



Transcript

Welcome:

Aileen: Hi everyone, on behalf of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Institute of International Education (IIE), we welcome you and thank you for joining our webinar today!

We are very excited to pilot this new webinar and we hope that it will provide you all with a solid foundation and help you brainstorm ideas from listening to our wonderful presenters about the various ways in which you can extend your exchange experience. My name is Aileen O'Donnell and I am an Assistant Manager with the Gilman Scholarship Program at the Institute of International Education and we operate out of the Houston office. I am joined by my colleague Sarah Causer, who is an Alumni Coordinator for the Program and we will be facilitating today's webinar. We are also joined by some outstanding presenters from across the United States. With us are Megan Huber, the Regional Alumni Coordinator for the U.S. in the Alumni Affairs Division at the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, also known as ECA, and she will be discussing opportunities for alumni of Department of State sponsored programs, such as the Gilman Scholarship. We are also joined by Diplomat in Residence Mr. John Roberts, and he will share some of his career path and highlight Department of State career opportunities in the Foreign Service. Lastly we are joined by our Alumni Ambassador Jeff Le, and he is going to share more information about how he was able to integrate his time abroad into his career. We hope that today's webinar will help you find different facets for extending and implementing the lessons you learned abroad and incorporating your experiences into further opportunities abroad, in your continued education or a career.

We will have time at the end for some Q&A, so please type your questions throughout the presentation in the chat box and we will address as many as possible.

So, I would like to introduce Megan Huber, who will be beginning the presentation by discussing opportunities for alumni of Department of State sponsored programs.

International Exchange Alumni:

Megan : Great, thank you. My name is Megan Huber and I am the Regional Alumni Coordinator for the U.S. with the U.S. Department of State. We work with all exchange alumni across a number of programs but our main purpose is to help all of our exchange alumni really take those skills and experiences they had abroad and make sure they have an opportunity to continue using them when they're back home. I'm going to talk a little bit about what resources are available to you through the U.S. Department of State because you all are alumni of the Gilman Program.

To start off, you are part of this much larger international exchange alumni community and we have more than one million alumni of U.S. government sponsored programs around the world. Of those, there are more than 300,000 alumni in the U.S. and that includes a number of programs which I'll talk about in a minute, which can be a great asset to you

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Administered by the Institute of International Education (IIE)*

especially as you think about what careers you want to be looking in to, what experiences you want to have down the road. Of those, there is actually 17,000 Gilman alumni. You have a great network to connect with. The network has a lot of prominent alumni, including 360 current or former heads of state, that would be presidents or prime ministers who have gone on an exchange program, and these include U.S. alumni like yourselves who have gone abroad, as well as foreign alumni who have come on a program to the U.S. We've also had a number of Nobel Prize winners, you might recognize the names of Muhammad Yunus, Milton Friedman, or Henry Kissinger; they all went on exchange programs sponsored by the State Department. We do have 46 members of Congress, most of who are in the House, but we have about six in the Senate as well. And then Pulitzer Prize winners like John Updike, Sylvia Plath, you might know those names as well from your high school or college literature classes. But they're not all heads of state, or leaders of the world. Many of them are just doing innovative projects to apply the knowledge and skills that they learned on their exchange programs to make even a small impact where they live, and that's what we hope to help you all accomplish. If you do go on to be a head of state, President of the U.S., that's great! We hope you'll credit us, but don't feel you have to, we want to help you use those exchange experiences anyway you can to improve your life and improve the lives of those in your community.

Alumni Network in the U.S.:

I want to talk a little bit about the Alumni Network, specifically in the U.S. So, you guys are all obviously part of the Gilman Program, which is just one of many programs that we sponsor at the U.S. Department of State. You might be familiar with the Fulbright Program, that's one of our largest, some of you may be thinking to apply to that program. The NSLI-Y Program is another one you might have heard of that is a language exchange program for high school students. Many of you might also be familiar with the Critical Language Scholarship, that's another language exchange program for universities, for graduate students to study a critical language, abroad. We have a number of other programs too you may or may not even know about. We have some cool sports exchanges, cultural exchanges, as well as youth leadership programs. The reason I want you all to know that these programs exist is that they are also part of your network. As soon as you connect with us, you are part of a much much larger group that you can reach out to. For example, those of you who are interested in maybe applying to a Fulbright down the road, we know you've had an awesome experience on your Gilman and you might think "I really want to live abroad again and study or teach" and you might be able to connect with a Fulbright alumnus who went to a country you're thinking of and they might be able to help you with your application. In a similar vein, if you have a particular career interest, it might be worth reaching out one of these other alumni who has a similar field as you, who has a job you're looking to get into, they are great people to reach out to. Those alumni are scattered across the U.S., there is some organization of it. IIE, as you'll hear about, has some; Gilman specific, as well as larger program networking events. There are also Fulbright Alumni Associations in a lot of cities, as well as some smaller groups and our office helps to facilitate some of this as well, which I'll talk about in a minute. I just want you to know what programs are out there in case you hear about them and they might be a little different in structure but all of these alumni share a common experience of spending time in another country. They've gained unforgettable skills and experiences and often are willing to discuss and help others as well.

I want to talk a little bit about how you can access this network. Many of you are hopefully already familiar with it. The International Exchange Alumni website is a resource available to all alumni of our exchange programs, and this includes the U.S. alumni as well as foreign alumni. On this website, which you can see is alumni.state.gov, you can register, or if you've already registered or you were registered automatically in some cases, you can log in. And this is always available to you for the rest of your life. Once an alumnus, always an alumnus. We do encourage you to use the website. I can talk a little bit about what the resources are on the website.

This is the landing page. So you see here, there's that Member Log In in green there, if you do not have an account yet you can click on that create an account button. Only alumni who have been verified by our office can be on the website, so you know that everyone on it, all of your information is only available to other alumni. And then if you do have an

account already, you can just log in with your email address, or you can also log in with Google now, so that way you don't have to remember your password.

International Exchange Alumni Resources:

So some of the resources available, I'm not going to go into it too much because I only have a few minutes, but just so you all know how you can use it, particularly in expanding your exchange down the road and thinking about networking. There is a job center currently on the site. It for now lists things like résumé building, how to use your international exchange, interview tips, things like that. There's also a grants database, which could be very useful for those of you who might be thinking about projects you want to implement, either in the U.S. or abroad. You can search \$33 billion dollars worth of grant opportunities there. And you can do advanced searches down to, you want to make a film about Indonesia, and you might be able to find funds for it. So, pretty much any interest you have, any project idea you can come up with, there's likely some sort of funding available out there, so check the grants database for that. In addition to that, there's a research tools section, and this might come in handy, particularly for those of you who might be in university now but as soon as you leave, you might lose access to some of these databases. This includes things like ProQuest and EBSCO. We have 20,000 publications available to you all for free on the website, so this includes everything from scholarly journals, if you ever want to do research or anything like that, as well as popular magazines and newspapers like The New York Times or Sports Illustrated or things like that, that most, even online these days, you have to pay for. So now you can read any article you want for free. There's an events tab which you can look at for local events in your area. I also want to highlight, particularly for networking purposes, the Alumni Directory, so anyone who registers through the website has an option to make a profile, and they can include as much information or as little information as they like. But many alumni do choose to include their interests, their job, their university, and their field of interest. So this is another great opportunity if you are looking into studying economics in China, you might want to connect with someone in China who is studying the same thing. Or maybe you want to look for someone in your home town who is studying the same thing, maybe a Fulbright Scholar who researched what you are looking into, or someone who now works for IBM and you really want to work for IBM. I do encourage you to look at the Alumni Directory, you can filter that by a number of different things and find people who are interesting to you. We've had groups of alumni before who went to a specific country and they found other alumni in their area who went to that same country and they've held language classes and things like that or just let them know about speakers that are coming about Indonesia or whatever country it might be. That's a really great resource that I encourage you to use as well for your networking purposes. And finally I want to mention the alumni highlights and stories. We do love to feature all of the great things you all are doing. If you do present a project that was a result of your exchange, let us know and we're very happy to help you promote it. We'll do it on the website, it will be public with your consent, always. And the State Department will know what great things you're doing. We'll promote it on social media and you'll get the promotion that you would like and get to highlight your experiences and help with storytelling. So, those are a few of the resources on the website. Again, if you haven't registered just go to alumni.state.gov, submit your registration, and I will go in and verify the account.

Other Opportunities for American Alumni:

I want to talk a little bit more about what specific opportunities are available for American alumni. As I mentioned that website is for all alumni of all programs. I know you all are probably looking a bit more internally at the moment as to what other alumni can do for you here in the U.S. So, what my office has, we have a U.S. Alumni Toolkit which provides a lot of great content, as far as, how can you meet with current exchange participants, how can you get in touch with the Diplomats in Residence Program that you'll hear about in a little bit, just some great ways to reconnect with your exchange. That Toolkit is available on the website. It can also be available if you email us and we can send it out to you. Additionally, we plan things like career fairs and mentoring opportunities. We have a plan in place for a virtual career fair for a chance for you all to explore what careers might be best for you based on your interests and your experiences. The way you would hear about that, again, is through registering on our website and you'll start getting our newsletters.

