

Robert H
UK

Gail Whitney Karn, AIA
Director
CIAO! Center for Introduction to Architecture Overseas
PO Box 233, Sudbury, MA 01776, USA

Dear Gail

I want to thank you for setting up the CIAO! Program as there is nothing else like it for aspiring architecture students.

[My daughter] asked if she could attend a summer school for architecture and I asked her to find some and forward me the links. I rejected every single program I looked at. All of them had the students sitting in a class or studio during the day and homework at night. She already knows about sitting in class and doing homework, and I'm not going to pay for that. I wanted her to find a program that would help her find out if architecture was a passion that would get her up in the morning long after her formal education is over.

Thankfully she came across your program and we both saw immediately that this is what we were looking for - it got her out of the classroom and into the real world and as a bonus for me it cost less than all the other options!

[Since her return from CIAO!] she talks about working with and observing the architecture students at *Sapienza* (real life stories about the perils of architecture school!), and of meeting the Mayor of Capranica. She talks about how she had to really focus her studio time making sure that her drawings communicated her ideas as she knew she would be working through translators when presenting. She had to let her work speak for itself which was a real challenge. Additionally she used a lot of the studio and presentation material from the course in her University Admissions portfolios and IB Art Course.

Having the course in Italy is perfect. I'm not an expert in this, but it is my guess that as Rome was built for people on foot, it is much easier to see how the street, piazza and building layouts in Rome impact how you interact with the city. The course was able to show her on both a visceral and academic level of how things could/should work in ways that you just don't get from classrooms, pictures and books. You need to walk in a piazza, sit in a café, dodge a bus and window shop in order to feel how a city works. CIAO! provided the time to do all of this. Before the course [my daughter] wasn't particularly interested in Urban Planning (probably because she didn't even know it existed!), but now her long term goal is to bring the livable European City to the United States.

One of my goals as a parent was to make sure she could have the time to talk with the instructors about the different types of architecture programs and schools. She was able to

ask all the “dumb questions” as they came up over breakfast, lunch, dinner or coffee and as the instructors got to know her over the three weeks they were able to provide personal insights. That was an invaluable and worth the price of the course itself.

Finally, one of the benefits of CIAO! was it treated the students as adults rather than children, which allowed them to experience how architecture works from an adults perspective. Although there was plenty of supervision with curfews, lights out etc., as the course was in Rome the students had to take a level of personal responsibility not often expected of high school students. If parents feel that their kids require extra supervision to stay out of trouble this is not the course for them. The opportunity to see how urban planning and architecture impacted Rome, develop and present a proposal to the Mayor of Capranica, and tour some of the greatest buildings in Europe should be enough motivation to keep them out of trouble. If not send them elsewhere!

I know [my daughter] has really benefited from CIAO! – clearer, more focused college selections, increased confidence, more comprehensive portfolio for the admissions process and first-hand experience of working architecture and urban planning. For me it got her out of the classroom and into the real world so she can begin to see if this is something she wants to do for the long term before spending lots of money on tuition!

Thanks,

Robert H