

IAP PARENT PROFILE

MADRID, SPAIN

Ken's daughter, Bailey, studied abroad for an academic year in Madrid, Spain.

How did you feel when Bailey first mentioned studying abroad? Excited. I knew Bailey wanted to travel and study abroad. I was not worried about her ability to adapt and make it a good experience.

Did you have concerns? I did worry about how much two semesters would cost compared to another year at UW. Surprisingly, estimated cost didn't appear to be much more than another year at Madison. Bailey and I worked out a financial plan with goals to meet. She did a great job adhering to our agreement by managing her living expenses. She came in on budget yet still enjoyed some great travel opportunities.

What advice do you have for parents concerned about cost? It was very important to have a financial plan agreed to by both the student and the parents. The plan should look for ways to control or reduce costs. Money priorities must be established up front because there won't be enough money to do everything. I think it's important that the student be responsible for a portion of the cost. It adds to the reality of the experience and creates decision making responsibility.

How did you keep in touch? I really tried not to be a "helicopter parent" and didn't want to cramp her style. I had complete confidence in her judgment and decision making abilities. We would talk periodically (once every couple weeks or so). Her blogs kept me apprised of her school and travel experiences. I told her I was always a phone call, text or e-mail away if she really needed something. I had confidence Bailey was making good decisions and was focusing on her studies. She didn't give me reason to worry and I appreciated that.

What benefits did you see in study abroad? Outside of seeing and experiencing places, people, and cultures, it nurtures independence and confidence. That will serve any student well the rest of their lives. Look at this as a "once-in-a-lifetime" experience.

Did you see any changes in Bailey when she returned? I wouldn't say changes, just an overall elevated level of confidence and appreciation. I am really surprised how well she has transitioned back to life here in Wisconsin. She seems energized and focused. We are happy her experience was safe, healthy, educational, and fun.



Ken and Bailey at the Rosaleda de Madrid, a rose garden down the street from Bailey's apartment.

“Step aside and let your child blossom into their full potential. Establish expectations, but give your child the ability and opportunity to create themselves.”

