**HOST FAMILY TESTIMONIAL**

**From:** Denny Piovesan   
**Date:** Tuesday, 23 August 2016 12:38 pm  
**To:** Mark Antulov PRINCIPAL  
**Cc:** Paula O' Donnell   
**Subject:** Italian exchange

Dear Mark,

We just wanted to send a quick thank you to you for supporting the Italian Exchange programme at Prendiville. It is an excellent programme that exposes students to a deeper personal perspective and opens doors to a new world. The impact that this kind of programme has on students and family’s is far deeper than may be evident on the surface.

We have had the privilege of hosting Vittoria Tisselli over the past 2 months in our home. We have in the past hosted a Japanese student and love the experience.

Initially we were apprehensive about the length of time – we were concerned that personalities may not get on and it would be a hard 8 weeks. However this was short lived time has flown by and great relationships forged.

Paula O Donnell did an excellent job of matching students and families and Vittoria fitted in to our family with ease. Paula has also been a great support to the Italian students at the College. Vitti and her fellow Italian students also loved the weekend away with the year 12 Italian students – the Italian students have made friends beyond their family this way. Fulvia Valvasori from WAATI, the coordinator of this programme has done so with professional excellence. To organise 68 students across the country over 2 months is an Extraordinary feat to undertake. We are really fortunate to have her do this and for her to support Prendiville at the level she does.

From our family’s perspective the experience has enabled us to open our hearts to someone new and to let our children gain another sibling. For Tessa, she has never had a sister and she has loved having another girl in the house. The boys have enjoyed having another sister to tease and laugh with. There is no greater pleasure than seeing all your children curled up on the couch on a winter’s night – all rugged up, arguing over chocolate, watching TV and teasing each other. Tessa has finally had some support and the girls have formed a very close bond. It is quite amazing to see this occur over a 2 month period.

Vittoria has told us that this has been one of the best experiences of her life so far. Rick and I told her that she has bought a dimension to our family and to us as individuals that we would not have discovered if it was not for this opportunity. She has added a depth to our family and opened us in ways we could not have imagined. Having her in our home seemed “right”. It is going to be really hard to say goodbye on Thursday.

Beyond our family – Tessa’s group of friends have also gained from the programme, they have a new friend and have benefitted all around. It has opened the group to making new friends within the school and across year levels – that may not have occurred before. Groups of students got together on weekends, went surfing, went in to the city and socialised together.

Tessa is going to Italy in November on exchange. We see how much Vittoria has grown and bloomed having been with us. I cannot wait for Tessa to have that experience and to mature her world view this way. Prendiville is a better College for having this programme and, from a personal perspective, this is the way to grow and nurture the “Global Community” that we strive to nurture at our College.

Many thanks and may we long continue these kinds of initiatives at Prendiville,

Warm regards

Denny, Rick, Dario, Tessa and Luca Piovesan

**HOST FAMILY TESTIMONIAL**

**From:** kmcstokes   
**Sent:** Monday, 3 February 2020 9:45 PM  
**To:** Fulvia  
**Subject:** Hosting Testimonial: Brianna Stokes Family - Iona PC

We hosted Nicoletta Voltolina from Chioggia this year, it was a fantastic experience for us all.  
If you are even remotely thinking about hosting - do it.   
You'll get to be a tourist in your own city and be blown away by what we have right in front of us.  
You'll laugh, cry and love, and realise how close someone can be with you after just 2 short months.  
You'll spend more time with your own family and kids, and fall in love with another at the same time.  
Not only has my daughter made a lifetime friend, but so have all of us.  
Thanks for the experience; I feel we were very lucky to have got Nicky

KMS

**ITALIAN EXCHANGE STUDENT TESTIMONIAL:**

**Luca Mino**

**@ CBC Fremantle**

**Farewell Function Speech, 20th August 2016**

(unedited)

I’ve always seen life more as a journey, not a destination. A journey that we share with other people, a journey made up of experiences of any kind, of events, expected or not they are. A journey made up of beautiful sunny days but also storms, of happy but also sad moments, of great periods but also other ones when everything just seem to go wrong.

