

editorial

Here comes another report from IB VAP! In this summer edition of our newsletter you'll see how our volunteers are doing abroad • what a Mentor in Mexico has to do with our volunteer services • and what work experience with IB VAP can look like. • You will also receive information about where our new partner organisations are based • the purpose of mid-term seminars abroad • how the incoming programme *weltwärts* South-North is developing • why money plays a role in our work • and why IB VAP Franken is so called despite not being based in Fürth anymore.

Happy reading! Ann Lorschiedter

travel

USA: VISIT TO OUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS

We have been sending volunteers to various partner organisations in the USA for many years so a business trip to the USA has been long overdue. One of these is L'Arche USA, an organisation working in several different locations, where people with and without disabilities live together. In May 2016, my journey led me to Washington DC, Mobile, Seattle and Portland where I was able to see the different communities (each community has three or four homes) and meet the people who live there. I met the people in charge of the volunteers and also the international volunteer coordinator for the entire L'Arche USA organisation. And of course, I also visited our current volunteers Jonas, Erny and Clara. I was able to spend time in some of the homes and so get to know a bit more about them too.

I was very impressed with the warmth and openness I was welcomed. Everyone placed great value on our German volunteers and were grateful for them. In turn, I too am very grateful for the time that each and every individual gave to me.

Our meetings were mainly about getting to know each other, exchanging experiences and sharing our understanding of volunteer services. And I notice the importance of meeting the people behind the organisation in person and to see the surroundings with my own eyes. By doing so, we can provide a better preparation and guidance to the volunteers as well as support the partners in their work with our volunteers. A huge thank you to the core members, all the people who work in the homes or offices of L'Arche USA and to Jillian, who has recently taken over the role of L'Arche USA volunteer coordinator. I look forward to further collaboration.

Anja Vitzthum



Anja and Jillian



The national flag of Lesotho

WELTWÄRTS - VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT IN THE KINGDOM IN THE SKY - LESOTHO

In Summer 2016, VAP Kassel sent their first volunteers to Lesotho. This small kingdom in southern Africa is special for many different reasons. This unique country is not only characterised by the high altitude - 80% of its lands lie above 1,800 metres - but also by the fact that it is a small enclave, completely surrounded by the territory of South Africa.

VAP Kassel has taken on three partner organisations in Lesotho from the Nothelfergemeinschaft der Freunde (Emergency Helpers Community of Friends), which reduces their involvement in the *weltwärts* Programme. Partners from the former German Development Service (DED) or German Society for International Development (GIZ) have been active in this programme for many years and have experienced colleagues to hand as well as tried and tested placements. The allocation of places was not difficult and we're looking forward to further collaboration. Bernhard Marien



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report

A MENTOR IN MEXICO



Perhaps it's just me but when I think of the word "Mentor" it brings to mind images of greying, successful and kindly father figures, who guide their charge with well-meaning condescension brought about by a certain old-age wisdom.

That is definitely not the sort of mentor that I want to be. So the question is, how would I personally define my role?

I'm currently working with my second year of IB *weltwärts* volunteers in Mexico and it makes me really happy, even if I can't fully answer that initial question. To gain some sort of clarity, perhaps

it would help to take a look at the mentor figures in my own life. They were, or are, people who I never called mentors but who, in some way or other, have given me a helping hand: a good piece of advice, an open ear, a new perspective, a true passion for something, some hard to hear criticism or fair feedback. All of these are qualities that I'd like to have on hand for my volunteers.

Supporting young people who have taken on the challenge of volunteer service begins long before the journey out to Mexico. At the first orientation session, I'm available for practical questions, but I'm also there should problems arise during the placement. I attend various doctor or hospital appointments and help to clarify "cultural" misunderstandings or incomprehension. It is important for me to have a good relationship with "my" volunteers, to build the foundations for trust as well as being a spokesperson for the volunteer during any difficult moments throughout the placement. In doing so, I have to learn to strike a balance between "too close" and "too far". I am the person that supports the learning process and I do also have to be critical at times. But just as important to me is being a good friend.

For me, being a mentor means: Joy, excitement, now and then shaking my head in disbelief, (im) patience, distance vs closeness, openness, learning and having to see my own chosen path through someone else's eyes: questioning my own version of Mexico but also sharing experiences and challenges.

Apart from supporting volunteers, I am also dedicated to the work with IB's partner organisations in Mexico. It's wonderful to be able to collaborate with so many different organisations and be able to realise the potential of a volunteer placement. At our last Partner Conference in November 2015, we shared experiences on the role of volunteers in the organisations and from that we were able to work on new possibilities for the integration of volunteers into the day to day running of the organisations.

The network of IB partners in Mexico is growing steadily and this diversity enables us and the volunteers to gain a insight at different levels of the work in Mexican civil society.

I'm looking forward to many more IB-years to come and great collaboration here in Mexico.

[Anna Langheinrich](#)

europe

JJFD MID-TERM SEMINAR

From 14-19th February 2016, the mid-term seminar organised by IB VAP Kassel took place in southern France and Spain. Just as in previous years, the "Albergue Comaruga" in Barcelona accommodated those volunteers with placements in Spain. A new home, "Mas de la Garonne", was tried out near Uzes, hosting those volunteers from France, Italy, Great Britain, Ireland, Poland and Estonia.

Southern France: The weather was really sunny. The volunteers, particularly those from northern countries, were really able to appreciate the warm rays! The home proved to be practical and wonderfully situated, despite being able to hear

through the thin walls and being a little difficult to find. There was space to swap experiences, distance from placements, chance to meet people, to offer suggestions regarding content and to encourage new ideas. There were opportunities for one-on-one discussions, some free time and even a small wellness centre. The mood was good and everyone was able to use their time in some way.

