one week. The people we served lived in unbelievable conditions. Alongside the locals, our group built a cement staircase in the side of the rocky mountain to help improve safety for the community. The gratitude the citizens showed us was immense and encouraged me to look further into public health, both globally and domestically.

My international experiences have influenced my academic and professional goals. I have decided to take a year off after my undergraduate career to apply for a Fulbright Grant and other opportunities to teach English abroad or intern in public health. I then hope to gain entrance into medical school. My ultimate career goals are to be a transnational healthcare provider, interacting and serving many different cultures along the way. The Gilman Scholarship gave me the support to start my journey as an active global citizen and I encourage everyone to take advantage of the wonderful opportunity the U.S. Department of State and Gilman Program presents.

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## FOLLOW-ON SERVICE PROJECT

For my Follow-on Service Project, I presented to the William H. Thompson Learning Community on my campus. I am a scholar and previous mentor in the community for low income and first-generation students. I created a guide to all the helpful resources on campus for writing their Gilman essays, extra

financial resources, as well as tips on how to stand out as an applicant.

I also felt it was important to share my experiences with my rural home community. I presented to five art classes at my alma mater and another rural high school. I focused on inspiring an interest in studying

abroad. There are many people from rural Nebraska who have never even left the Midwest, and I wanted to show these kids that they literally have the whole world to explore along with resources, like the Program, are eager to help them to fulfill their dreams.