

ALEXIS TURAN

Graduate, Early Childhood/Exceptional Education
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CLASSROOMS

I witnessed how education is taken very seriously by children from 2nd grade into college. The students were so clearly disciplined and hardworking. And the love and classroom community the teachers developed is something I cannot wait to bring to my own classroom and students.

Working in schools that are so different from what I am used to was simultaneously interesting and nerve-racking. It was amazing to see how differently schools, teachers, and students are viewed in Zambia as compared to the U.S. Experiencing a classroom of 60+ students when I'm used to teaching only 6, put a lot into perspective. I was intrigued at how the teacher could capture the attention of the entire class and make it feel like there was no more than 20 students. She used cut up boxes to practice phonics instead of elaborate supplies. If all of this is possible with such a large class, then I know I can do the same with fewer students as long as I practice, get creative, and have strict expectations and rules.

COMMUNITIES

One of my favorite parts of the trip was interacting with locals at the hotels and markets. My roommate and I spent very little time in our room; every free moment we spent in the communities talking to people at restaurants or while shopping. I was most touched at the Chikumboso Project, which helps women and children receive support, skills training, and education. The women were so welcoming and interested in swapping life stories and seemed so appreciative of the time we shared simply sitting together and helping make bags that they could sell. I'll cherish these memories forever.

MY BIGGEST TAKE AWAY WAS HOW MUCH IN MY LIFE THAT I TAKE FOR GRANTED WITHOUT REALIZING IT.



Check Out Alexis' IPDS Blog:
<https://buffalostateipdszambia.weebly.com/alexis>

