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UNION CATHOLIC STUDENTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUMMER ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCES

Scotch Plains, NJ, September 16, 2009 - Union Catholic High School juniors Brittany D'Annunzio and Marissa Mastrocola, both residents of Scotch Plains, utilized the summer of 2009 to expand their knowledge and skills beyond the classroom setting by participating in the People to People Student Ambassador Program. The People to People Program provides educational travel opportunities which stress fostering friendships, building foundations for personal success, and providing unique access to people, places, and activities. Traveling with other high school students from Union and Essex counties, Brittany and Marissa toured locations in Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. Italy, the favorite of both travelers, left lasting impressions. "In Tuscany we stayed at a beautiful hotel in the mountains where you could see for miles", stated Brittany. "Everyone should ride a gondola!" exclaimed Marissa about her experience with the famous Venetian rowing boat.

The students' most unique experiences took place outside the major metropolitan areas and included an apple strudel making class, an Austrian dance class, attending school with German students during a three-day home-stay with a German family and spending two-nights on a camping trip designed to mirror life in medieval times.

While traveling to Italy was their main motivation for participating in the program, Brittany and Marissa



both agree that the perspectives they gained during the three-week trip could not compare to any experience that had before. They appreciate the opportunities that the program offered and were surprised by their ability to truly serve as "ambassadors" by not only learning from those they met on their travels but teaching them about life in America as well.

Pictured above left to right: Brittany D'Annunzio and Marissa Mastrocola.