

Brand Ambassador Abroad
Noles Abroad SE05 EP04

Vanessa: "Welcome to NolesAbroad, a podcast by Florida State University International Programs. My name's Vanessa and I'm filling in for Hannah this episode."

Zoe: "And I'm Zoe and we're your hosts. On this podcast, we'll talk about study abroad from the perspective of the students, faculty, staff and alumni who make it an experience worth sharing. We'll also bring you travel tips and fun facts from around the globe. On today's episode we talk with Nikki Jamaki, a first year abroad student studying in London. Nikki is one of Ips brand ambassadors and she talks about what it's like to create for IPs Tik Tok. She also talks about some of her favorite things to do in and around London. Let's go to our conversation with Nikki now. Hello, can you introduce yourself to our listeners?"

Nikki: "My name is Nikki; I am from North Carolina and I'm studying right now in London and my major is business management."

Vanessa: "As an out of state student, what made you choose to apply to FSU?"

Nikki: "So it's actually a funny story. Over quarantine, my dad he loves to travel so we would fly to a state and then we'd rent a car and drive all around and so one day, I think it was during Thanksgiving weekend, we drove down to Florida and on the way down until Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama and we had as many colleges as we could and also state capitals and it became kind of a game for my dad just like see how many different colleges and state capitals we could visit. We went down to Florida State and when we went there, I immediately loved the campus and I actually applied like that day like while just walking around and I think it was one of the last days to apply before the deadline and then even after like going to all these other colleges it's been my favorite and it still is because I think at the end of the year, my dad put a collage together of all the different colleges we've gone to over quarantine and all the trips we'll take and it was like 72 colleges and out of all of them, Florida state was my favorite and so I really didn't think I would get in but here I am."

Zoe: "That's awesome congrats. I'm glad that you got in and it's amazing that out of 72 colleges like this was the one that you wanted to go to and then you got in so that's awesome."

Nikki: "I know yeah."

Vanessa: "And I love how it was so involved of a search and that sounds like so much fun to go on a road trip to the different colleges."

Nikki: "Yeah it was really fun, it was just so much driving, but it was worth it because I wouldn't have found Florida State if it hadn't been for that."

Zoe: "Absolutely. Ok, so we've heard a lot about why you chose FSU, but can you tell us how you decided to participate in the first year abroad program?"

Nikki: "Yeah so I actually didn't know about this program until I got in through the pathways program and when I was reading through, I saw an option to study abroad for a year. And I was between that or a semester, but I knew going into college that I wanted to study abroad at some point, I just thought it would be more towards junior or senior year. So, when I found out that they gave in state tuition to out of state students if you did a year, I thought this was a really cool opportunity and I also knew a few family members that studied abroad and they said that they wish that they had more time so I knew that a year would probably be worth it in the end."

Vanessa: "So IP started a brand ambassador program recently, can you talk about what that is and why you wanted to be a part of it?"

Nikki: "Yeah so basically I saw through the Instagram, @FSUIP, that you guys were going to be having brand ambassadors for the different locations that you have at FSU and you wanted to spread the message of studying abroad and show other students what it's like and so I thought it would be a cool opportunity to be a part of that and to show other students potentially what life is like when you study abroad."

Vanessa: "Do you feel like being a brand ambassador and having to capture content, has that enhanced your experience at all?"

Nikki: "Yeah so I definitely I love making videos and like you know having that memory to look back on so I knew like when I'm here it would not only be beneficial for others to see what it's like but also remember those moments."

Zoe: "That's awesome. So, you kind of touched on this but like what do you hope to share with other students with the content that you create?"

Nikki: "I just really want to do, through like the videos and the Tik Toks, hopefully like get people get a good idea of what it's like to study abroad and like hopefully that can inspire them to want to also do the same because I know like when I watch videos or something like that, I'll be like, "That looks so cool" or "That looks really fun" and then that can motivate me to want to do it."

Vanessa: "So what has been the best part of studying abroad so far?"

Nikki: "For me I think it's just being in like a big city and being able to travel, walk around and explore because like I said my dad loves to travel so growing up I was able to go visit so many cities and different places. Just walking around here is like so exciting and you know so many things that can see so that is my favorite part."

Zoe: "Absolutely, London is such an amazing city, and the surrounding area too is really nice. So, speaking of that what are some of your favorite places that you have explored so far?"

Nikki: "My favorite places are probably like, I really liked Cornwall we did a group excursion, and it was towards the beginning of the semester, and it was super cool just being able to stay at a hostel. It was our first like overnight excursion and I actually went back whenever my parents came to visit like a week ago during my fall break, I showed them Cornwall and then we also went over to the white cliffs of dover and that was super cool as well. You could see Pairs from the cliffs."

Vanessa: "As an FYA student, you can change locations for the summer semester so can you tell us about your plans?"

Nikki: "Yeah so I obviously the options are Florence and then Valencia and London and Panama so I was looking I was very in between Florence and Valencia but I thought with summer being by the beach, Valencia was going to be really nice and then I actually went to Barcelona three years ago and I really really liked it so I haven't been anywhere else in Spain but I've heard really good things and even through like other students on Instagram I've seen a post about Valencia and it looks like so much fun and the food is also really good in Spain. That's my plan and I actually just supplied like a week ago when the application came out for the summer."

Zoe: "Nice that is so exciting. OK well our last question for you is something that we ask everyone on this podcast and that's just what advice do you have for other students who are considering study abroad?"

Nikki: "I'd say as much as you are probably scared, you know it's such a big deal to cross the country or across the world, I think taking that risk is going to be so beneficial in the end because you'll learn so many new things and even me just being here for two months, I feel like I've become way more independent and also when you go back to Florida State, I know I feel more comfortable and so this experience is just open you up to new cultures. Maybe you'll have a new hobby, traveling and you'll make life long friends. I just say like advice would be to just take the risk and honestly I don't think you could have a regret doing something like this because you do get so many opportunities that come with it."

Zoe: "Awesome I love that advice so much. I think that's really great and I definitely agree that you know it will create a new like hobby for you or love of traveling because that's sort of what it's all about is just experiencing new cultures and going new places and making those friends."

Nikki: "For sure."

Zoe: "well thank you so much for talking with this today we hope that you have a great rest of the semester and year abroad."

Nikki: "Thank you so much. Thank you for having me on here."

Vanessa: "Thanks Nikki."

Zoe: "Before we disembark, we want to talk about Tik Tok. As Nikki mentioned, IP is now on Tik Tok. You can find us there @FSUIP for student created content featuring everything from what to eat to where to visit while abroad. You also get a behind the scenes look at what we do around campus."

Vanessa: "You can check out all our social media accounts using the handle @FSUIP. We're also on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. For students submitted stories, visit the NolesAbroad blog at nolesabroad.international.fsu.edu."

Zoe: "Thanks to Nikki for talking with us today and thanks to all of you for listening."

Vanessa: "This podcast is a production of FSU international programs. The music for this podcast was composed by John Bartman. Our logo was designed by me, Vanessa Guirey and I also do our sound engineering. Editing, transcription and research is done by us, Vanessa Guirey and Zoe Crook."