

Hello, my name is Nicole Udy. I'm from Western Canada in a town called Campbell River on Vancouver Island. At home I live with my mom named Carrie who is 44 and my dad named Chris who is 47. I also have a brother named Dan who is 21 and a sister named Shannon who is 19 that do not live at home. My dad is a welding and fabrication teacher at the college in our town and owns his own business. My mom works in the kitchen at the hospital in our town. Shannon is currently studying at McGill University in Montreal and Dan is training to become a police officer. My family is very busy but also very close. We like to go on sailing and camping trips together. At home my life was very busy, I had a lot of homework, I was very involved in sports at my school, and on top of that I had a part time job at a pizza shop.

At my school in Canada we have eight subjects, however, not everybody has the same classes. Depending on what the student would like to study later, what they are interested in, and what is required. The classes I was required to take last year were, at least one science, Math (easy or hard), English, and Social Studies. The classes I am taking next year are Math, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, English, Calculus, PE, and French, because I am interested in going to University for Science. Every day we go to school from 8am to 3pm and we have two semesters. Each semester we have four classes and we have them every day for an hour and a half. We also have two ten minute breaks and a forty-five minute lunch. At lunch my friends and I used to go out and buy something to eat. I enjoyed school at home and it could be a lot of fun.

I found out I was coming to Croatia in December of last year. In October when I applied with Rotary to do a year abroad I didn't get to choose the country I would go to. However, I was and am really happy I was placed in Croatia. I wanted to come to Croatia because I love independence and I've always loved travelling and meeting new people. I also wanted to come here because not everybody knows about it, but it's really beautiful. I have been here for six months now, and it has been the best and most challenging experience of my life. My first host family loves traveling also and wanted to show me everything. So far I have been to many places in Croatia including, Bol, Šibenik, Pirovac, Zadar, Split, Varaždin, and Plitvice. In April the other exchange student and I are going to Dubrovnik. I have also been to many places outside of Croatia including, Munich with my host family, Salzburg with the other exchange students, and Tomislavgrad to go skiing with my host family. At the end of this year I'm also going on a Europe tour to Köln, Brüssels, Bruges, Paris, Toulouse, Andorra, Barcelona, Montserrat, Avignon, Monaco, Amelgia/La Spezia, Cinque Terre, Lucca, Pisa, Florence, Jesolo, Venice, and Linz.

I have had two very great host families. The first was the Andrić family and I am now staying with the Jajčinović family. Both have been very good experiences and I have made long lasting relationships. School at first was very challenging because I didn't know how school worked, anybody,

or Croatian. However, once I got used to it, met people, and learned a little bit of Croatian it got a lot easier. I enjoy school and because of it I don't feel like a tourist here and I've developed a life.

It's been an amazing year and I can't believe I only have four months left. It's so soon, I don't want to leave! I have made a life here and It's hard to believe it will be nonexistent in four months. I have learnt an immense about myself, who I am, and what I want to do in my life. Mostly I have grown in my independence and maturity. Of course I have to go back, and I'm excited to also. I'm excited to start my life, and make my own decisions. It's been really great and I can't wait for the next four months.