



Loyola Marymount University

Office of National & International Fellowships (ONIF)

Example of a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant to Spain application

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STATEMENT OF GRANT PURPOSE

[REDACTED], Spain, English Teaching Assistantship

My junior year I was selected as a Benjamin A. Gilman scholar and spent a semester studying and teaching in Madrid, Spain. I am now eager to have the experience of living in a less metropolitan Spanish region, such as Asturias, Galicia, or La Rioja. However, my desire to serve as a cultural ambassador to Spain overrides any regional preference, so I am open to being placed in any region and school where the Commission and co-sponsors have a need.

I discovered my love of teaching when I worked as an English language tutor at a *Fundacion Raiz*, a homelessness resource center in Madrid. “Lash, I got the job!” Maribel exclaimed after receiving the news she had been hired as a bilingual cashier at *Supersol*, a local *supermercado*. Maribel was determined to improve her English to become a more competitive job applicant. Each Wednesday afternoon, we had *intercambios*, discussing various topics ranging from interview strategies to embarrassing family stories. No matter the subject, however, there was always a mutual exchange of knowledge: I taught Maribel English and shared with her stories about my experiences as a black woman in the United States, while in turn she regaled me with stories of life in Spain and taught me the power of resiliency and determination. After a semester of working together, Maribel was offered at full-time job position.

Working with Maribel inspired me to teach an ESL course for the local community at my host school, *Universidad Saint Louis Madrid*. I taught a class of 25 intermediate-level English speakers of various ages from 11 to 70 years old. Their first assignment was “Lunch Conferences with Lash,” which required them to individually meet with me to discuss their personal goals for the course. This experience enabled me to create lesson plans better suited for the unique needs of my students. Since the majority of my students expressed difficulty with both speaking and writing in English, I incorporated verbal communication and written reflection into each of our lessons. For example, one lesson I created was a virtual *El Corte Ingles*, where students role-played as cashiers and customers to practice their new vocabulary. Each student also kept a journal and after each lesson was required to write a reflection on a topic of their choice. This activity gave them the opportunity to learn new English vocabulary related to their passions while also improving their confidence with written English. These are some of the teaching techniques I would bring to a Spanish classroom.

My energetic teaching style and leadership experience will create an engaging learning environment for my Spanish students. As I am currently serving as my university’s elected student body president, I understand the importance of student advocacy and being a role model for my peers. My two years of experience as a resident advisor (RA) in my student dormitory also has prepared me to offer academic and emotional support to my Spanish students. As an RA, I counseled 48 freshman students and served as their mentor as they transitioned into college. The insights I have gained from these positions will enable me to provide a unique account of the college experience in the US while also allowing me to create a fun and comfortable learning environment for my students.

What excites me most about being an ETA in Spain is the opportunity to engage with the local community. I have a passion for fitness education and would like to organize a community-wide 5k run. This run would encourage an active lifestyle for local families and promote community health. I am also excited for the opportunity to once again work with *Reach the World (RTW)* program. As a Gilman scholar I was a RTW writing correspondent, which permitted me to share my experiences in Spain with a classroom in the Bronx, New York. Along with teaching and engaging in the Spanish community, I hope to continue to create cross-cultural learning opportunities for Spanish and US students by serving as a RTW-Fulbright scholar.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

[REDACTED], Spain, English Teaching Assistantship

When I was 16 years old, my father, Destry Bell, died of a heart attack induced by type-2 diabetes and obesity. Raised in inner-city Los Angeles, my dad was a product a “food desert”, a low-income community that lacks access to healthy food. Frequently limited to the more affordable but unhealthy option of fast-food restaurants, my father’s eating habits lead him to a life of obesity and, unfortunately, an early death. The suffering I watched him endure inspired me to seek methods to ensure that minority families have the tools to fight against preventable diseases like obesity and type-2 diabetes.

Two years after my father’s death, I became the first person in my family to attend a four-year university, and now, as an African-American woman in the sciences, I hope to utilize my platform to advocate for the health concerns of underserved communities. I decided to start by making a difference in my community of San Bernardino County, California, where 29% of the population is reported as obese and 85% of the food resources are fast food restaurants and convenience stores.

To counter this daunting reality, I created a diabetes prevention program called *The Definition: Redefining One’s Health*, for low-income pre-diabetic women in San Bernardino. My program earned me an invitation to the Clinton Global Initiative University (CGIU), an annual meeting held by the Clinton Foundation with 1,200 student leaders from over 80 countries. CGIU granted me funding in the amount of \$2,000, which allowed me to provide 10 women with exercise equipment, adequate nutrition education and the opportunity to take agency over their health. Over the course of 8 weeks I also taught the women affordable recipes to cook healthy meals for their families and led exercise sessions where I taught cost-effective methods to stay fit at home: yoga, zumba and medicine ball workouts.

My sophomore year of college, I took my passion for preventative medicine abroad when I traveled to Nicaragua with eight other LMU students to teach public health awareness courses and to learn about the Nicaraguan health care system. Motivated by my experiences, I was prompted to create a documentary titled *Demystifying Public Health*, where I compared the levels of diabetes in Nicaragua to those in the United States. Through my research, I found that the issue of diabetes and obesity is a global challenge. As our world becomes more interconnected, the public health concerns of one nation will become those of another. My goal to become a culturally sensitive bilingual physician is affirmed by this reality.

Since March of this year, I have been a bilingual medical translator for Venice Family Clinic (VFC), a non-profit clinic in Los Angeles. At VFC the majority of the patients are Spanish speaking and low-income. This position has enabled me to see the impact bilingualism has on a patient’s experience at the hospital.

After my undergraduate career I would like to pursue an MD and Masters in Public Health dual degree to then practice family medicine in a low-income and/or rural community in the US. These regions continue to be underserved, with the nearest physician often located over an hour away from peoples’ homes. The residents of these areas tend to be Spanish-speaking farmers, which creates a need for bilingual physicians to serve in these communities. Therefore, before attending medical school, I would like to continue to improve my Spanish language skills by teaching as an ETA in a rural Spanish community. As a Spanish ETA I will have the opportunity to continue improving my Spanish language skills through interactions with my students and members of the community where I teach. These experiences will help me better serve as a physician in the future and help me continue to expand my diabetes prevention program to low-income Spanish speaking communities.