

ANNA CORINNE, Illinois

The program so far has been the greatest gift that has ever been blessed upon me. The instruction in both the language and dance has been exceptional. We have learned so much language, in both in and out of the classroom. Since all of our ballet classes aren't translated and we are surrounded by it every time we go out, our ears are forced to listen while our minds are trying to understand. It's quite the ideal situation RAF has provided us for learning the language. There really is no better way! On top of it all we get some of the best dance training there is in the world. You now know why The Bolshoi produces such amazing dancers. They demand so much from a technical and soul level. I feel that I have not only improved but I have a greater understanding of the art and the soul of it.

Another unique opportunity that RAF has provided is the experience to live with host families on the weekends. It's quite fascinating to not only get to know Russia on a tourist level, but to also be able to live among and with the people. I've had the chance so far to stay at a Russian dacha to celebrate a birthday, visit the Kremlin and Red Square, see a movie in Russian, and of course shopping! Beside from the activities we did with our hosts, we also got to experience their way of life from the interactions with one another to the food they prepare and serve us. It's all very fascinating.

In conclusion I feel I am a changed person in not only my newly gained language skills but in my maturity as a person and understanding for other cultures. This program has given me more than I could ever ask for and I am very grateful for it.

Anna Corinne