We also have piloted virtual exchange programs, for those of you really interested in language we have done that and are looking to expand it further. There are opportunities for project, essay, or photo competitions, which you are always welcome to join. Possible grant opportunities, as well cross-program alumni networking opportunities. So those chances to meet other alumni of these programs who might have gone and had a similar experience as you all.

I'm just going to end with this quote I really like : "May your adventures bring you closer together, even as they take you far away from home." I think this really captures exactly what we hope your experience entails for you all. You all traveled to different parts of the world, but we really hope you did develop a deeper connection with those people in your host communities as well as your communities back home in a lot of cases, and with other alumni in the network. And we do hope you'll take advantage of all of those resources that are available to you.

You have my name again, Megan Huber. You can contact me through the website exchangealumni.state.gov, and exchangealumni@state.gov is the email you can reach us at. Please let me know if there's any questions, we hope that we can help you all continue to extend and expand those exchange experiences. I know they were probably very meaningful and we really do want to help you all out.

Gilman Alumni Opportunities:

Sarah: Thank you Megan for giving us those insights into the further opportunities the Department of State offers for the alumni. I feel oftentimes they don't know of all these opportunities for them to take advantage of. So thank you for being on the line and giving us insight into further additions they can use from being a Gilman Scholar.

In addition to those valuable resources that Megan was able to let us know about, the Gilman Scholarship offers many opportunities to stay connected through our alumni portal. Our alumni section through the Gilman application system allows alumni to log in at any time and update their account information, such as name, current location or contact details. Follow-on Service Projects and other great information about you as an alum can be shared through your alumni portal. We are always very eager to hear about the exciting things and encourage you to "toot your own horn" or brag about yourselves, because we do feature you on our website and in our newsletter. Definitely log into your alumni portal and update us, we would love to keep in touch with you.

As I mentioned, we have those newsletters, and if you're not already subscribed, I encourage you to sign up to receive the Gilman Alumni Newsletter to stay current with what is happening throughout the Gilman Program, in addition to finding out about other scholastic opportunities abroad and through the U.S. Department of State. You can also find the registration for the newsletter on the Gilman website section for alumni, so definitely take a look at our website.

Additionally, we have our official LinkedIn, and I highly encourage you to join that as an official Gilman Alumni group to stay connected with the Gilman Scholarship as well as your fellow Gilman alumni. There are also subgroups for alumni who wish to remain connected to their world region of study or interest. We also offer many job openings and other announcements on this page, so keep an eye out if you're interested in staying connected to further fellowship or job opportunities.

Lastly, we have our Gilman webinars. As part of our commitment to engaging and supporting our alumni, we put on several webinars throughout the year, such as our Re-Entry Webinar to help recent returnees process the culture shock and emotion and this is conducted twice a year. We also have a webinar for Gilman Scholars interested in applying for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. It offers advice from Fulbright Program staff and Gilman-Fulbright recipients, you can find more information on our newsletters or on our website.

Additionally, we have an exciting opportunity for Gilman Alumni to participate in our Gilman Alumni Ambassador Program. Every summer we select from a group of applications to have these students partake in this program. What

you are required to do is to have returned home and fill out your Follow-On Service Project in order to apply. You do not actually have to be a student for this opportunity, you can, but many of our ambassadors are professionals, both young and seasoned. We recently accepted and are currently training 30 ambassadors to serve for the 2014-2015 year. They will be conducting outreach on behalf of the Gilman Scholarship across the U.S. If this is an opportunity that interests you, we highly encourage you to apply in the future. It's also a great way to develop your presentation and networking skills while navigating through the re-entry process.

Lastly, we have our networking events. This past spring, the Gilman Program partnered with the Fulbright U.S. Student Program to pilot an alumni networking series across the United States. At these events we've welcomed alumni of the programs to meet with other representatives from the Department of State and IIE staff in Houston, New York, San Diego, and Washington D.C. We hope to continue offering these networking events and encourage you to stay connected to the Program to learn of a possible event in a city near you.

IIE Administered Opportunities:

In addition to administering the Gilman Scholarship Program, the Institute of International Education strives to advance international education and access to education worldwide. IIE is an independent, not-for-profit organization founded in 1919 with a network of 19 offices and affiliates worldwide and over 1,200 member institutions. As a world leader in the international exchange of people and ideas, IIE designs and implements programs of study and training for students, educators, young professionals and trainees from all sectors with funding from government agencies, foundations, and corporations.

IIE also administers a wide variety of scholarship and fellowship opportunities for students, scholars and professionals, including those for the U.S. Department of State and other private and public sponsors.

One of the opportunities is the Fulbright Program, which is also, as mentioned before, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and has been administered by IIE since its inception in 1940's. There are many different opportunities within Fulbright, and I will cover them briefly. They include the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, which is the largest U.S. international exchange program. It offers opportunities for students and professionals who have obtained a bachelor's Degree to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching, and teaching in elementary and secondary schools worldwide. The grant lengths and dates vary by country. Take a look at their website for more details. There is also the Fulbright Scholars Program; the Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES), is a division of IIE, is well known for its expertise and extensive experience in conducting international exchange programs for scholars and university administrators. There is also the Fulbright Clinton Fellowship. The J. William Fulbright – Hillary Rodham Clinton Fellowship, in its full name, allows fellows to serve in professional public-policy-related placements in foreign government ministries or institutions and to gain hands-on public sector experience in participating foreign countries, while simultaneously carrying out an academic study or research project.

One of the new awards that's really exciting is the Fulbright mtvU Awards. It is available to all countries where there is an active Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Projects should center around research on an aspect of international musical culture, and should focus on contemporary or popular music as a cultural force for expression. If that is something that piques your interest, definitely take a look at that.

The last Fulbright award that we'll cover is the Fulbright National Geographic Digital Storytelling Fellowship, which provides a unique platform for American Fulbright students to develop global narratives and discuss commonalities across borders around a common issue or theme. Trained, supported, and mentored by National Geographic Editors during their grants in one or multiple countries, the fellows will use new media platforms to help build ties across cultures while enhancing mutual understanding. The digital content that they produce will be featured online in various places, including a blog hosted by National Geographic.

Once again, I definitely encourage you to take a look at the websites for more detailed information on each of these opportunities.

Additionally, IIE also administers the Boren Scholarship through funding from the National Security Education Program. It supports U.S. undergraduate and graduate students to study less commonly taught languages in regions critical to U.S. interests. These regions include Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America, and the Middle East. They have awards up to \$20,000 to \$30,000. Recipients commit to work in the federal government for at least one year after graduation. It's a great opportunity for anyone interested in these areas to look into.

Additionally, there is the Confucius China Studies Program, which supports doctoral and master's degree students from U.S. universities to undertake advanced language training, coursework, and guided research related to the study of modern and contemporary China at a Chinese institution. The duration of these awards is from six months to two years.

For those of you in the STEM field, these next two opportunities may be of particular interest. The first one being the Whittaker International Program. It supports international collaboration in the growing field of biomedical engineering, from graduating seniors to post-doctorate degree holders. This program sends emerging leaders in U.S. biomedical engineering or bioengineering field overseas to undertake a self-designed project that will enhance their careers in the field and encourage grantees to engage in research, policy work and propose projects in an industry setting.

Next is the Global E3, which is the Global Engineering Education Exchange. It is a consortium based study abroad opportunity for undergraduate, and some graduate students, to be exchanged between U.S. and international engineering university programs in Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. The students of this award with the program can take engineering coursework in an international setting while earning credit and paying tuition at their home institution.

For those who are interested in education and teaching, this next opportunity for you, and that is the Hilton Teacher Treks Program, which is sponsored by Hilton Worldwide. The Hilton Teacher Treks Program is meant to bring people together and foster greater understanding between the U.S. and other countries. This program allows U.S. primary and secondary level teachers to go abroad for 2-3 weeks to travel, explore and experience culture firsthand.

Lastly, we want to promote IIE Internships and jobs. IIE offers internships at different offices around the world, most notably within the Budapest, Mexico City, DC and New York offices, but you can check out www.iie.org for more job openings and internships. For those who have seen our recent Alumni Newsletter, may recognize the special story we featured on three Gilman alumni who currently work with the program at our IIE office in Houston. We also have other Gilman alumni working in the New York and DC offices on other programs. Once again I want to encourage you to check out our website, the links for the webpages for each of these programs and for careers at IIE.

Generation Study Abroad:

The last thing that we really want to feature right now for you is Generation Study Abroad. IIE has recently launched our new initiative Generation Study Abroad and has partnered with key stakeholders and institutions around the United States. The Goal of Generation Study Abroad is to double the number of U.S. students studying abroad by 2019.

As you can see, the method is 4 fold. But as recipients of the Gilman Scholarship and having studied abroad, you are part of Generation Study Abroad already. You can help us achieve this goal that you can see on the screen by promoting awareness of studying abroad – create a buzz and excitement, inspire action and advocacy, and build coalitions beyond the norm and extend the reach through new channels.

