

~Adventures Abroad~

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Major: Middle Childhood Education



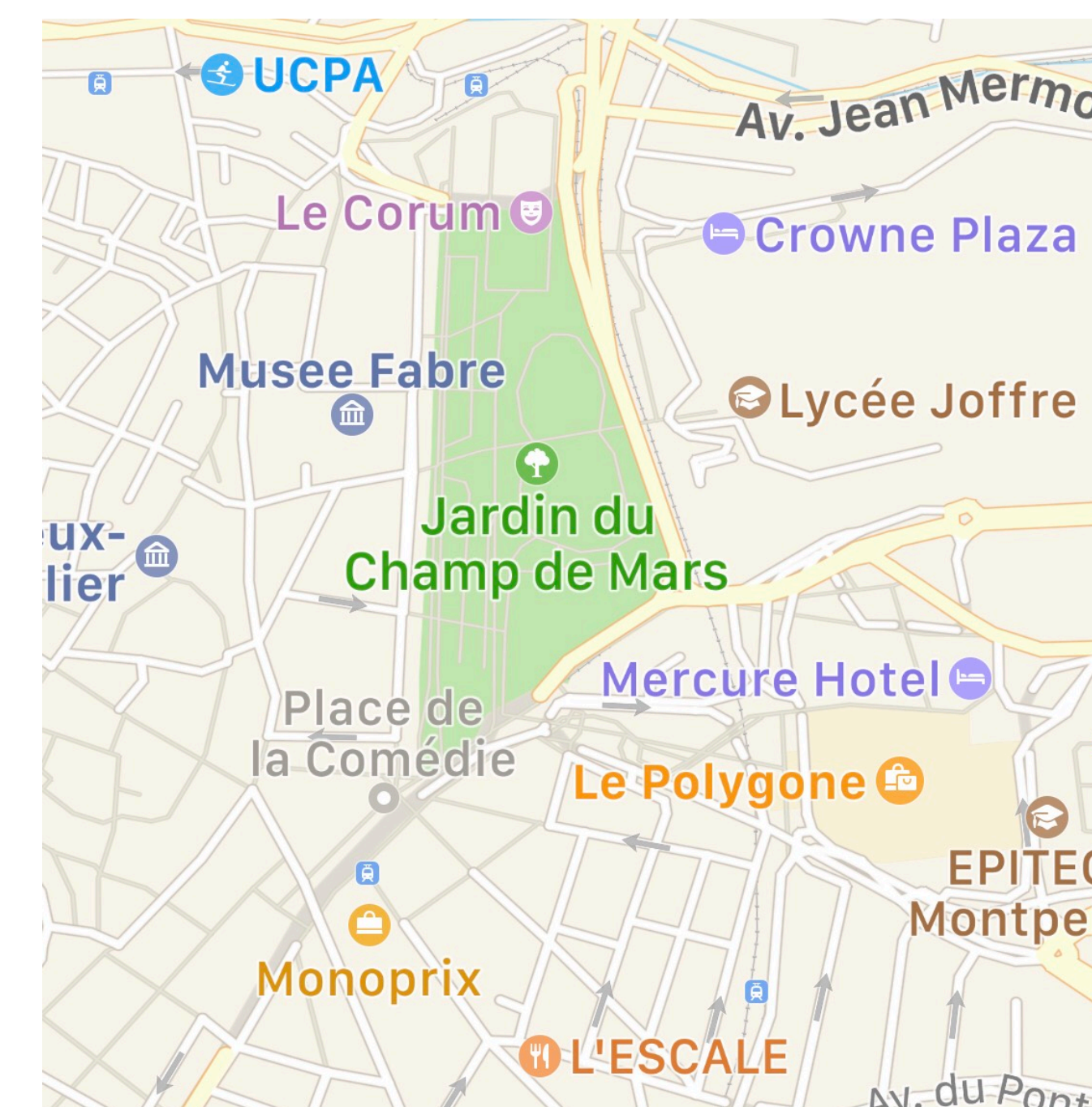
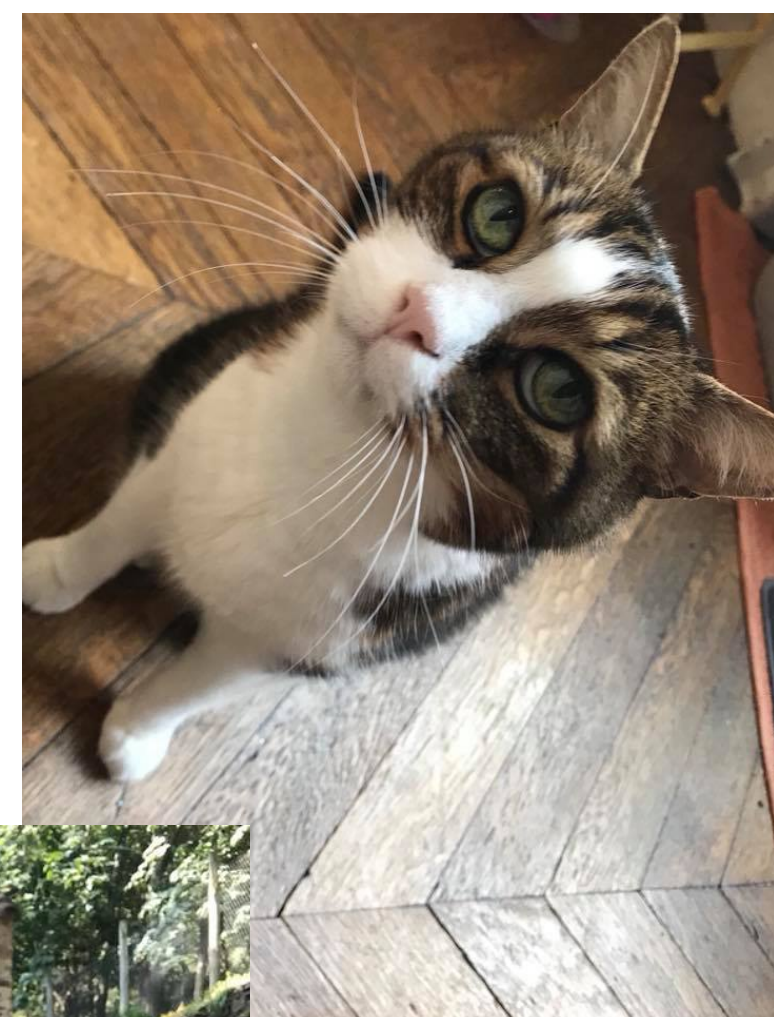
My favorite part of my experience was getting to photograph the incredible architecture, gardens, vineyards, beaches, and city-life of Montpellier. I found it so stress relieving to take time for myself and my artistic side while abroad. I loved sharing pictures I took of Montpellier with my family and friends because the pictures told stories better than I could. Through that month, I took at least 3,000 photos.