This part of my journey, those two months had felt like…well, you know those days when you’re on a rush and you catch every green light? That’s…that’s what it felt like.

I don’t deny that, besides what everyone advised me, I left Italy with some expectations. But even the most positives one of those had been completely blew off. This country, his territory, his landscapes, his animals, his lifestyle and, more than everything else, his people… The only word I can find is **amazing** and I feel like it’s not strong enough. I’ve seen breathtaking landscapes, mind-blowing places, I literally filled myself up with the immensity of Australia. I’ve known so many people, and everyone has been so friendly and welcoming that…well, I think this is the most incredible part. I really, really felt like I was at home. I never really felt homesick because…I was feeling at home. And for this I want to thank everyone that have had even a tiny role in this part of my journey.

But most of all I want to thanks my host family, my host brothers Jack and Josh and my host parents Cristina and Stephen. You succeed in something that’s really special, unique, almost magical: you really made me feel part of your family, you really made me feel at home. I think it’s something that cannot be properly expressed with words, this feeling, and…I will never thank you enough.

This part of my journey has been simply incredible, and I will never forget none of the places, landscapes and no one of the people that made it so good.

I think I’m leaving a part of me in Australia, and I’m taking away a piece of this country, of all of you.

I want to thank everybody again and I really hope to see you all again, one day or another

Thanks everyone

Luca

**TEACHER IN CHARGE OF EXCHANGE TESTIMONIAL:**

EMAIL 22 JULY 2017

Fulvia,

I have to tell you that our exchange student is so, so lovely!

The first two we had were pretty special, especially Stefano – but Ugo I think is going to be the best yet.

He came in the last week of term, obviously only for a few days, I paired him with a student and talked about timetables.

He ditched all the Maths subjects after the holidays (where he would have a chance at doing well I would think) and picked up Biology and Japanese!

He has had three lessons of Japanese and has already learned 2/3 of an alphabet – apparently wanted to learn as his sister wants to learn and he wants to teach her when he gets back!

He joined the Drama class and is now in the school production, will have five performances before they leave.

Everyone keeps telling me how wonderful he is – and he is simply in love with school in Australia.

Considering this is the first time we have had just one WAATI student here – I am completely in awe of the person he is and I simply can’t wait to see where he takes himself in life. He is more confident than the two yearlong exchange students we have here, and he has only been here almost four weeks. I know his paperwork looked good – but it doesn’t always match the reality…

Thought you would like to know

Justine

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Justine Richmond |
| Teacher |

**Georgina Molloy Anglican School**

**PAST STUDENT TESTIMONIAL**

**REFLECTIONS 10 years later of my EXCHANGE EXPERIENCE – Hosting and sending 2005-2006 !**

My Italian experience began at the beginning of 2002 when I started year 8 and, much to my mum’s despair, I chose Indonesian as my elective subject. Someone in the admin office made a mistake and a week later I was surprised to find myself in an Italian classroom. Little did I know back then that this would be the most fortunate of administrative accidents I could ever imagine?

Italian continued to be by far the most challenging but rewarding of subjects at school. What other subject exposed us to history, culture, language and life beyond our shores? From very early on, I knew I had to do everything I could to take the opportunity to go on exchange. The long term exchange always appealed to me more than the 4 week tour as I knew a longer experience meant an even better immersion in the Italian culture.

My exchange experience started in the middle of year 11 when my family hosted an Italian student, Monica, from a small town just outside of Bologna. I remember with absolute clarity the evening we went to go pick her up. There had been some weeks of communication in the lead up- some photos of Mon with her friends and family, a brief profile about her. We both loved art! She had already travelled well compared to me. She was an only child, while I was the youngest of a raucous pack of 6. Would we get along?

