

Nicole Ranieri

### Milan, Italy

Studying abroad taught me more than I ever could have imagined, and I am very thankful that I was able to go abroad with this program. I went to Milan, Italy and observed classes at the American school of Milan. I learned a lot about teaching and connecting with students while observing at the school. The teachers at the American School of Milan (ASM) had a lot on their plate and managed it all seamlessly. There were students from over 50 different countries, and most of them spoke more than one language. Yet, the teachers at ASM's dedication was impeccable. Everything they did inside and outside of the classroom was for a purpose and they were not only good with the students, but they were good at communicating with the parents in their community. The parents were informed on the curriculum, so they knew what their children were learning about while they were in school. The teachers also gave the parents resources in order to help their children if they were struggling in certain subjects. This gave the parents reassurance that their children were in good hands, and not one culture was left out. Watching the teachers there was inspiring.

Not only did I gain knowledge about education while abroad, but I gained knowledge about myself. I grew immensely over the short four weeks I was abroad because for the first time I was really on my own. I could not ask my parents to do things for me and when things went wrong, I had to figure it out. I got lost, things stopped working, I had to talk to people who did not speak the same language as me, and I had to book trains, planes, and hotel rooms on my own. Most of these things I had never had to deal with by myself before, but I figured it out and am proud of how far I have come. That being said, I would not change anything that happened because I am a much more capable and independent person than before I went abroad. Google

maps saved my life a couple of times when I was wandering the streets of Milan, but I always felt safe. I always felt safe because of the people I met while studying abroad. I met lifelong friends and am grateful that I got to experience four weeks abroad with them. Meeting new people and going abroad not knowing anyone was one of the things I was most worried about, but that ended up being the easiest thing because everyone on the trip was friendly. I was given the opportunity to travel all over Europe with these new friends as well. If anyone in the future asks me if they should study abroad, I would say yes in a heartbeat because everything I experienced was a learning experience that affected me for the better.