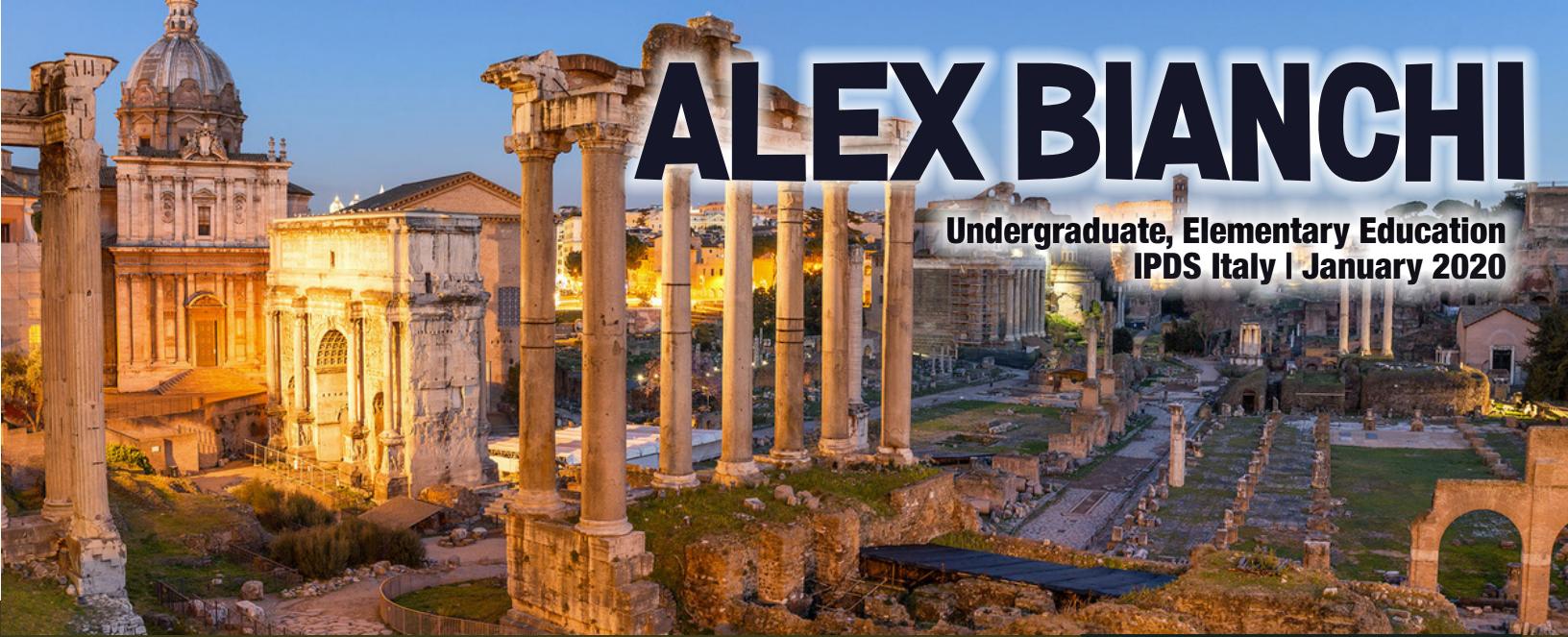


ALEX BIANCHI

Undergraduate, Elementary Education
IPDS Italy | January 2020



SPARKED

I was already adventurous, but this trip furthered my desire to see more parts of the world and experience unfamiliar cultures. Flexibility significantly helped me to enjoy the experience. Being ready for anything and prepared to roll with the punches was a major part of the travel (and is a major part of being a teacher!). I became more understanding of the ways we share space and what that means to me as an individual. I am more conscious about being culturally responsive in my teaching and developing a greater understanding of the struggles of students learning a second language. The trip also became an amazing talking point during job interviews!



MOVED

Our work in the school had the most significant impact on me. We experienced an array of grade levels and class structures. It was a little like stepping back in time, with less technology and simple classrooms environments. In a very short time we built relationships with the students. We would share stories about Buffalo and lead songs and crafts. Singing was a good way to bridge the language gap. On the last day, we were led to the auditorium where the students were waiting, then sang “This Land is Your Land,” as a parting gift to us. It was so moving and incredible to be part of their daily school experience.



FAVORITE MOMENTS

- Waking early to get to the Roman Forum
- Singing “Sweet Caroline” to our B&B hosts
- An evening touring the town with the high school students
- Dressing up in medieval Italian clothing during a castle tour



Check Out Alex's IPDS Blog:

<https://buffalostateipdsitaly.weebly.com/alex>



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We have the rest of our lives to work and finding opportunities like IPDS will only get harder. Take advantage of the chance to expand your horizons because these trips are impossible to replicate!