

## LAURIE, Ohio

Ever since I was little, I've dreamed about becoming a professional ballerina and travelling the world to see all of the beautiful places. At the top of my list of places to go, was Moscow. This program opened the door to allow one of my biggest dreams to come true and has changed my life, forever.

This trip has taught me so much about Moscow, the people, the culture, and the ballet. Being able to study at the Bolshoi Academy, that I have seen in so many documentaries, has been such an incredible experience! Dancing in the same studios that many great dancers such as Natalia Osipova, Ivan Vasiliev, and Ekaterina Maximova have danced in is the most exciting thing I have ever experienced!

Aside from ballet, I have been able to see the city and experience life in Moscow! At first it was difficult, because I did not know the language or much of the culture. However, as the days went by, I continued to learn new things and I felt like a part of Moscow and the community! Being there has opened my eyes and has allowed me to see and experience one of the most beautiful and historic places in the world!

This has been a trip that has changed my life forever. The friends that I have made will be lifelong and I am so happy to have shared this experience with them. I will always remember this summer with great passion. The NSLI-Y/Bolshoi program in Moscow has helped me grow, personally, as a member of the international community, and has provided me with memories and knowledge that I will carry throughout my life. Thank you for giving me this opportunity and allowing me to live my biggest dream!