Please help us reach these goals and interact with us on social media by using our hashtag #generationstudyabroad and definitely take part in this new opportunity.

Additional International Opportunities:

The last thing we want to highlight is opportunities for international studies outside of IIE and Gilman. These opportunities that we want you to look into, we want to advise that you research them individually as we don't have all of the specific requirements and deadlines. The first one is the Critical Language Scholarship, and it is also funded by the U.S. Department of State and offers scholarships to participate in intensive language studies in countries that predominately speak Critical Need Languages such as: Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Turkish to name a few.

There is also the Teaching English Program, many students wish to go abroad after they graduate and teach English. We've looked at only a small portion of these opportunities here such as the JET program, which offers graduates the opportunity to teach English in Japan for 2 years, and CIEE offers many different locations for graduates to teach English for different terms and they also offer different living accommodations such as homestays and apartments. If that is something that piques your interest, take a look at their websites. Lastly, there is foreign government sponsored scholarships to teach English. Many different country governments directly offer these positions to Americans, so take a look for those different opportunities.

Another popular resource that many students partake in after they graduate is joining the Peace Corps, which provides long term volunteer opportunities to serve communities abroad to promote world peace and friendship through collaborative projects that tackle global challenges, such as climate change, pandemic diseases, food security, and gender equality and empowerment. There are also combination programs with the Peace Corps and select U.S. institutions to complete master's programs and volunteer work.

I want to leave you with the idea of IIE Passport. IIE has created a comprehensive online resource for students and graduated students to find opportunities abroad, you can visit IIE Passport's website for more details and utilize it to search for these other options.

John C. Roberts – Diplomat in Residence:

Aileen: At this time, I'd like to introduce John Roberts. John Roberts is a career member of the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service currently serving as a Diplomat in Residence for Southeast Texas and Louisiana. Prior to his assignment as Diplomat in Residence he served as Director of the Civilian Response Corps in the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations. He also earned a Master of Strategic Studies Degree from the U.S. Air Force Air War College, served as Public Affairs Officer for Barbados and the six other nations of the Eastern Caribbean, and directed the Press and Cultural Affairs Offices at the U.S. Embassy Baghdad as Information Officer and Acting Public Affairs Officer. Thank you so much for joining us today Mr. Roberts.

John Roberts: Thanks Aileen, thanks Sarah. I wish you all out in cyberspace could see this great, absolutely well-organized event we've got going on here. Thanks so much for having me today and thank you Gilman Scholars for being out there to participate. You are my primary audience and I love working with and talking to you folks because you understand and appreciate U.S. foreign policy and have a real appreciation for this. Very importantly, I want to make sure you have my contact information, which is, I'm the Diplomat in Residence for Southeast Texas and Louisiana, and you can see my email address (DIRSoutheastTexasLou@state.gov). I encourage you, if you have questions, we have Diplomats in Residence located all over the United States. Go to our website, careers.state.gov, and look at the map and reach out to a Diplomat in Residence near you.

What I'm going to do today is talk about four main opportunities; student programs, Civil Service programs, foreign service specialists and foreign service officers. As you all know, we seek a diverse and very talented group of employees and we're looking for people with a high calling to serve, just like Gilman scholars. We hire from all academic disciplines and all walks of life, so no one should feel excluded.

U.S. Department of State:

As I'm sure most of you know, or everyone knows, who the Secretary of State is. I was laughing with Aileen and Sarah as I came in today saying that I speak all over the southeastern United States, and often I go to places because the further away I go from Washington, the more remote foreign policy appears. I do speak to audiences who actually can't recognize the name of the Secretary of State, and that's sad. However, I know Gilman Scholars are not those people, and we know that the Secretary of State serves as the principle advisor to the President on foreign policy issues, in fact the Department of State is the lead foreign policy, foreign affairs agency in the U.S. government.

Most people don't realize though that beyond the Secretary of State, we have a vast organization at the U.S. Department of State, including more than 70,000 employees. Of those 70,000 about 14,000 are Foreign Service Americans and they are grouped generally as Generalists, Foreign Service Officers, and Foreign Service Specialists. We also have some 10,907 Civil Service employees, mostly working in Washington D.C. and other domestic locations around the United States. And then we have an astounding 45,000 Foreign Service Nationals; those are non-American citizens who are working in support of U.S. government policies and programs at our embassies overseas.

Well, and where are those overseas posts? Well, about 275 posts abroad and in 190 different countries. That fluctuates some, as you know, we have draw downs occasionally due to crises overseas, and occasionally new countries are even born. Our headquarters is in Washington D.C., however we have passport agencies, and diplomatic security offices all around the nation, in fact, we have both right here in Houston, Texas where I am.

For most of you, I'm sure you've been to a U.S. embassy but for some who haven't, it may be interesting to just have a quick overview of what is a U.S. Embassy and what is the chain of command? Well, from the President through the Secretary of State, through the Ambassador, to the Deputy Chief of Mission, and then you see on the lower line there, the five foreign service professional tracks; management, consular, public diplomacy, economic and political, and then of course we have our Regional Security Office, Foreign Service Specialists, and up to a dozen other federal agencies representative of the country team. If you want to know more about the organization of a U.S. Embassy, I encourage you to get a publication off our website at careers.state.gov called "Inside a U.S. Embassy." That will give you a great overview of the daily roles and life of a Foreign Service Officer.

How Can You Work at State?:

Here's the meat of the program. I said I was going to talk about four different areas. We have student programs, Civil Service employment opportunities, we have Foreign Service Specialists, and what I love to talk about is Foreign Service Officers, because of course, I'm biased, as a Foreign Service Officer I could talk on and on.

Student Programs:

Well, student programs. I can kick off with that because right now is our application window for student programs, and it's just happening now between now and November. We have some awesome opportunities for students to live and work abroad for 10 weeks, or in the United States we have paid and unpaid internships. I encourage you to get on our website, careers.state.gov and go to our student program section. We have Pathways Programs that are paid, we have our regular unpaid student internships, and we have a program called the Virtual Student Foreign Service, which is awesome. It gives you an opportunity to connect virtually to the U.S. Department of State and work on projects that are

vital to our U.S. foreign affairs. I really encourage you, if you are not able to go to Washington or feel like you're not in line for an overseas internship, check our Virtual Student Foreign Service. At any rate, I really encourage you to dig deeply on these student programs, they're outstanding opportunities to try this career on, see what you like, get a chance to experience different culture, maybe learn a different language, and most importantly learn what we do at U.S. embassies overseas.

Fellowships:

Fellowships. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Presidential Management Fellowship, the Pickering Foreign Affairs and Graduate Foreign Affairs Programs, as well as Charles B. Rangel. I encourage you to get on the websites listed, because it definitely pays to do some research. You all have accomplished a lot, already in your careers as Gilman Scholars. You already, probably, have international experience, many of you have language capabilities, and certainly you have experience working in government programs. Any one of these fellowships would be an awesome opportunity for you to pursue.

Civil Service:

Well, let's go to the Civil Service. We've talked a little bit about student program and if you're interested in supporting U.S. foreign affairs at the Department of State, you might be interested in a Civil Service position. Again, they are mostly located in the United States, at main state, or in cities around the nation. You can apply for any specific job through the USA jobs website. Again I encourage you to look carefully at that USA jobs website and build your résumé there, and begin screening and searching for jobs you might be interested in, perhaps not just at the Department of State, but all federal agencies. Typically, there are a limited number of entry-level positions, for Civil Service at State, but you need to look. A few tips, and I'll just briefly highlight these, because you'll get a chance to look at this slide deck later. Look at USA jobs, create an account, get your search parameters just right. If you want to filter for State Department positions, do so. Search widely, identify the jobs you want and make sure you qualify based on your education level and your experience, and use the feature that alerts you when positions become open, that's critical because some of these jobs, most of them in fact, will be highly sought after and will open sometimes for only days, weeks, or hours, depending on how many applicants they are looking for to fill these positions. You really need to be on top of it using the alert feature that is on USA jobs.

More Civil Service tips: follow the instructions carefully. As Gilman Scholars, you've filled out a few applications, and Aileen is smiling at me right now because she knows following instructions is really important whenever you're applying for a government program, there is no doubt about it, and Civil Service is no exception, nor is Foreign Service Specialists or Foreign Service Officers. So, you'll want to follow the instructions, get on the USA jobs account, and apply to many positions. I always encourage people not to limit themselves, go ahead and make the application. Once you build your résumé you can use it and modify it, use it for many different kinds of programs. You see a pay scale there that gives you some idea, and you can check the internet of course for the exact dollars and cents amounts that correspond with those pay grades.

Civil Service benefits are enormous. As you all know if you're already in the job market, great jobs are tough to find, and great jobs with benefits are even tougher to find. The U.S. government has still cornered the market on jobs that have tremendous impact, particularly at the Department of State, where you have a chance to work in an area that's vital in importance to the U.S. Government. Health insurance, life insurance, sick leave, annual leave, federal holidays. The 401k program which we call the Thrift Savings Plan is exceptional. In fact, its recently ranked, essentially, the best IRA you can have, because it is a no-load, very inexpensive, and easy to manage IRA account.

