

Procida, Italy testimony

The Experiential Learning program in Procida, Italy is unlike any study abroad experience. It is one thing to travel to a country to learn the language but it is another to be embedded into the community and make a mark amongst its people, culture, and history. This is what the “experiential learning” of the program accomplished.

Procida is an island off the coast of Naples with a population of around 10,000 people, so it's not hard to be recognized as the “group of tourists” on the island. However, after all the community engagement and hospitality of the locals, we transformed from being tourists of the island to being a part of it. Every day was busy with a new experience awaiting. We were working at a local elementary school where we helped clean and rebuild their sustainable garden. We visited the island's events and sights that exposed us to its rich culture and history. We were even invited to learn about the island's sea life by marine biologists. The work was fun and challenging. There were early mornings, late nights, and demanding physical work but it was always rewarding. Despite the challenge, there was an adventure with a learning opportunity at every turn.

We also had amazing leisurely activities. My personal favorites were going kayaking, sailing through the Mediterranean, and hiking up the highest mountain in Ischia (a neighboring Island). We did more in this month than I ever expected when I looked into the program. To say the least, this program was a unique experience that will open anyone's eyes to the wonders that the world has to offer. I myself have become more inclined to explore the world and would like to mold my life and career so I can accomplish these goals. I encourage anyone who is interested in a challenging but rewarding experience to apply to the program. You won't regret it!

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