Study Abroad as a Public Good:
Identifying and Enhancing Underrepresented Students’
Professional Growth through International Experience
Presenters

Moderator:
- Michelle Pickard, Director, Gilman International Scholarship Program, Institute of International Education (IIE)

Presenters:
- Ryanna Miller, Gilman Alumni & 2019 Alumni Ambassador, rymiller_52@yahoo.com
- Sandra Cortez, Assistant Director, International Programs & Community Engagement, Lehman College, CUNY, SANDRA.CORTEZ@lehman.cuny.edu
- Julissa Contreras-Martinez, Director, Scholarship Center, York College, jcontreras@york.cuny.edu
In 2016/17 there was an increase of 2% over the prior year in the number of U.S. students studying abroad.
Race and Ethnicity of U.S. Study Abroad Students

The proportion of U.S. minority students studying abroad has increased modestly over the past ten years.

Open Doors is conducted by the Institute of International Education with the support of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Online at: www.iie.org/opendooms
Targeted outreach, recruitment, and funding helps diversify study abroad participants

U.S. Study Abroad 2016/17

- Asian or Pacific Islander: 29.2%
- Hispanic or Latino(a): 14.9%
- Multiracial & Other: 1.9%
- African American or Black: 1.6%
- White: 43.1%

U.S. Higher Education*

- Asian or Pacific Islander: 1.6%
- Hispanic or Latino(a): 4.1%
- Multiracial & Other: 1.7%
- African American or Black: 2.5%
- White: 43.1%

Gilman Program 2016/17

- Asian or Pacific Islander: 6.8%
- Hispanic or Latino(a): 6.8%
- Multiracial & Other: 6.8%
- African American or Black: 6.8%
- White: 68.0%


#IEW2018 #IIECelebratesIEW2018 #OpenDoorsReport
Duration of U.S. Study Abroad

65% short-term
summer, or eight weeks or less

33% mid-length
one semester, or one or two quarters

2% long-term
academic or calendar year

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Top Majors of Study of U.S. Study Abroad Students

- STEM Fields: 26%
- Business: 21%
- Social Sciences: 17%
- Foreign Language & International Studies: 7%
- Fine & Applied Arts: 6%

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Host Regions

- 1% North America
- 16% Latin America & Caribbean
- 2% Middle East & North Africa
- 4% Sub-Saharan Africa
- 54% Europe
- 12% Asia
- 4% Oceania

Europe hosts over half of U.S. study abroad students.
2019 Study Abroad Data!

The 2019 *Open Doors* Annual Data Release will be held on Monday, November 18, in Washington, D.C.
The study investigates the connection between study abroad programs and the development of skills that contribute to employment and career development in today’s workforce.

This national study of study abroad alumni surveyed a broad sample of over 4,500 alumni of U.S. higher education institutions who participated in study abroad between 1999/00 and 2016/17.
Key Findings

1. **Study abroad has an overall positive impact on the development of a wide range of 21st century job skills including:** curiosity, flexibility & adaptability, confidence, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, communication, problem solving, language, tolerance for ambiguity, and course or major-related knowledge.

2. **Study abroad expands career possibilities.** Studying abroad gave interviewees both a broader understanding of career possibilities, and the confidence to pursue these career paths.

3. **The skills gained through study abroad have a long-term impact on career progression and promotion.** More than half of survey respondents reported that they believe their study abroad experience contributed to a job offer at some point.

4. **Longer periods of study abroad have a high impact on subsequent job offers and the development of most skills.** Short term programs are most effective at developing teamwork skills. 68 percent reported study abroad contributing to a job offer at some point.
Key Findings Continued

5. STEM majors highly value the gains made in skills outside of their majors during study abroad. STEM majors described academic programs at home as more insular and viewed study abroad as an opportunity to gain “soft” skills that others in their fields lack.

6. Choosing a less familiar destination was positively associated with skill development and sense of career impact. Students going to places that were less familiar to them culturally were more likely to describe a clear impact on skill development and career utility.

7. Student intentionality and highly structured programs contribute to skill development. Having career prospects in mind prior to choosing to study abroad had an overall positive impact on the ability of those interviewed to articulate their skill development and the impact it had on their career. Let’s plant the seeds early on!
Resources – *Underrepresented Students, Study Abroad, and Employment*

- Free - *A Parents Guide to Study Abroad* (available in English and Spanish)

[iie.org](http://iie.org)
Ryanna Miller
Studied Abroad in South Africa, 2012
Ryanna Miller, South Africa 2012

- Duke University’s Organization of Tropical Studies (OTS)
- Global Health Issues in South Africa
- Summer 2012
- 6-week program, spent mainly in rural villages
- Rigorous research based, (4 credit-hours)
- Awarded the Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship
Going Abroad
The Study Abroad Experience

• Shadowed community health workers, visited clinics, learned of the legal policies of healthcare in South Africa

• Conducted research during the homestay and presented findings at a symposium for leaders in human rights and health care