Foreign Service:

Let's talk about Foreign Service now, the topic that I love to talk about. We have two flavors of Foreign Service; we have Foreign Service Officers and Foreign Service Specialists. Both promote the interests of the U.S. and protect U.S. citizens at U.S. embassies at posts overseas and in Washington, D.C. I would say quickly here that the Foreign Service is not a job, this is a life choice. It is an opportunity to serve your nation. It's an opportunity to represent the most powerful and influential nation that's existed in the history of our world. It is a 24 hour a day, 7 day a week job that you will love. There is absolutely nothing else like being in the Foreign Service. Nothing.

Foreign Service Specialists come in a variety of categories; security, administration, construction, engineering, information technology, medicine and health; and in fact, Foreign Service Specialists, and the Foreign Service in general, and even more broadly speaking, the U.S. Department of State, just about anything that you can do, we have a place for you to do it. Whether you are a construction engineer building our state of the art embassy complexes overseas, an architect, whether you deal with security or information management, or you're a doctor, lawyer, or a nurse, we have positions for you. Obviously, strong subject matter expertise is required. These are résumé-based application processes for the Foreign Service Specialist positions and there is a specialized oral assessment that goes along with that. I encourage you to get on our careers.state.gov website and look closely at every one of these categories and see if there is something that interests you.

Foreign Service Officers, as I said, I think that's the very best career option – life choice – you can make. We have five career tracks: Consular Officers, Economic Officers, Management Officers, Political Officers, and Public Diplomacy Officers. You need to be flexible, because you're going to be spending about two-thirds of your professional career living and working overseas. That's an opportunity to experience different cultures, learn different languages, and play a part – and not just a small part – in historic events around the world. It is a fascinating opportunity to serve.

How Do I Become a Foreign Service Officer?:

Well, one might ask, "How do I make this great life choice?" The good thing about it is, it's pretty straightforward. We don't require that you have some specialized master's degree, in fact we don't require that you have a master's degree. We don't require that you have a specialized bachelor's degree, oh in fact, we don't require that you have a college degree. What we do require is that you pass a series of selection processes that include Foreign Service Officer Tests, Qualifications Evaluation Panel, an oral assessment, medical and security clearances, a final review panel, then you're added to a career track registry rank ordered based on your choice of career tracks, ultimately leading to an orientation class in Washington, D.C. if you are a successful candidate. Now, the process looks and is fairly simple, and, it is very competitive. Our process is essentially the gold standard of recruiting and selection processes. It's rigorous, it is exacting, demanding, and it takes a little while. From start to finish, one might expect 18 months to two years in our selection process. So my point in saying that is, don't wait, apply now. You can register for the Foreign Service Officer Test online, again, go to careers.state.gov. The Foreign Service Officer Test is given three times a year, in October, February, and June. It's free, so how great is that? It's given all over the world, how wonderful is that? And, you can take it as many times as you want, up to one time a year. The maximum age for the Foreign Service is 59 and a half, and I seriously doubt anyone on this webinar is bumping up against that age limit but me.

Foreign Service Officer Test Information:

The Foreign Service Officer Test includes several different categories. There's a job knowledge portion, there's an English expression and usage, there's a biographic information section, and there's a written essay. None of these things is impossible. All can be studied for and prepared for, and again I encourage you to reach out to your Diplomat in Residence at the university nearest you, sit down with that person, have a frank discussion, get on our website, look at our sample test, look at all of the information we provide to prepare for the Foreign Service Officer Test. In preparation, a few keys; be widely read, read major newspapers, magazines, be up to speed on current affairs, take that practice test I mentioned at careers.state.gov. Test yourself on our retired questions and our mobile app. This mobile app is

awesome, not only can you contact Diplomats in Residence near you, we have lots and lots of question sub-sets for you to go through to practice your skills in the eight categories we test in. Now, I would like to think, many people go home with this mobile app and play sort of a Foreign Affairs Trivial Pursuit game. I doubt they do that, but I always laugh and think, “Gosh it sure would be fun to do that” because there are some great questions and some really challenging questions. So I encourage you to download that free app onto your smart phone and try it. Test your friends and really generate some enthusiasm for this knowledge base.

The general knowledge areas are English composition, management, comparative politics, economics, international trade and finance, U.S. history, U.S. economic history, U.S. political system, social and intellectual history, world geography. You see its pretty broad ranging, very broad ranging in fact. So, probably you will be drawing from your best experience in school, from high school all the way through university or graduate school, and I would say, just like preparation for any test, you want to take time to practice. You want to take time to study and do as well as you can. In fact, I encourage people to approach the Foreign Officer selection process with a zen mind, with an expectation of success, giving it your very best at every step, but not being so attached to the outcome. Because remember, you can do this several times.

Qualifications Evaluation Panel:

The Qualifications Evaluation Panel is for many people, the toughest part. After you take and pass the Foreign Service Officer Test, you’ll be asked to submit six personal narratives. This is an opportunity for our bureau of examiners to get a look at the whole person, the total candidate if you will. We want to look at your background, your experience – your international experience, if you have that, though its not essential, your language capability. All the things that you’ve done, and we want to map them against what we call the 13 Dimensions, which I’ll talk about in just a moment.

Oral Assessment:

Once you pass the Qualifications Evaluation Panel, you’re invited to the oral assessment. The oral assessment has a group exercise, a structured interview, and a case management written exercise. It is held in Washington, D.C. and sometimes elsewhere in the United States. Those successful candidates are notified that day and in fact, those that are not successful are notified that day at the oral assessment, whether they are going to be added to the register or not, or rather, whether their medical and security will be processed or not. The oral assessment, also, is a challenging opportunity to be the very best you that you can be, at least for one day. I encourage you to reach out to your Diplomat in Residence, wherever you are, because we do an awesome two-hour presentation including videos of simulated oral assessments. I’d say you would not want to miss that. We also do that via Adobe Connect Worldwide, in fact I did one just two weeks ago, and we had candidates from all over the world signed on to it.

The oral assessment is based on the 13 Dimensions, which I mentioned just a moment ago. Composure, cultural adaptability, experience and motivation, information integration and analysis, initiative and leadership, judgment, objectivity and integrity, oral communication, planning and organizing, quantitative analysis, resourcefulness, working with others, written communication – wow, it’s a list of the perfect person. These are criteria that we select against, and in fact, I would add a 14th Dimension that we’ve actually already talked about today, which is follow instructions. That’s the 14th Dimension that should be up there. At any rate, these are attributes that I would suggest any top tier employer is looking for in their potential employees. So, you want to map your life against these 13 Dimensions, and you want to be able to tell us what you’ve done that demonstrates your ownership of not five or six, of these, not eight or ten, but all 13 Dimensions.

Reasons to Join the Foreign Service:

Key reasons to join the Foreign Service? Its just an awesome job, no, its an awesome life choice. Joking aside, it's a chance to serve your nation, public service is critical. There are a lot of other things that go along with that, but I really feel strongly that the opportunity to serve is, for me, the highest calling. Again, it's a chance to represent the most powerful and influential nation that's existed in the history of our world, the challenging work, the lifelong learning, the constant variety and change, the opportunity to experience different cultures, live in different countries, learn different languages, and do it your entire life, and get paid to do it, while you are serving our nation. It is an unparalleled opportunity that really is like nothing else out there.

Benefits, sort of like Civil Service, we have excellent benefits. Retirement plan at age 50, that is 20 years of service and age 50. We have language training. If you didn't come to the Foreign Service with a master's degree, we'll send you to a master's program. You get host country holidays, you get paid U.S. government housing while you're living overseas, you get excellent education for your children, you get paid home leave, you get rest and recuperation travel, you get student loan repayment, you get a cost of living allowance. There are a lot of incentives. Get on careers.state.gov and you can find even more.

I would encourage you, first, if you didn't get anything out of what I did say, just remember, go to careers.state.gov. That is the mother lode of information about all things to do with our student programs, our Civil Service jobs, our Foreign Service Specialist jobs, and our Foreign Service Officer jobs. Also, download that application free on your smartphone, the DOS careers app. It is excellent. Again, it gives you an idea about how to select a career, it gives you interesting test questions, and it gives you the ability to contact Diplomats in Residence directly. Contact your Diplomat in Residence or reach out directly to me and I can refer you. Also, reach out to Diplomats in Residence on our Facebook pages. Each of us maintains a State Department Facebook Page and you can find all sorts of interesting career information and highlights there. We have Twitter feeds and we have LinkedIn as well.

Aileen: You did a great job outlining all the great opportunities with the Department of State. Like John said, please don't be intimidated by taking the Foreign Service exam, you can take it as many times as you'd like, you can get a jump start while you're still in college. He also outlined opportunities for you to serve as a virtual intern, and we actually had someone question how they can get a job without experience. And I think these opportunities will really serve as a lynch pin to get you into your career, so if you're looking to start your career, definitely check out our LinkedIn page, we've posted these opportunities, and check out the websites that John has told you to look at.

