

Returning Ambassadors



Katie Sabo
Associate Director of Global Engagement
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Katie Sabo is the Associate Director of Global Engagement in the Fulbright College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees in French language and literature from the University of Arkansas and studied abroad in France. In her current role, she serves as a study abroad advisor for students in the College of Arts & Sciences, manages College of Arts & Sciences and Honors College faculty-led programs, and assists Arts & Sciences faculty and academic departments in developing and identifying study abroad program opportunities. Katie also serves on university committees related to study abroad, high impact practices, and first-generation college student support.

Katie has been a campus certifying advisor for the Gilman Scholarship Program for over six years and has served as a selection panelist for the Gilman Scholarship Program and the Critical Language Scholarship Program. She coordinates Gilman outreach efforts across campus including application workshops, and one-on-one review of application materials with students. Her professional interests center on developing her own education and advocacy efforts for increasing access and belonging for underserved student populations in education abroad. She has presented regionally and nationally on these topics and serves on the AIFS Abroad Board of Advisors.



Scott Palmer
Prestigious Scholarships Advisor
University of California, Davis, California

Scott Palmer has served as the Prestigious Scholarships Advisor at University of California, Davis (UC Davis) since August 2013. His work involves recruiting, advising, and preparing students and alumni for competitive fellowships including The Benjamin A Gilman International Scholarship Program, Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), and Fulbright, in addition to others. He previously served as the Financial Aid Director at Bushnell University (Eugene, OR).

Scott is a first-generation college student who benefitted from the federal Pell grant while earning a BA in History from the University of Puget Sound (Tacoma, WA) in 2001. He earned a Master of Arts in Ministry Leadership from George Fox Seminary (Portland, OR) in 2010.

The lone regret from Scott's collegiate experience is not studying abroad, consequently, he now strives to make study abroad opportunities accessible to all, particularly as UC Davis has a high proportion of first-generation, minority, and low-income students.

UC Davis has been recognized multiple times as a Fulbright and Gilman Top Producer, and as a Top Producer of Gilman Scholars for the first 20 years of the program during Scott's tenure.



Malin Hilmersson
Program Manager
University of Denver, Colorado

Malin Hilmersson is a Program Manager for the Office of International Education at the University of Denver, where she works with incoming and outgoing exchange students. She has almost 15 years of experience in higher education, having worked for institutions in Sweden, Australia, California, Texas, and Colorado. She entered the field of international education in 2017, when she also began serving as a Gilman Advisor, helping students through the application process. Malin has served on multiple selection committees for national scholarships, including the Gilman Program.

During her undergraduate studies, Malin studied abroad for one semester in Rennes, France, and one semester in Darwin, Australia. As a first-generation student with limited exposure to other cultures, these transformative experiences profoundly shaped her career and personal life.

Malin earned her Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Jönköping International Business School, Sweden, and her masters in Higher Education Administration with a graduate certificate in Academic Advising from Sam Houston State University, Texas. She recently completed a graduate certificate in Web Design and Development from the University of Denver. She is a strong believer in lifelong learning.



Joshua Hudson
Director of Study Abroad Programs
Georgia State University, Georgia

Joshua Hudson is the Director of Study Abroad Programs at Georgia State University. Previously, he worked at Clemson University as a Study Abroad Coordinator where he supported students throughout their study abroad experience while working towards university initiatives. Prior to Clemson University, he worked at CIS Abroad as a University Relations Representative in the southeast. Joshua holds a Bachelor's degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, and a Master of Business Administration from Clemson University. He is enthusiastic about connecting students to a variety of international experiences and has lived and worked in Thailand, Chile, Italy, and the United Kingdom.



Ashley Neyer
Director, Office of Study Abroad
Louisiana State University, Louisiana

Ashley Neyer is the Director of Study Abroad at Louisiana State University, where she collaborates with faculty to develop education abroad programming, develops and refines education abroad processes and policies to align with the best practices, and serves as the Academic Programs Abroad risk mitigation and management key contact. She has participated in previous Gilman panels and has helped her previous institution, University of Alabama, achieve the #2 Top Producing Midsize Institution in 2020-21.

Ashley has been in the field for over a decade, previously serving as an Education Abroad Advisor and various other capacities in International Education at a 4-year public institution in the Midwest. Ashley

graduated from Missouri State University with her Bachelor in Science in Administrative Management, minor in Accounting, and her Master's in Business Administration. Ashley is recognized by the Forum on Education Abroad with a Professional Certification in the Standards of Good Practice and serves as a Forum Trained Facilitator.



Vivian Shannon-Ramsey
Coordinator of Global Learning Program and Assistant Professor
Bowie State University, Maryland

Vivian Shannon-Ramsey is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Global Learning Visit Program (GLVP) within the Department of Social Work at Bowie State University. She also serves as a member of the Study Abroad Advisor Committee to advocate for efficient administrative practices and support student and faculty scholarship opportunities. She has worked in higher education for 15 years. For nearly 10 years, she has served as a Gilman advisor and has been involved in international and faculty-led study abroad programs. Vivian has organized and implemented international programs in South Africa, Japan, Panama, Columbia, Ghana, Germany, and Portugal. Vivian previously served as the Director of the TRiO Student Support Services Program for seven years, helping first-generation, low-income, and individuals with disabilities apply for and win the Gilman International Scholarship Program to study abroad. She also serves as a selection panelist for the Gilman, Critical Language, and Boren Scholarship programs.

