

# NATALIE GANG

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*My host, Marcello, said, "You don't need to drive from the kitchen table to your bedroom."*

*My mantra, "Always say yes to wine with dinner. Embrace the customs!"*



Check Out Natalie's IPDS Blog:  
<https://buffalostateipdsstudentteaching.weebly.com/natalie>



## PAUSE

I enjoyed getting to know students and faculty in a culturally diverse environment at the International School of Siena. The school community included a wide variety of backgrounds and languages so things often took a little more time or explanation...and it was perfectly alright. Over and over again I find that patience is key, especially as an educator. Approaching teaching by being generous with my patience has allowed me to create positive learning experiences and to better connect with my students. Patience is always in my teacher toolbox.

## EMBRACE

I learned that the most meaningful experiences come when we truly embrace another culture and way of life. This means trying new foods, attempting to speak the language, and appreciating the people who are supporting us through it all. Coming away from this program, I feel so much more confident as a traveler, so appreciative of the learning experience, and more empathetic as a human. International travel truly has a way of changing you for the better.

## LINGER

A few days after my arrival in Siena, I took the bus to Fortezza Medicea and sat on a bench journaling. I listened as the church bells rang and watched the sunset. I couldn't believe how lucky I was to experience something so beautiful. I had so many moments that became my favorite memories, especially enjoying game nights with Italian friends, sitting in the Piazza del Campo on sunny days, and living with a host family, which had a profound impact on me and enhanced the experience. I had such a great relationship with my host family, made new friendships and experienced a sweet Italian life!