Professional Skills from Study Abroad:

On that note, I'd like to switch over to talking about how students can talk about their skills gained from abroad on their résumés, cover letters, and elevator speeches, as well as interviews. I'm just going to go briefly into this because our alumni speaker will be able to touch upon these more in depth. So, when you're creating your résumé, make sure to identify the skills you gained while abroad, and start to apply them in your professional development. Start trying to integrate the skills you acquired from study abroad into your résumé, cover letter, and elevator speeches. Some skills you might have noticed that you gained while abroad are your adaptability and flexibility, maybe you're now able to operate with a high level of ambiguity, you're able to function outside of your comfort zone, as well as communicate despite obstacles. You can also take direction and lead others, manage time and resources, identify and solve problems with limited tools, handle challenging situations respectfully, and manage stress and conflict. I know that before I went abroad, my independence and my ability to operate with a high level of ambiguity had skyrocketed after going abroad. So, being able to talk about situations where you really grew and were challenged, to employers really gives you a leg up to other students because only one percent of students study abroad. Being able to talk about these experiences to employers really helps you.

Articulate Your Skills:

We've added a picture here, so as I mentioned before, education abroad helps develop key desirable traits that most employers are looking for, such as adapting to situations of change and intercultural awareness. We recommend using your time abroad as a lynch pin for future career and academic endeavors. We recommend brainstorming or completing a self-evaluation to decipher what skills and competencies you gained while abroad. For example, did you gain time management skills because of your large course load and internship? Did you develop critical thinking skills and strengthen handling unpredictable and unfamiliar situations through your experience abroad? These are really important aspects to highlight to employers in your future career search, for example, in your résumés, cover letters, and interviews. Your résumé should effectively communicate why an applicant is an ideal candidate for a specific position or field. We recommend that students add their transferrable skills and knowledge gained from studying or interning abroad from their résumés in order to show why they would be a valuable employee. We don't want you to just list that you were abroad for a semester, maybe try and highlight some of the achievements that you completed while you were abroad. Perhaps you completed an internship or any specific courses that might be applicable to what you'll be doing with that employer. You can describe your qualifications and skills for the position that are matching the job description. And in your interviews, we definitely encourage you to cite your transferrable skills from abroad and use examples. You can see from this example here, but you can also hear more in depth information in the Gilman Re-entry Webinar, on our LinkedIn website we've posted the link to this webinar which you can download and listen to. We go in-depth on how to highlight these experiences into your résumé, cover letters, and interviews.

I'm going to touch upon interviews. In regards to interviews and networking, we advise alumni to practice answering interview questions with specific examples to show how your skills and experiences will translate into the professional world. We encourage you to use the S.T.A.R. approach, which is an acronym for Situation, Task, Action, and Results, when answering behavioral questions that show you have the skills they are looking for. Situation meaning, you've described the back story to a challenge you have overcome. Task, what was your exact role or responsibility in the situation, and what was the end goal? The Action would be, explain the sequence of actions and your thought process to how you dealt with this challenge, and why you chose this method. And then lastly, Results, where you summarize the tangible results and impact of your work and decision. How are things better off because of the decisions that you made? Use a high level of detail and concrete evidence to show the full impact of your initiative.

Jeff Le:

Now, I'm going to hand things over to Jeff Le. He is going to talk about his time abroad and how he was not only able to articulate the skills that he gained during his time abroad as a Gilman Scholar, but also he's going to speak about how he extended his experience through his career.

Jeff: Hello everybody. My name is Jeff Le, I was a 2004 Gilman Scholar at the University of Ghana. First off, I just want to thank Sarah and Aileen and John for all the information so far. John in particular, I think you really captured a lot of the Foreign Service positives, and I think a lot of the importance of your work, especially in terms of I think implicitly understanding the culture of the Foreign Service. It's a really vital piece, and those 13 components that he talked about, I think definitely resonate here.

Jeff's Day Job:

So, I'm based out here in Sacramento. I work for the Governor of California. I have been serving as Deputy Director for External and International Affairs. It's a pretty broad role here, and you'll find that actually the international affairs universe is very broad. Let's say, you don't think being a Foreign Service Officer is necessarily the thing you've always wanted to do. There's definitely a lot of things out there. My day to day covers a lot of issues. I'm meeting with a lot of domestic and international stakeholders. I'm handling a lot of protocol, I'm organizing meetings and having events. Just today, for example this is just from this morning, I met with 13 water groups, 21 environmental groups, did a walk through with the Consulate General of Mexico, took a phone call with the Archbishop of San Francisco, and then took

meetings with the L.A. Chamber of Commerce. So, it's a constant sort of barrage of things, and I think one of the best skills that one can have from the study abroad experience is the ability to juggle many things, and I think as a Gilman Scholar in particular, that grant and that experience lends itself to showing a lot of important, at least initial, skills that are critical for the field, beyond talent and beyond exposure to the international arena, but also the ability to deal with adversity. Having a record of success so far, being fairly driven, and of course I think something we really need to highlight is having character and being unique. I say unique because I think uniqueness is one of the most important factors in being successful in international affairs.

Jeff's Childhood Dream:

I wasn't always interested in working in the international arena. If you had told me I was going to work for the Governor of California ten years ago, before I went to Ghana, I probably would have laughed. On top of that, if you would have asked me if I was going to leave the country, I was probably going to laugh. My whole dream as a kid was I wanted to be an astronaut. The woman there in the top left corner, that is Sally Ride, that's the first woman in space, that is my childhood hero. I went to space camp, I had a whole plan. I was going to go to UC San Diego where Sally Ride taught, I was going to get mentored by her, and then I was going to do the NASA internship, go to flight school, become an astronaut, fly to Mars, and then bask in the glory. Unfortunately, things happen, and you'll find quickly that, and I'm sure in your international experience, things change. And the thing that I didn't realize was that to fly for NASA you have to pass a physical exam, and unfortunately, I wasn't able to pass, but it was something that really just shook me. In that moment, I realized that I wasn't necessarily interested in going to space, I was interested in exploration. I became very curious about doing international things and I found myself at a crossroads. So, I try to take the negatives of having disappointment and make it into something different. I decided I was going to study abroad, I was going to change my major to African History and International Politics, and I went to the University of Leeds for a year. And while I was there, and John I think it's relevant for you to know that I filled in and did a State Department internship before I went off to the University of Ghana where I was a Gilman Scholar, where I was doing field research on economic history. So this is, you know, one of those pivotal experiences of things that you always talk about and think about, the people you meet, the things that you saw. Not just the experience when you get there, but also how do you deal with having that experience when you come back.

The Universe of International Relations Jobs:

The universe, the universe is a very big place here. These are just a few examples of things I thought of off the top of my head, I would probably also add international law, it is a huge huge world. Let's say you don't work at the State Department, you're in the research field, you're in international education, you're working in the consulting world, you're in business, you're in academia, you're an international journalist – it is a huge arena. And there I was staring at all these things and I asked myself, what in the world was I going to do? So I did what anyone would do, I dabbled, I had a little bit of trial and error. And I went on this journey. In many ways I had no idea how it was going to turn out. Like I said, I started out doing the State Department internships, I worked in the DC office, I also worked in Tbilisi and Bucharest, and through that experience kind of lent itself to working in international institutions, then going back to graduate school, and then finding myself in sort of this straddle between politics and policy in the international arena, both domestically and internationally. Again, it's not necessarily the road that you necessarily think you'll actually land on, and I think if you'd asked me ten years ago I don't think any of that would have happened, but things happen when you really keep an open mind. So, I dabbled in international diplomacy and institutions, I got to work on elections around the world, I got to visit very interesting places – that's Burma actually on the right there, after the transition. And I got to work in Afghanistan, where I got to work with the military and helping people communicate.

Personal Skills from Study Abroad:

I know that Sarah had mentioned some of the professional skills gained and I know that John had talked about those. I'm going to talk to you about some of the personal skills, because I think that is a very vital piece here. Having a passion, which I know many of you have if you're in the international field, that's really a key here. And also the lessons that you've learned from the places that you've been to, always keeping in mind that those experiences help shape who you are. I think I mentioned to you trial and error, you've obviously had to deal with a lot of adversity and you've had to be quick decision makers in a place of challenge. It's not easy. Living abroad, it has its huge advantages but there are also some challenges. Sacrifice, you're away from loved ones and home, it is a huge ability to be able to thrive in that environment. Having the ability to check in with people and having that rock of important people in your life to ensure that you stay in the straight and narrow and also that you're actually able to be able to connect your experiences to others is very important. I think I've mentioned to you the ability to transition. Not everything is forever, and I think the people who are best adept at adjusting to new environments and situations, personally and professionally, those people tend to succeed. The ability to tell a story, this will help you certainly in terms of being interesting, but also the ability to share with someone what you experienced and how that helped shape you, and in your interviews, in your résumé, in your cover letter, all those sort of tools, those are huge pieces of telling the story. Empathy and respect, it's something that is sort of implied but it's never really spoken about. Empathy is a huge personality trait to focus on and grow. I don't think it can be said enough. I think if you're in international relations or in politics, you'll find that your word is the most important currency. Connectivity, you're connected to the world and having that ability to be able to reach out to many people, that will help you excel in your international work. And the last piece is perspective and open mindedness, like I said. Sometimes things sort of come your way, things are really hard and it's important to take that step back and really sort of reflect on just how to move forward on an issue or a challenge.