• Experience was not perfect, many scary and new moments

• Allowed to completely demolish any idea of a “comfort zone”
The Study Abroad Experience Continued
The Study Abroad Experience Continued
Alabama A&M University

• Department of Social Sciences requirement to either complete a study abroad or internship

• Chairperson – Dr. Ronald Slaughter, urged study abroad

• International Study Office – Ms. Mary, found the Gilman Scholarship from simple Google search

• Originally from Anchorage, Alaska – Alabama A&M was a complete culture shock

• Returned to graduate number 1 in School, Summa Cum Laude, BA Political Science w/ International Relations focus
Returning from Abroad
Professional Career & Impact of Study Abroad

- MA in International Relations concentrating in Conflict Resolution & International Negotiation
- 2017-2019, Director of Public Private-Partnerships at Invest Sou Sou
- DC REALTOR® at Compass
- Owner of a DC & Maryland Business
- Co-Founder of Diplomatic Perspective
- Brookings Institute - Member, Robert S. Brookings Society
- Young Professionals In Foreign Policy (YPFP)
The Role of the Gilman Scholarship

• Completed Follow on Service Project: HBCU Gilman Tour
• Engaged Black fraternities and sororities to think more globally
• Granted as an International Exchange Alumni through the U.S. Department of State
• Support during Graduate study at American University
• Asked to speak at 2018 Concordia Summit by fellow Gilman Alumna
• 2019-2020 Gilman Alumni Ambassador
• Serving as a role model to other diverse students who never knew studying abroad was possible
Overall Impact of Studying Abroad

- Enhanced my travel experience; ie, Solo travel
- Led to finding biological family in 2016
- Fully fearless
- The importance of peace of mind & overall health
- Became plant-based in 2013 (due to chicken experience while abroad)
- Transferable intercultural communication skills
- Leader amongst friends and family of global travel and international relations
Advice to Study Abroad Advisors

1) Study Abroad as a requirement

2) Assist students in research of programs

3) Become a Gilman Campus Administrator

4) Seek “non-traditional” study abroad students.

5) Offer parental/guardian support and access
Sandra Cortez
Assistant Director, Office of International Programs & Community Engagement
Lehman College, CUNY
Lehman College

Senior Liberal Arts College, Hispanic Serving Institution

- Undergraduate Student Population: 12,639
- Graduate Student Population: 2,148
- Transfer Student Population: 68%
- Pell Recipients: 55%
- First Generation College Students: 56%
Office of International Programs & Community Engagement

- Global Partnerships & Study Abroad
- International Student and Scholar Services
- Local Community Engagement and Volunteering
- Service Learning Programs (National & International)
- Peace Corps Prep Program
Challenges

- Commuter School
- Low-income households
- High transfer student population
- Family restrictions
- Under-resourced
Study Abroad Growth

Study Abroad Participants

- 2016-2017: 56 students
- 2017-2018: 140 students
- 2018-2019: 163 students
Gilman Scholarship Recipients

- 2015-2016 Academic Year: 4 Gilman Offers
- By 2019: 60 Gilman Offers
How did we do it?

New Program and Structural Initiatives

- Lehman in the Provinces
- Lehman L.I.F.E. Service Learning Programs
- Community College Collaboration
- Faculty Outreach
Changing the Narrative

Scholarship & Program Applications

- Open to all who meet eligibility
- Not only for the top students
- Demystifying the personal statement
- Raising awareness across campus
- Anecdotes
Internal and External Collaborations

- CIIE
- Office Of Prestigious Awards
- Peace Corps
- Career Services
- Percy Ellis Sutton SEEK Program
- Adult Degree Program
- Freshman College
- Community College Collaboration
- International Nonprofits
Building our campus knowledge

- Registrar
- Financial Aid, TAP & Excelsior Scholarship
- Academic Departments & Advising Departments
Gilman Essay – Career Goals

- Expanding on vague concepts
- Student research into prospective fields
- Connecting with career services
- Relying on returnees
Preparing Our Students

- Orientation – skill building activities
- Re-Entry – reflection and connection to next opportunities
- Career Services Workshops – catered to international experience
- Local Service & Engagement
Where Are Our Students Now?

- Accounting Firms
- TV and Film Industry
- Government Positions
- Fulbright
- Education
- Medical Field
- International Field
- NGO’s & Community Development and more!
Julissa Contreras
Director, Scholarship Center
York College
Why Study Abroad?

1. Connect your classroom experience to the world
2. Learn a language in the country it is spoken
3. Gain viable skills for your career
4. Experience your career abroad
Barriers

1. Money
2. Parents
3. Safety
Promoting Through Collaboration

1. Student Development
2. Faculty
3. Students
Discussion
Ensuring Diverse Students are Competitive Upon Graduation/Job Search

1. What does your campus do to reach underrepresented students?
2. How do you tie in study abroad to careers and employment?
THANK YOU

CIIEE