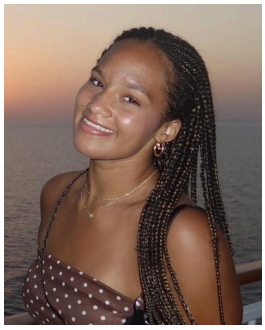
Sydnee Norwood



My Travel Log #3: Ravenna, Italy and Boarding the Ship

Sunday, July 26th

My family and I woke up in our hotel room in Bologna, Italy, and it was time to drive to Ravenna, where our cruise ship began its voyage. My aunt's friend picked us up and took us to a beach. The beach had a long walkway through trees before reaching the sand. Along the sand, beach tennis and volleyball athletes were enjoying the sun and competing. After spending some time at the beach, we got back in our car to take a ferry to board the cruise ship. I was thankful my aunt is a frequent cruise-goer because she had all the perks to skip the lines during check-in. As we boarded the ship, I could not believe how massive the boat was. We took all our luggage to our rooms and settled down. I had a room to myself with my sister, Jordyn, on the 8th floor, while my aunt and grandma shared a room on the 5th floor. My aunt gave Jordyn and me free rein to explore the ship and have fun. We planned to meet back up at the "Welcome Aboard Show" in the theatre. Jordyn and I got dressed in our bathing suits and headed to the pool deck. First, we went upstairs to the athletic floor and shot around on the basketball court. Then, we went to the pool and jacuzzi. This is where we met our first of many friends on the ship. In the jacuzzi, we met boy cousins about our age, Casey and Simon, from North Carolina and West Virginia. We got along really well, and it was fun to learn about each other's different lives. They thought we were so cool for living in Orange County, California. In a different hot tub, we met a father and son from England. They were funny and asked us very typical American/California questions. The first question someone who was not from America would ask was if we owned a gun or were afraid of getting shot when we left our house. After meeting new friends, Jordyn started a ping-pong tournament with a few adults and kids. She beat every single person! It was getting late, so we quickly headed back to our rooms to get dressed for the welcome show. The show was not the best. It was cringey, and the singing and dancing weren't impressive. After the show, Jordyn and I met back up with Casey and Simon. We played soccer on the ship's athletic floor, then explored the rest of the ship with them. We stumbled upon the karaoke bar, and little did we know it would become our spot. The karaoke bar was quiet, but our performance changed that. We queued "Unwritten' by Natasha Bedingfield and put on a performance of a lifetime. People from the bar came down to the stage to sing, dance, and cheer us on. It felt like a scene straight out of a movie! Our cruise friend group started expanding, as we met more friends at the karaoke bar from New York. This night was just the start of our incredible European cruise, and I will never forget all of the excitement and new experiences.