THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (IIE) NAMES 700 TO RECEIVED THE BENJAMIN A. GILMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR STUDY ABROAD

Houston, Texas, June 20, 2008  -- Rachael Tackett, who is currently a student at the University of South Florida (USF) majoring in Liberal Studies, is one of 700 outstanding American undergraduate students from over 320 colleges and universities across the U.S. who was awarded the prestigious Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship to participate in Academic Year 2008-2009 study abroad programs worldwide. Ms. Tackett is studying Economics at the University of Ghana and completing her Honor’s thesis on microfinance. Ms. Tackett has been heavily involved with the USF Center for Civic Engagement and Volunteerism (CCEV) as a board member for the alternative spring break program. Previously, she served as Events Chair for the USF Honor’s College Student Council. In the summer of 2007, Ms. Tackett was an USF Global Ambassador to AMIDEAST Tunisia. Her career ambitions are to work in the international non-profit industry focusing on development issues and civil society.

Gilman Scholars receive up to $8,000 to apply towards their study abroad program costs. The list of Fall 2008 Gilman Scholars including students’ home state, universities and country of study is available at www.iie.org/gilman.

The Gilman Scholarship Program aims to diversify the kinds of students who study abroad and the countries and regions where they go. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and administered by the Institute of International Education’s (IIE) Southern Regional Center in Houston, Texas. Applications for Spring 2009 study abroad scholarships are due October 7, 2008 and are available at www.iie.org/gilman. Students receiving a federal Pell Grant from two- and four-year institutions are encouraged to apply.

Since the establishment of the Gilman International Scholarship Program by the International Academic Opportunity Act of 2000, over 4,202 students nationwide have received this prestigious award. 1226 scholarships will be awarded to students participating in study
abroad programs during the 2008-2009 academic year. Congressman Gilman, who retired in 2002 after serving in the House of Representatives for 30 years and chairing the House Foreign Relations Committee, commented, “Study abroad is a special experience for every student who participates. Living and learning in a vastly different environment of another nation not only exposes our students to alternate views, but also adds an enriching social and cultural experience. It also provides our students with the opportunity to return home with a deeper understanding of their place in the world, encouraging them to be a contributor, rather than a spectator in the international community.”

Recipients of the scholarship have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of other cultures, countries, languages, and economies -- making them better prepared to assume leadership roles within government and the private sector. According to IIE President Allan Goodman, “International education is one of the best tools for developing mutual understanding and building connections between people from different countries. It is critical to the success of American diplomacy and business, and the lasting ties that Americans make during their international studies are important to our country in times of conflict as well as times of peace.”

# # #

The Institute of International Education (http://www.iie.org) is the world leader in the international exchange of people and ideas. An independent, nonprofit organization founded in 1919, the Institute is the world’s most experienced global higher education and professional exchange organization. IIE has a network of 19 offices worldwide, over 600 college and university members, and more than 5,000 volunteers. IIE designs and implements programs of study and training for students, educators, young professionals and trainees from all sectors with funding from government and private sources. These programs include the Fulbright and Humphrey Fellowships administered for the U.S. Department of State. The Institute is a resource for educators and institutions worldwide, publishing the Open Doors Report and operating www.IIEPassport.org and www.studyabroadfunding.org search engines for study abroad program and study abroad scholarships. The Institute of International Education’s Southern Regional Center (IIE/Houston) was founded in 1952 and is dedicated to building international understanding and goodwill through education, professional, and cultural exchanges, and developing closer associations between Houstonians and the world. IIE/Houston presents the city’s diversity and strength to current and future world leaders and creates opportunities for all Houstonians to serve as citizen ambassadors. For more information, please call Paetra Hauck, Senior Manager, Gilman International Scholarship at 713-621-6300 ext. 12, e-mail phauck@iie.org