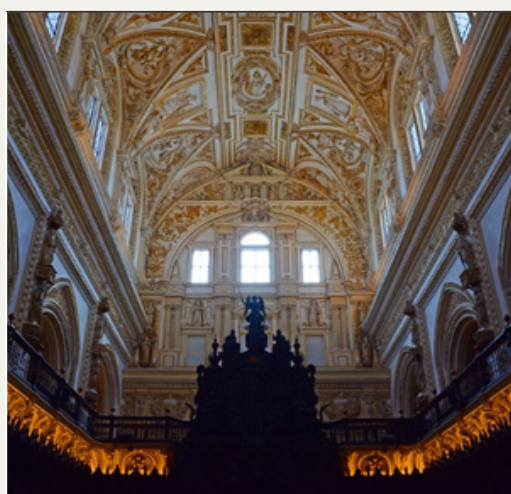
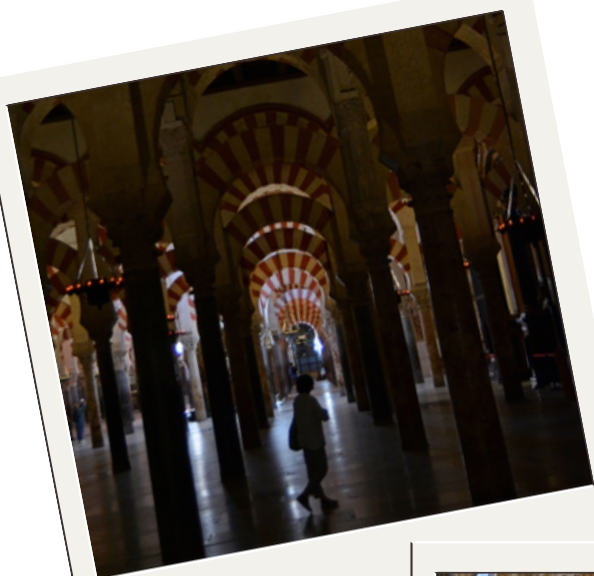


ANDY KOORS STUDY ABROAD SPONSORSHIP RECIPIENTS SHARE THEIR STORIES

IAN CARPENTER

I am currently a senior at Batesville High School. Last year, I applied for the IU Honors Program of Foreign Languages, and I was fortunate enough to be accepted. At that time, I wasn't able to fully grasp how life-changing of an experience this was going to be. The opportunity to participate in this program was a gift, and looking back, I can't imagine not having taken part. I wanted to learn their language, understand their way of life, and have stories that would stay with me forever. I stayed in Ciudad Real, Spain, but places like Granada, Cordoba, Madrid, and Toledo also became part of my adventure. For six weeks, I lived with a family there, and those weeks turned into memories that are really important to me.

When I first got to Spain, it was a bit of a surprise. I didn't understand much of what people were saying, and that was a bit overwhelming. There were these stores called "Chinos" on almost every street corner, which was something new for me. The Spanish culture is pretty lively, and people often stay up until around 3 AM, which was different from what I was used to. I didn't know much Spanish before, but I practiced a lot once I found out I was going to Spain.



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CARPENTER (CONT.)

I saw some really amazing cathedrals and monasteries during my trips to places like Toledo, Granada, and Cordoba. I also got to taste traditional Spanish food like paella, thanks to my host mom's cooking. I went to local parties and festivals, which were a lot of fun. Because I stayed with a family there, I got to meet people my age who lived in Spain. By the end of my trip, I could understand almost everything they were saying, which was a big achievement for me. My Spanish got so much better that I could express myself clearly.

At the beginning of the trip, I wasn't very good at Spanish, but by the end, I was one of the better students in our group. This experience helped me grow a lot. Now, I want to use what I've learned to help others. I want to volunteer and make a positive impact in different parts of the world.

At first, I was worried about how much the trip would cost. But then I found out about the BCEF scholarship for students studying foreign languages abroad. This scholarship helped me pay for a big part of my trip. So, a big thank you to BCEF and everyone who helped me raise money for the trip!

Looking back, this trip to Spain was really special. It taught me so much and gave me a new perspective on things. It's something I'll always remember, and it's inspired me to do more to help people in the future.



ELENA KUISEL

I am a senior at Batesville High School and last summer I went on a trip of a lifetime in Ciudad Real, Spain. Around Fall 2022, after countless discussions with my parents, teachers, and even friends, I made the decision to apply for the Indiana University Honors Program Foreign Language. Luckily, out of the 1,200 applicants that applied, I was one of the 100 students who were accepted into this program.

On June 7, 2023, I began my trip in the Indianapolis Airport with 24 other strangers from around Indiana. This also happens to be where I met some of my new best friends. In the few hours that we were allowed to speak English, we tried to learn everything about each other. We even thought we were prepared to take on Spain but that was not the case when we stepped off the plane. The first few days I had some of the oddest experiences. From not being able to form a simple sentence with my friends on the bus, not understanding a single word at the dinner table with my family, and even getting lost in a city that is 17 times bigger than Batesville and having to explain to my mother where I was. Even with that all being said, I truly do not think I have been genuinely that happy in my life.



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KUISEL (CONT.)

Some activities that I participated in were going to classes, eating ice cream everyday with my friends, singing in the kitchen with my family, and participating in community-led activities. Some cities I visited were Granada, Córdoba, Toledo, and Madrid. Most importantly, some of the lessons I learned on my trip were sticking up for myself, adaptability, and that confidence is the key to anything in life.

Although my experience abroad was only a short six weeks, I am so grateful for every single second that I had in Spain. In addition, I am extremely grateful to have received the BCEF Andy Koors Scholarship which helped make my dreams reality. To future students who might consider the IUHPFL program, the BCEF sponsorship is a great way to show that money should not be a deterrent when an opportunity like this comes along.