Vivian Shannon-Ramsey holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) from Winthrop University and a Certificate of Community Health from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. She also has an English to Speakers to Other Language (TESOL) certificate from the Training Institute at Montgomery College and a Bachelor of Science from South Carolina State University.



Cathy Schuster
Study Abroad Coordinator - Office of Student Finance
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Minnesota

Cathy Schuster is the Study Abroad Coordinator in the Office of Student Finance (OSF) at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities (UMTC.), where she graduated with a Bachelor's in Sociology. She manages off-campus study financial aid coordination and serves as the primary liaison to the Learning Abroad Center, Carlson Global Institute and National Student Exchange (NSE) programs. Cathy and her advising team counsel Twin Cities and Rochester students for "Financial Aid Preview Meetings," crucially helping them understand how their aid package would work with potential off-campus study costs, thereby ensuring the program is a good fit financially prior to confirming their participation. She has presented nationally and internationally on a variety of topics to further promote financial aid literacy for students, faculty, and staff. She has presented as a panelist in a Gilman-sponsored Financial Aid webinar, is a two-time Gilman selection panelist and has been a financial aid certifying advisor for many years. She has also presented at the 2018 National Student Exchange Annual Placement Conference and in several NSE webinars. Cathy's work on the UMTC Education Abroad Network, in which she serves as a board member in addition to the UMTC Financial Barriers Advisory Group, has been integral in supporting the work of providing meaningful education abroad opportunities for students. Cathy also helped create the UMTC Bridging Loan program which received a 2015 Andrew Heiskell Award Honorable Mention.



Kimberly Longfellow
Assistant Director of Off-Campus Programs
St. Lawrence University, New York

Kimberly Longfellow is the Assistant Director of Off-Campus Programs at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York. She has been a Gilman Advisor for six years and served on a selection panel in the fall 2022 application cycle. Kim and her colleagues have worked to dramatically increase awareness of the Gilman Scholarship Program on St. Lawrence's campus. This has included utilizing the Gilman Advisor resources to build and train a diverse coalition of Gilman advocates and advisors, leading outreach sessions and writing workshops for Pell recipients, supporting mentorship opportunities by Gilman alumni, and meeting one-on-one with students to discuss the nuances of their essays. To Kim, the value of the Gilman Scholarship Program is not only the critical financial support it provides to students but also the application process itself, encouraging deep and holistic reflection on the study abroad experience—including what motivates each student to study abroad, how they will meaningfully engage with their host community, and how their study abroad experience can impact future academic and professional goals.

Kim earned her bachelor's degree in Sociology and German Studies from Gettysburg College, and her master's degree in human behavior from Hood College. She studied abroad in Heidelberg, Germany as an undergraduate, and later worked in Leverkusen, Germany as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant.



Meghan Mason
Associate Director, Global Programs
Denison University, Ohio

Meghan Mason is the Associate Director of the Center for Global Programs at Denison University where she advises students on selection of off-campus study programs, prepares students for program and scholarship applications, facilitates pre-departure planning, and coordinates assessments. She focuses on building inclusion into the off-campus study process at all phases, particularly for traditionally underserved students in study abroad. As a Gilman advisor for the past six years, she enjoys helping students translate their personality and passion to the application.

Meghan has traveled with education abroad programs to Hong Kong, Bulgaria, Turkey, Serbia, Italy, and Hungary, and studied abroad for one semester in Luxembourg. Meghan earned her Bachelor's degree in International Studies at Miami University, and her Master's in Higher Education and Student Affairs from The Ohio State University. She has 15 years of experience in supporting international education.



Stephanie Tignor
Director of Global Learning
Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia

Stephanie Tignor is the Director of Global Learning at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) where she leads education abroad, campus and virtual global learning programs, and supports international students. Stephanie is enthusiastic about increasing access to global learning opportunities for underrepresented students. Under her



leadership, VCU consistently ranks as top producer for the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program in the state of Virginia and has received the CIEE Passport Caravan and IIE American Passport Project grants which funded over 150 first time passport recipients.

Stephanie has served as a selection panelist for the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, the U.S. Department of State Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), the Fund for Education Abroad, USAC's STEM Scholarship Program, the U.S. Department of State Capacity Building Grants for U.S. Undergraduate Study Abroad, and the Hosteling International USA Explore the World Scholarship Program; she regularly serves as a campus reviewer for Boren Awards, Fulbright, and other nationally-competitive international scholarship programs.

Stephanie is a two-time alumna of VCU and first discovered a passion for cultural exchange as an undergraduate music major on a semester program in Scotland. As a graduate student in English, she studied in Peru and volunteered in Ecuador as an English teacher. She has led short-term programs to Mexico, Malaysia, and France, and in the U.S. for international students.