Destinee Carter

Gilman Program Alumni Ambassador
Italy, 2022

- CLS (Spark) – Mandarin
- GEM Fellowship

"The Gilman scholarship allowed me to take an undergraduate engineering course abroad without worrying about a possible negative impact it would have on my finances, post-grad career, or graduation trajectory. Having this study abroad experience helped me stand out in the job, scholarship, and fellowship pools."

Destinee's faculty-led engineering course in Florence and Rome gave her the opportunity to connect her coursework with her summer internship. During her time abroad, Destinee was able to connect with the Italian branch of her previous employer and gain insight into the differences in COVID-19 vaccine transportation in rural America versus rural Italy. This study abroad experience helped Destinee grow more confident in her language-learning ability. In tourist cities where many people speak English, Destinee was intentional about stepping out of her comfort zone and improving her Italian. The growth that she experienced during her short summer was a highlight in her undergraduate career.

Destinee credits the Gilman Program with influencing her drive to work abroad in the future. After returning to the United States, she worked on multiple global teams and expanded her language learning with the Critical Language Spark Scholarship for Mandarin. Before graduating with her industrial and systems engineering degree from the University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Destinee worked with young engineering students to improve their resumes and interview skills for jobs and scholarships.

Destinee is a first-year Graduate Education for Minorities (GEM) Fellow at Rice University, where she is pursuing a master's degree in engineering management and leadership with a specialization in computer science. She also works as a data analyst and hopes to move into a project management role after graduation. Destinee is looking forward to helping STEM students on their road to pursuing the Gilman Scholarship.

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