Mon was last in line, and when she walked into the room we instantly recognised each other and ran up for a massive teary hug. It was so exciting! We bundled her in the car and so began a unique and wonderful exchange experience for my whole family. Mon instantly found her place in our home and our lives. Even though she was my exchange student, each of my sisters, brother and parents share a special bond with her and we all gained so much from having Mon share her culture with us in our home.

By the time it came around to my turn to head to Italy; I was riddled with excitement. My parents were very trepidatious – hesitant to send their youngest daughter off into the unknown, but mercifully ready to allow my taking a small step towards adulthood. Thanks to the impeccable planning of Prof Valvasori and Intercultura, my exchange group arrived in Rome safely; and one by one we headed off to our respective host families’ homes. Lucky for me, I already knew my host sister – Mon and I had been inseparable the whole time she was in Perth and I missed my Italian sister dearly. And so began the best 9 weeks of my life.

Not many people have the opportunity to really live in a different country, as the locals do. I attended school 6 days a week, made Italian friends- through Mon, but also people unknown to her whom I visited by myself. I helped out with household chores, caught public transport, had to navigate hectic high school corridors, befriended the local baker, and became attached to a favourite local trashy reality TV show. This all made for an extremely exciting, nerve wracking and exhilarating 9 weeks.

Mon’s high school couldn’t take me- which meant I had to travel to another school by myself on the school bus. Having been lucky enough to always been driven to school, and barely understanding the public transport system in Perth, I was suddenly confronted with bus timetables in a different language. I clearly remember one time a teacher called in sick for the last period of the day and all the kids got to go home early. How exciting! Except, which bus do I need to take? Back home, I would have been terrified of stepping on the wrong bus. Now, I needed to trust my instincts, and make a serious crack at using all the Italian I had learned to figure something out. Nothing forces you out of your comfort zone like the prospect of being stranded at a bus stop in the snow. Suddenly I realised that, actually, I *can* speak Italian, and even if I make a mistake- it’s ok! People are still able to figure out what I am trying to say. And help me. Wow- this is something I can do!

Just as Mon had found her spot in my family, I felt right at home with her family. As we became more comfortable with each other, my confidence with speaking Italian grew. Mon’s English was excellent and there were times I was tempted to slip into English with her, but not with her parents who could not understand a word. Again, I surprised myself with knowing more Italian than I first thought, and my confidence to speak quickly grew.

One of the funniest moments was at Christmas Eve dinner with all of Mon’s family. An interesting dessert was put on the table, and seeing my curiosity, Mon prompted me to “feel it! Just give it a feel!” Huh? Feel it? Uh.. ok… I gave it a prod. My mistake! Mon had told me to ‘taste’ it. The room erupted in laughter and I still chuckle about that moment to this day. There are too many moments of hilarious and interesting cultural clash to mention; but the experience opened my world.

I returned home with a maturity, sense of adventure and self-reliance that were beyond that of my peers. Not to mention advanced Italian skills this certainly boosted my ATAR score.

Since then, Mon and I have remained in close contact. We have both since travelled to each other’s countries again, and also met up in foreign places when fate brought us to the same city by chance. My Italian skills have stood me in good stead, even many years on, when I recently travelled to South America and found I could communicate to locals with the Spanish/ Italian cognates; or when I aced my linguistics unit at university. I still mention the exchange on my resume which I know has impressed employers.

When Mon first came to Perth back in 2005 we were inspired by a story we heard of an Italian teacher who had attended her host sister’s wedding many years after their exchange experience. Mon and I promised each other than that we would attend each other’s weddings no matter what. Next year in June it will be exactly 10 years after Mon and I first met, and I will be travelling back to that small town outside of Bologna, this time with my parents, to watch Mon walk down the aisle.

Thanks to my very special Prof Valvasori who supported me through my 5 years of Italian and the still now, 10 years later, one of the best experience of my life.

**Olivia B**

**2015**

**Prendiville Catholic College**