



Bryanna Hill

Undergraduate Student, Elementary Education & Reading
Cabarete, Dominican Republic - January 2017

SET YOURSELF APART

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

CLASSROOMS

I learned that teachers must be able to think on their feet. You'll have different tasks thrown at you every day and, even though you may have a set schedule, you must be ready to make last minute changes!



FRIENDSHIPS

I learned how to be more social, to seem more approachable, and to keep an open mind when speaking with others. I really enjoyed developing relationships with the students in my cohort. On our last day we had a little party with the Mariposa Foundation where we had been volunteering and learning Spanish - we danced and played games and enjoyed each other's company even though we barely spoke the same language as the Mariposa girls.



Bryanna with the class she taught, with peers from her cohort (above right), with the Mariposa girls (below right), and feeding rescued monkeys at Monkey Jungle.

[Click to Read Bryanna's Blog](#)

SURPRISES

I learned that technology can be stressful - and that when you remove yourself from technology it's much easier to relax and breathe! I'm used to having my phone available and checking social media or looking for friends on-line at every free moment. Since I didn't have continual Wi-Fi service on this trip, I spent more time looking out my window, taking time to see the world or to just *think*. I talked to more people and made new friendships and was pretty much able to leave my entire Buffalo life in Buffalo! Surprisingly, this was one of the best feelings I've ever had.

I wanted to improve my Spanish and see what life is like outside of the United States.

Traveling abroad is such an eye-opening experience! Life can be completely different in other parts of the world. The memories and friends I made will stay with me forever.

If there's any part of you that is curious to see what life is like outside of the United States, you absolutely should join the IPDS!