The Job Hunt (Learning):

The first thing one has to think is "Oh my gosh, this whole world of things that are going on, what do I do?" I think the very first thing, this is my process but, I think it is something that is very relevant and you'll all start from somewhere if you haven't already. The very first thing, and it's something that can be hard, especially for these doers out there that many of you are, is to take a step back and really ask yourself what do you want. What do you want in your life? What is really important to you, what makes you happy? And once you have a sense of that, try and develop a lay of the land, I think I highlighted some of the pieces, it a big universe. How do you help develop and sort of figure out this roadmap? I think gathering of information is vital. And luckily for you, you are all folks who have achieved a lot of things, and as a result of that, you have incredible networks. At least, maybe relation points would be the better term. But there's a couple here; university alumni, scholarship program alumni, like for the Gilman, organizations you've been a part of, young professional organizations, language meet ups, hobby clubs, athletic events, and of course the friends of friends of friends, and that will be very important for you down the road.

The Job Hunt (Exposure):

Now you've gotten a sense of where you need to be turning, and I think you'll find that many of the jobs internationally, or let's say in the United States, there are only so many places in town. But what's for sure is, the international hubs, they will have some sort of intellectual talks around town on interesting subject matters, I know that was the case for me in Washington and New York and San Francisco and other cities as well. I have in parentheses happy hour, because that's certainly a place where people are much more open to meeting new people, and I would say moving from sort of the ground game, but also the online game, and here a couple examples of places I certainly looked, and just understanding where things are is really helpful. Just in terms of learning what's out there. It's not necessarily the thing that's going to get you there, but it's good to be exposed to it.

The Job Hunt (Test of Humility):

So now you're ready to go, and you're going to find very quickly that it's a test of humility. I'd first start out with seizing the moment, because you'll find that random opportunities sometimes are the best ones. I've definitely had job interviews come out of nowhere because I shared a table with someone at a Starbucks, that's happened actually more than once. You never know who has opportunities for you. I think anyone who sees a potential in you, I think that's a moment for you to really shine and people will see that. The intel and the inside scoop, I think I mentioned it to you, being able to reach out to all those people. You start reaching out to these groups, you sit down with them, you want to talk about what they do or what they're interested in. First thing, be focused. Talk about one particular issue area and then see what happens. Let's say they are an international lawyer, so you want to talk to them about international human rights law. Being specific is very helpful, and I think also will help them guide you. Whenever I do informational interviews, I try to give the person I'm sitting down with for coffee two or three leads, two or three people who I think would be much better equipped to help that person figure out what's next for them, or get them in the right direction. Don't forget of course to thank them, thank you's are priceless. There is no cost to thanking someone and it does actually mean quite a bit. When you have people who are there for you, who you're sitting down with, they're your champions and they're your supporters, so think of that. You're building this group of people who are there for you to support you, so don't forget that's a very critical piece of the currency, and also because you're going to have to follow up with these people. Let's say you talk with them about working for their non-profit, and you hear that there is an opening and they might like you. You get a green light so you apply, you have to follow up. But here is the thing, out of all the job opportunities out there and all the things you will do right, and everyone will tell you you are doing the right thing if you are sitting down with people and you're being proactive, don't get discouraged. It's very easy to get discouraged. You're going to hit some lows and those are the moments where you have to be positive, you have to keep moving in the right direction. Eventually you will find something fantastic, you only need one.

Tools for the Job:

Tools for the job, cover letters and résumés, just to be generic, very basic. You guys are much smarter than I am on a lot of things I wish I knew back then. Read the job description, it's something that's very understated but something that's really important to really see again if this is a fit for you. This is where you want to be introspective. Individualize every application, take the time. Think of it like you're presenting a gift to someone, part of who you are. You want to put quality into it. There are no short cuts, so copy paste stuff that's not really super helpful, you can feel it usually, give them the time and attention. And of course like I said, get the inside scoop. Get an understanding of their culture, the fit, what they're looking for, what they're not looking for, what their negative experiences are and try to hone that to best give you the advantages you need.

Résumé:

I see a lot of résumés, I probably look at about 40 or 50 a week from people who send things over to me. The first thing I always look for is not what you do, and I think what you do is great, but what you achieved. What did you leave behind in all the things you did? Think about your study abroad experiences or some of the projects you worked on, the actual things you're really proud of. The real achievements, that's the difference. Because any sort of what you did I can look up online, but what your lasting legacy was or the thing you're most proud of, that's different.

Say something about yourself. When you look at 150 or 200 applications for one position, they all kind of blur together. At the bottom of my résumé, I know for me, people looked at me not necessarily because of my experiences, but at the bottom of my résumé I talked about going to every baseball stadium in the United States and I talked about how I wanted to be an astronaut. It helped me stand out and they wanted to ask me questions about it.

One page. I say this to everyone, even in their late 40's or 50's. One page is so helpful, it shows that you can prioritize and that you know who you are. The fourth bit, there are style points. Have a couple people aesthetically look at it and see if it actually looks easy to read.

Cover Letter:

This is the personal side, this is the why. Why do you want to work for them? This is the chance to make your case, do the research on the organization, learn everything about them, talk about what inspires you about working in that industry. Also, how does this fit into your life and your big goals?

Dating AKA Interviewing:

So you get to be interviewed. You're going to get a couple of these questions, and I think Sarah talked about some of it. Why do you want to work for us? It's a really big moment here, you've got to have a good answer because that's a question you're going to get. Tell a story, I think the S.T.A.R. method was talked about. I think that's a really important thing to show how you dealt with a situation. Talking about what you are most proud of, being honest about things that didn't work out and things that you're proud of. Showing how you learned and adjusted to things. Asking really good questions at the end. At the end they're going to ask you the question of, "Do you have any questions for us?" I would say take the time to look at the organization and ask questions about them. One of the questions I tended to ask was, "Where do you see the organization moving in the next couple of years and what are the challenges with that?" When you're walking out of there, just remember, it is like dating. It's a two way street. I know there is such an emphasis on you getting their approval, but its two ways. Just remember, is this a place that you think you can succeed? Did you get a good feeling from them, their culture, the things they value? And of course, you walk out of there, send them a thank you card, you can either do it by hand or by an email. And win, lose, or draw, ask for feedback, feedback is priceless.

"It's Not you, it's us.":

Let's say it doesn't work out, don't forget, it's a two way street. They're looking for the best fit. You might be a great candidate, but there are still some things that are just a little out of your control. So you have to learn from those experiences and don't get disgruntled by it. There are some things that are just a little outside your control. There are other political components that are outside of necessarily you. And just remember, this is the toughest field in the all the world, with some of the best people on earth. Don't forget that when you're mixing it up there. When you do get something that really fits, it was meant to be.

Keys to Success in International Relations (and Life):

Keys here, some things I highlight are being flexible, working smart. That doesn't mean working crazy hours, it does happen but, knowing when to put your passion into something because there is only so much energy you can have in a seven day week. Being proactive and having goals. Being humble, so the ability to learn from people of all sorts, whether they are your subordinates or your superiors. Having a work-life balance. I found that when I was most happy and most effective in my work, I was doing things that really made me happy, like this race photo here.

Keep in touch, it really pays off and these are just a couple photos of friends I've met along the way. What's interesting is every person in all those photos, helped me directly, or pretty much indirectly, get the next job I had. Every single job that I've ever had, I knew at least three people there somehow, I talked to them, they knew me eventually, and that's really the big leg up there. I think developing relationships is so important, and in your life experiences you're going to meet some amazing people. Take the time to keep in touch. That is the most valuable thing in the entire world, the relationships you're going to build. And when you look back in time you're not going to be thinking about the less trivial

things, you're going to be thinking about the people who meant a lot to you, and they can mean a lot to you personally as well as professionally.

Good Karma Professional and Personally:

Take advantage of new opportunities and be reflective, think about the things that really make you happy. I do believe in karma, be nice to everybody. Be helpful, even when you really really don't want to. In D.C. there is a saying, they say, "Yesterday's intern is tomorrow's member of congress" and it actually does happen that way. Be careful. If you put negativity out there in the world, it does come back and get you. That is one of the universal truths I've seen. I've seen people do some not great things and they just as hurt in the end. Keep yourself to a high standard of character and you'll go very far.

Mentorship:

John, one of the things I'm so glad you're here as a Diplomat in Residence because my first mentor was a career Foreign Service Officer. She was the Diplomat in Residence at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and she reviewed my first State Department internship, which helped me get on this path. Mentorship is everything. Let's assume that everyone is smart and talented and accomplished. There is another factor, which is the people who support you. Mentors are very rare to find. They teach you something that you can't necessarily learn right away. The saying I always go with is, "Experience is learning from your mistakes, wisdom is learning from other people's mistakes." Take the time to collect all that amazing wisdom, it's free.