My STEP project included studying abroad in Montpellier through the University of Minnesota. Montpellier is located in southern France on the beautiful Mediterranean coast. For my project, I participated in the U of M Montpellier program by attending classes, going on excursions, and staying with a host family.



Personally, I was impacted by this project because it tested my limits, and I found out how strong I could be. Speaking only French with my host family made me nervous because I did not want to miscommunicate or cause problems. For the first two weeks, I was very silent and pensive, not wanting to say the wrong thing. I could understand what my host family members were saying, but they could not fully understand my responses. This confusion made me feel isolated at times, but I eventually gained confidence and found my voice!



I chose this project because I have been taking French since sixth grade. I wanted to incorporate my French minor into STEP somehow, so I started researching study abroad trips. Two years ago, I attended the STEP Expo, and I talked to a student about this opportunity. She spoke so highly of her experiences, so I applied!

My experience impacted my academic goals of getting a French minor, because now I am one step closer, and improving my French language skills. My personal goal of gaining confidence and realizing my strength was accomplished. This project also impacted my life goals of traveling to France and navigating a city away from home.



To find out more about this program...

This project was transformational to me for many reasons. I learned about the variety of cultural differences, learned acceptance of these differences, and overcame culture shock. Staying with a host family gave me new insights about French daily life and customs. I thoroughly enjoyed stepping out of my comfort zone, forcing myself to meet new people and explore a foreign place. Though, I was often overwhelmed with emotions and sometimes worry, my positive memories outweigh the difficult times.

