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Experience summary

I am a Colombian biologist, recently graduated from the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Degree in Tropical Ecosystems and Biodiversity, which has partnerships between universities of Belgium and Italy. I had a great time during my five-month internship (Oct 2021-Feb 2022) with the Associazione Nazionale Giacche Verdi Bronte after I graduated. During my internship in Sicily, I participated in their project "Humus per la Biosfera," learning different aspects of environmental educations, from creating an animated PowerPoint about humus to presenting it at schools. I gained knowledge about humus and how it relates to agriculture, biodiversity, climate changes and compost during the making of this presentation. I also got to know a little bit about the management of olives/pistachio fields, sustainable agricultural practices and photo documentation.



One of the most professionally enriching parts of this internship, as a biologist, was the possibility to do an independent research project, I learned and practiced multiple professional skills, even without the guidance of a scientific supervisor. I was also capable of independently sharpening many other skills during my stay such as photo editing, report writing, and research/biodiversity assessment abilities.



Furthermore, I learned many aspects about how an environmental non-governmental organization (NGO) operates from observing how Giacche Verdi functions. I learned partially about fundraising, project management, volunteer and trainee management. Also, my Italian speaking skills increased significantly through this internship; I finally was able to apply what I learned from all my previous Italian courses.

I was treated very kindly by the wonderful staff of Giacche Verdi. They all helped me with what every I needed and would try to find a solution to any problem I presented. I learned from each one of them important lessons about working with people and in an environmental NGO.



I was also fortunate to meet and get close to amazing people from different countries like Germany, Spain, Poland, Netherlands and South Africa. We had a lot of fun living and working together. I learned from each one of them and about their countries, allowing me to widen my perspective on various topics and world issues. Overall, I learned, laughed and gained beautiful memories and friends from this experience. I am happy to have been part of Giacche Verdi.