Here's the last piece. Like I said, from the personal connections from your study abroad experience, those pillars I have down there, those things really do make a difference. I really think the experiences you had as Gilman scholars and beyond will be very critical to your future successes. Shoot big, and the rest of it will work itself out.

There's my details there, feel free to drop me an email with your stuff, or if you have questions about experiences. I'm happy to share thoughts. Thanks for listening.

Aileen: Thanks so much Jeff. That was a really thoughtful presentation. I knew when I contacted you that from your depth of experiences that you would be able to give something valuable, but I never expected something so great. I really glad we were able to get you talking to everyone.

John: Jeff, I'll kick in on that too. That was great, and thanks for those State Department kudos.

Jeff: Of course! It was a wonderful experience.

Aileen: And once again, thank you so much to Megan Hubert in the Alumni Affairs Office at the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, and to our Diplomat in Residence, John Roberts, for both taking the time out of their evenings to share information on additional State Department opportunities for program alumni and for those interested in Civil Service and foreign service careers.

Question and Answer:

For Alumni who have questions, please feel free to contact the Gilman Program. We're now going to open up the floor for any questions.

We have a few to get us started, and Sarah can start us off.

Sarah: I want to highlight that we're going to answer as many as possible. If you don't get answers to your questions, please email them to us at Gilman_scholars@iie.org, it's also on the screen, and we'll try and get them to the appropriate people.

The first question I want to put out there is actually for Mr. Roberts. You said that two-thirds of your time as a foreign service officer is spent abroad. How are you able to maintain relationships with family members, friends, and significant others?

John: That's a great question and that's a real challenge in the Foreign Service because our life is about change. Many people say, "What's the best thing about a career in the Foreign Service?" and it's the constant change. You can flip that on its head and say, "What's the most challenging thing?" and it's the constant change. I wouldn't attempt to deceive you that moving every one to three years, uprooting yourself, your family, changing your professional associations, your personal associations and then beginning a new job that could be very different from your previous job in a different culture, in a different country, in a different language, those are a lot of challenges. It is not easy. However, the State Department does a great job, I think, in creating an environment in which you and your family can thrive. The State Department employee is going to be working in a somewhat familiar environment, that is the U.S. Embassy. And although your job may change, your responsibilities may change, your professional associations may change, your experience that you bring to the job, obviously, is a huge benefit. So, I don't say that it gets easier over time, it's always challenging. But that's really part of the fun and interest and allure of this life choice. It is an opportunity to meet new people all the time. I look at it as an 8-20 principle. If you stayed in one small town your whole life, you'd have a handful of friends, and they'd be your friends for life. That's great. But if you move every three years, you get to have a chance to have a few more friends, and you keep adding those friends and those important networks as Jeff said, until you have a very interesting life full of fascinating contacts.

Sarah: The next question I have could either go to Mr. Roberts or Jeff. This student wants to know, for someone who lives outside of Washington, D.C., what opportunities would someone want to look into if they do not have the means to travel to D.C.? More specifically, they double majored in international and Middle Eastern studies with a minor in Arabic, and they want to know if there are opportunities in New York. Jeff, do you have any thoughts on that?

Jeff: So, I guess is the question in relation to looking for opportunities in New York, is that right?

Sarah: Yes, that's correct.

Jeff: Well it would be very similar, I'm a big believer in moving to the place is really important, and I know that there's a financial constraint. But that's only because of your exposure to so many more people than you would have to maybe being in your home town. There are of course international job fronts, the Council on Foreign Relations is based in New York, and they have a great job board. That's something to look at. Any of the Idealist links would be super helpful, but there are a number, there is a UN association that's around. There are opportunities; it's just a different scope. In Washington, it's definitely all there. You might be walking block to block and you'll be running into many people in the international arena. I think in New York it's a much bigger pool, so there's many different opportunities there. I can't say I know the New York ones as well as the Washington ones though.

Sarah: Wonderful, thanks Jeff.

Aileen: I'm just going to jump in and put a plug in for IIE. We have an IIE office in New York if you're interested in working in higher education, where maybe Middle Eastern politics and international education intersect. You can look at the IIE job postings on the career page on www.iie.org and also the United Nations is based in New York. There is a lot of international organizations based in New York, you'd be surprised. I had no idea that IIE had an office in Budapest until I

googled higher education internships in Budapest and lo and behold they were around the corner from where I was in grad school. I definitely encourage you to look into those opportunities in New York.

Sarah: The next question actually pertains to the Foreign Service, this student would like to know if they are able to choose their location for the Foreign Service or their Officer career at all.

John: That's a great question. Yes, the answer is yes. You get to choose, you get to choose a lot in the Foreign Service. First, you're going to choose your career track. That's when you register for the Foreign Service Officer Test, you're going to be asked to submit your preference, or actually you're going to be asked to choose specifically whether you're going to be a Consular Officer, Economic Officer, Political Officer, Public Diplomacy Officer, or Management Officer. So you're going to choose, right up front, how you see your professional life developing in the Foreign Service. Second, in terms of where you serve in the Foreign Service, you're going to have a chance to choose that too. Because each year, like a giant game of musical chairs, all Foreign Service Officers that are subject to reassignment, at the one, two, or three year period, depending on where they are serving, will bid on open assignments around the world. So, you will bid on jobs in your career track as a Consular Officer or a Political Officer, at your grade, and across the world in different geographic regions. You'll have an opportunity to bid on jobs in Washington, D.C., you may even look at jobs that are outside the U.S. Department of State. We have some excellent exchange programs, if you want to go work in private business for a year, we have those, if you want to do a graduate study program, we have those. So yes, the simple answer is, there is a lot of choice, and we are all subject to needs of the service. You will have an unaccompanied tour probably somewhere in your future as a Foreign Service Officer, that might be Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, one of the many countries now that is really in peril, but there is always choice.

Sarah: Perfect, thank you. Another, more social media geared question, is about how to get involved with Generation Study Abroad in using the hashtag, and I think Aileen can offer some insight to that real quick.

Aileen: Sure. Generation Study Abroad, as Sarah went over before, is IIE's mission to double the number of students who are studying abroad, by 2019. If you have any pictures studying abroad, you can use the #generationstudyabroad, we look at that hashtag and it's great if you're posting a picture of yourself while abroad and can become involved with us. You can also go to the website and look at more information on how to become involved with Generation Study Abroad.

John: Let me throw in something too on State Department social media. As I mentioned, we have Facebook pages. I encourage you to check my Facebook page, how's that for shameless advertising, dirsotxla, you'll see it, or you'll find me on Facebook. I encourage you not just to go on my Facebook page and like it because I want the likes, but to actually look at the content on the Facebook page, because I'll post announcements there, I have someone back in Washington helping me. Not only do I post events locally that I do, or in the Southeast, but the U.S. Department of State will post other helpful things, deadlines and dates to remember. It might be a good place to start. If you want to communicate with me though, I prefer that you communicate with me through the careers.state.gov website and my Diplomat in Residence email, that way we don't have to do a public transaction on Facebook.

Sarah: The next question could actually go to either Mr. Roberts or Jeff again, so I'll let you two figure out who the best context for that is. We have a student who is an economics major with three semesters left until graduation, and they are considering of applying to be an officer in the air force, but they don't know many people in that field. Do either of you have any familiarity with this pursuit and can touch on that?

Jeff: I guess like anything it depends on what area you're looking into. I've had many friends go through air force officer school and end up being deployed, and I think it is a very unique lifestyle, it is very interesting and I think in some ways similar to the State Department, in the sense that there is obviously a unique culture, there is a lot of room for adventure, at least the friends I've had definitely, what they loved about it was the camaraderie with so many others. I

haven't heard anything really negative, especially at least with the air force. They're certainly very technical and I think as long as you're not scared of heights I think that's probably not a bad potential opportunity. I know there is very much an emphasis on languages, and I know there is a focus on the intelligence component as well.

John: I'll add into that Jeff, as a 30 year military veteran myself. I am high on the military. Now, I'm an army veteran, but I did attend the Air War College for a Master's degree, courtesy of the U.S. Department of State. I would say the Air Force, or the U.S. Military in general is a great choice, and I think maybe the old slogan used to be, "The Air Force is a great way of life" maybe that was 20 years ago. But I would say yeah, look into it, but as Jeff mentioned, you want to do your due diligence. You want to make sure the career field you're going into is something that you want. In the Army for instance right now because of budgets and risk, it's very difficult to select which career track you want in the Army. So I'd say be very specific when you talk with a recruiter about what direction your career path will take, but the military has some spectacular benefits and obviously one of its greatest advantages is, it's an opportunity to serve your nation.

Sarah: I do have one student that would like you to repeat your Facebook page name again.

John: Wow! Hey that's good! Alright, I am expecting a "like" out of this. You can either search me on Facebook or look at it, [dirtsotxla](#), that's like Diplomat in Residence Southeast Texas Louisiana, I hope it comes up on that. I've got to confess, I'm not a personal Facebook user often, but I do post consistently on my State Department site. Feel free to check it out, but if you do want to contact me, it is best to reach me on my State Department or my Diplomat in Residence email address, I attend to that all the time. Facebook, it might take me 24 hours to see it.

