Program: Institut de Touraine French Language Program, Summer

Rachel’s Major: Industrial and Systems Engineering

Academic Life: The courses at the Institut de Touraine are divided into four sections: oral comprehension, oral production, written comprehension, and written production. In addition to these core classes, there are two phonetic labs per week, where students work on pronunciation and nuances of the French language. The classes are small, about 15 students per class. I had fellow classmates from South Korea, Iran, Taiwan, Canada, Columbia, Spain, and most likely a few other places as well.

Study Abroad and Future Aspirations: Studying abroad had strengthened my adaptability and cultural outlook. As an engineering student, those attributes are highly useful.

Most Memorable Moments: The Loire Valley region is home to many of France’s castles, and I would have to say that seeing French history through tours of these castles was my most memorable experience from my time in France.

Housing: During my time abroad I stayed with a host family that consisted of a woman, her two cats, and for a period of time, her daughter. Originally I planned to stay with this family for just one month of my stay, but I enjoyed their company so much that I stayed for both months. They had a lovely little house in which I had my own bedroom and bathroom.

Advice for Someone Considering Studying Abroad: Studying abroad is a chance to challenge yourself. France was a wonderful country that taught me many lessons about being independent and more cultured. My biggest piece of advice would be to not be afraid to travel and explore new opportunities.

“Studying abroad has given me a newfound confidence and drive to learn.”