Sarah: The next question I think is more geared towards Jeff. We have a student who is looking for a job, but they constantly run into a wall not having the experience necessary. What advice can you give this student on getting their foot in the door for a career opportunity?

Jeff: Well, I think first and foremost, getting your foot in the door is the most vital piece. I think my first question would be, are there unpaid opportunities for them? That is not exactly your first pick, but it is the opportunity that best gets you in front of the people that do make decisions down the road for long-term hiring. I know that when I started out, there were moments where you had to do unpaid internships and that would give you the work experience you needed to really stand out when you got to final rounds. That's certainly one arena I think. John had highlighted some of the fellowships out there, as well as you Sarah, that, you know, fellowships tend to lead to things, whether it is a Fulbright and transitioning over. That certainly gives the commiserate experience. I've had many friends when they hit walls, they look at the Peace Corps for opportunities, especially if they're looking to go into international development. Having field experience and going into international development is a vital opportunity. There are definitely avenues out there. It's not easy. I would say, depending on the industry, there would probably be a couple conduits I would look at first, so if you're looking to bounce ideas, I'm happy to take a look at your stuff and then maybe we can figure something out.

John: Going back to the previous question on how to get experience, I tossed out to you, the military is a great opportunity there. The military gives you the opportunity to train in a variety of fields, you get the overseas experience. All the military branches have what they call the Foreign Area Officer Program. Those folks get a master's degree, they get a second language capability, and they're going to live and work in and around U.S. embassies. Not to mention, you do a short commitment with the military, you gain significant experience, but of course if you do a long commitment you can be in and out in 20 years, which puts you into a second career at age 42. Not that I'm recruiting for the military, but I'd say, that's a great place to get some experience while you are serving your nation.

Sarah: Perfect, thank you both for that answer. The next question we have, and I can highlight a little bit on it, is do any of our panelists have advice for someone who is looking for opportunities for someone who majored in global communications with Japanese language skills? I will definitely plug that if the Japanese English Teaching Program is

something you are interested in doing, please take a look at their website for more details. I don't know if any of the other panelists have thoughts for that area.

John: Sarah, you know that I've got a thought and that is look at our careers at the State Department. We have not only Foreign Service Officer jobs but Foreign Service Specialist jobs, there may be a chance to use your language ability, or it might even be teaching at the Foreign Service Institute. I'm a paid performer for the U.S. Department of State so I would say, clearly, look at careers.state.gov and exhaust any possibility you see for a U.S. State Department job.

Jeff: I might add, and just thinking a little away from the public sector, I would also look at Japanese multi-national companies that are based in the United States. Maybe you would have to spend some time in the U.S. working for them, but I think having Japanese skills definitely give you the opportunities to later on transfer to Japan and use your skills more broadly.

Sarah: Perfect, thank you. I think Mr. Roberts you sparked an interest. We have one student who would like to know if you have thoughts on a career with JAG or other legal careers in international affairs?

John: Sure, JAG is great in the military. Of course we have our "L" Office of Legal Advisers at the U.S. Department of State. The Office of Legal Advisers accepts interns as well. I don't know exactly how many interns "L" takes each year but they do recruit at law schools around the southeast. Typically I'll speak to second-year students who are looking for a legal internship. If you're interested in international law, I can't imagine a better place to start than the U.S. Department of State. Yes, there are opportunities at the State Department, and JAG Officers are great too. That's a super opportunity if you're interested in the law and you're going to be in the military.

Sarah: Perfect, thank you. We want to be respectful to our panelists so we're going to ask about two more questions. The next one I know Mr. Roberts definitely will have some advice on, and it's for students who are back from being overseas that are not technically students and they want to be able to get an internship. Do you have advice where they can look for an internship not associated with school credit?

John: That's a tough one, because most of the internships, as you're well aware, require that you be enrolled in a full-time program, or be taking studies for credit. That's a tough one. State Department has a recent graduates program you might want to look into, it's on our website, careers.state.gov. Look into that. But yeah, you are in kind of a tough situation there, because the student programs are designed for students, so I don't know really how to direct you much more on those, but I would also encourage you, look at the fellowship programs. If you're just finished your undergraduate degree, you might want to look at some of the outstanding opportunities to go on to graduate school. Maybe a \$30,000 Rangel Fellowship, or Pickering, or something like that is then going to give you a degree in a foreign affairs related field paid for by the U.S. Government, most of those are pathways programs that even have opportunities to even work later in the U.S. Government. Indirectly, you're in a tough spot. I know that doesn't help about being in the internship market, but look on for those graduate fellowships as well.

Aileen: Jeff, do you have anything to add?

Jeff: No, I think John covered it. I mean, again, if you're set on a certain city, there are opportunities that show up, certainly to be helpful. But I think I agree, it's a tough place to be when you are sort of in-between. I'm sure some of you hit that wall, but I do find that being more advanced does help you pick up things quicker, and I think once you're in front of them, you'll be able to show what you have.

Sarah: The last question I'm going to pose I believe is more for you, Jeff. I've heard great responses from many students for all three of our panelists, they are really grateful for the advice that you are all giving. This last question is, where would you see yourself in five years and how do you think you'll get there, Jeff?

Jeff: That sounds like an interview!

John: I'm glad that one is for you.

Jeff: I know! Here's the thing. I don't think in five year intervals anymore. You know when I first started out; I really did, because I had a set path. If I entered the Foreign Service and I really thought it was for me, I would think, okay in 20 years I could be an ambassador potentially. I would look at my regional cones and my thematic cones, I would look at my language skills and I would think of all the pieces that would help me get there. But I think in our generation, and I'm probably 10, 12, 13 years older than some of you, I know that we change jobs all the time. We get interested in so many different things. Even up to a year ago, I never thought I would be working in Sacramento for the Governor of California. I never thought that. I was working for an international human rights organization focused on capacity building for women's rights groups and minority groups in the global south. I never thought that would come. But sometimes opportunities come knocking, and that was why it was so important to keep in touch with people, just in general. And they asked, "Hey, how would you feel about coming out here, we're looking for someone whose worked and traveled in a lot of countries, and isn't a jerk," which I think is an important thing at times. I guess the short answer is, in five years I would like to be probably out of politics because politics can be a bit of a burnout. I think ideally the one area of the international arena I haven't worked in yet that really intrigued me was in the foundation world, and certainly that sort of universe sometimes picks you. How I would plan would be just to do the things I want to do that make me happy and you keep in touch with folks and you never know what happens.

John: I'd like to add something to the excellent point that Jeff just made. I am in touch with a lot of students that are undergraduate and graduate students and I notice that students often think of life in a linear progression, because that's the experience in life they've had up until then. I graduate from high school, then I go to college, then I go to graduate school, and then I get a job. Well, most of life becomes less linear with more experience, and I advise people to have a lot of different plans. You need to not just apply to one job along a linear path; you need to apply to ten different opportunities, because as Jeff said, your life will take branches in many unexpected ways. Having a plan is good, but having several plans is probably better, and keeping a lot of options open and recognizing also when these options mature. The State Department application, for instance, can take two years. So you need to be doing something else during those two years while you are waiting for the U.S. Department of State to call you and say "We want you to start orientation class in March." Again, a non-linear approach to life with more experience I think is probably the reality and not the exception.

Jeff: I would say also, just to add one last piece and I find that there are folks who kind of fall into this, where you fixate on one goal and let's say it doesn't work out so the door closes. People sometimes miss out on all the opportunities that open around them. It definitely not a linear approach, it's more of a cyclical approach, you'll find yourself in different clusters or nebulas, if you imagine the solar systems, there's little different universes in there. There is a lot to explore and you'll find yourself, before you know it, in something you never thought you would be in. That's kind of the way the international arena works. Let's say you're interested and you go in the Peace Corps. You don't really have a choice in where you're going necessarily, you can have preferences, but you don't know what will happen by doing water and health sanitation work in Kyrgyzstan, for example. Who knows if that leads to you becoming a Eurasia expert or interested in health, or human services, or whatnot, it really evolves. And you evolved as a person. You at 18 versus you at 22, a lot happened! And that will definitely escalate from 22 to 25 and 25 to 30. So, it's definitely a growth process and it's important to check in with yourself and evaluate what did you like about this experience, what was great about it, what would you have changed, and what was not super pleasant? I think that will help you better hone in on what the real plan is for you.

Aileen: Thanks so much everyone. Thank you again to our panelists, you've been great at answering all these questions. On behalf of the U.S. Department of State's Gilman Scholarship Program, thank you for joining us on this alumni

webinar, and for our special guests for providing valuable information to benefit our program alumni. You've really helped them, you've even helped me in thinking of my career. So I'm sure you've helped all of our guests. Please make sure you're connected to our Gilman alumni outlets to ensure that you're staying updated with further Gilman alumni information, news, and announcements. Thanks!