Once again, we have seen how essential the mid-term seminar is and just how important it is to the volunteer placements. [Janina Drude](#)



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INCOMING PROGRAMME *WELTWÄRTS* SOUTH-NORTH PARTNER CONFERENCE

After a three-year pilot phase of the incoming programme “weltwärts South-North”, a conference of partners took place in Berlin from the 9th to the 14th May 2016. This was part of the evaluation process with the aim of analysing the pilot phase and sharing experiences, positives and challenges of the programme. The partner conference was organised by ICJA in Berlin and 57 people from 35 sending organisations from different countries from the global south took part, as well as 17 people from German host organisations and 5 workers from placements in Germany. Also present were three partners from IB: Carmen from Ecuador, Meena from India and Sangu from Tanzania.

During the conference we discussed recommendations for how to develop the South-North Programme across the world. All the participants agreed that this programme offers many opportunities. The majority of organisations from the global south have been working to support German volunteers in their placements for many years. With the South-North

Programme, it is possible to turn that perspective around. There is great commitment and many ideas about how the role of the sending organisation can be fulfilled. A particular opportunity for the volunteer programme is the fact that on their return, many volunteers become involved in the sending organisation. Structurally, however, this does have its limitations; one recommendation was to introduce a returning fund, something that already exists for German volunteers.

The conference was also used as an exchange platform, above all for suggestions in the selection and preparation process, for Visa problems and for further regional networking. The political dimension of the programme was also clear: A representative of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) emphasised that the BMZ are completely behind the South-North Programme: “At this moment in time this way of exchanging and collaborating is necessary to foster real dialogue.” [Kornelia Bodach](#)

experiences

WORK EXPERIENCE AT IB VAP FRANKEN

Hello, I'm Francis-Julia Harms and I am currently studying a Masters in Social Work at the Technical College in Nuremberg. I did my two month long Masters Mentorship at IB VAP Franken. As part of this, I prepared a short speech for a meeting in mid-March on the topic of Youth Research entitled “What makes young people tick”. It was very exciting for me to work with current youth literature and I really hope that IB VAP can use my results in the future to be able to respond better to the

target group for voluntary placements abroad. I would highly recommend completing a work experience placement or Masters Mentorship here as it is a very interesting work sector and you can get a great insight into divisional management and training in a short space of time. As well as that, you also get a first-hand experience of how change management can be practically implemented. [Francis Harms](#)



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Quifd

QUALITY = WORK AND TIME

In 2015, IB VAP was first put under the microscope of an external assessment. In our newsletter 1/2015, we reported about our certification by Quifd (the organisation for "Quality in Volunteer Services". In Spring 2015, both VAP offices came through the initial certification successfully. This confirmation of our good work was no surprise to us but we were very pleased that this work has been officially recognised! The hours and hours that it took to bring all the necessary documents together, to write explanatory texts and to black out many names and details in the documents for data protection reasons all paid off.

The first re-certification comes one year after the initial certification - so 2016. In April, we prepared all the documents and in May VAP Kassel were audited, followed by VAP Franken in June. For the re-certification, we have been really busy with the new South-North Programme as standards will also be developed through which the quality of the work carried out by the relative organisations can be measured.

We haven't yet received the results of the audits, but we're confident that they will be satisfactory ;-)

Ann Lorschiedter

Quifd

Qualität in Freiwilligendiensten



A VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT COSTS MONEY...

...as spending a year abroad is not cheap. The Federal Government supports the *weltwärts* Programme and the IJFD (International Youth Volunteer Service) but only a part of it. The remaining finances must be found by the sending organisation. And as IB VAP Franken and Kassel send nearly 200 volunteers abroad every year, a lot of money is needed to be able to fully finance the placements.

Being a charitable, not-for-profit organisation we do not have our own resources to raise such a sum of money so, just as the majority of the other sending organisations, we also ask our volunteers to build a circle of supporters who help to finance their placements. But it's not all just about the necessity of raising money; we also believe that it is right, important and makes sense for the volunteers to help to finance their own placements as they are going to get a huge amount out of this placement! We also believe in the meaningfulness and efficiency of a circle of supporters for our community in Germany. Through the future volunteers collecting donations and then reporting back to their donors about their

experiences abroad, we all learn about experiences, openness and tolerance. And in the current political situation, that's something we can't get enough of....

For the volunteer year 2016/17, for the first time we have introduced an amount, calculated as an average, to finance the volunteers regardless of the programme being undertaken. This amount of €2,800 doesn't cover 100% of the costs for each volunteer but it's an average. The costs, for example, for accommodation and care may sometimes be higher for some but not others, but then perhaps the mid-term seminar will be less for others.

To help with the future volunteers' concerns, every year we offer workshops to those people involved with the "supporting circle" project. To that end we have helped the cross-institutional advice centre, eurodesk, to produce a brochure on the topic. You can download the brochure here:

www.rausvonzuhause.de/downloads/Bestellservice/eurodesk-brosch-unterstuetzer-160122-web.pdf

Ann Lorschiedter

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new address

IB VAP FRANKEN: THE MOVE FROM FÜRTH TO NUREMBERG

In 2004, IB VAP Franken was established in Nuremberg. The IB outgoing volunteer placements department was set up in the incoming volunteer placements office and over the course of time, the one-woman show developed into a bigger VAP team. In 2010, the space in Kopernikusplatz, Nuremberg was bursting at the seams, while in Mathildenstraße in Fürth, there was still space. So VAP moved, settled in and felt very much at home in their beautiful old building.

Despite all that, we still gazed longingly towards Nuremberg with the hope that "sometime in the future" we would once again share a space with our colleagues from the incoming volunteer placements. Over the years, the areas of common ground between the departments have grown, mainly in the area of incoming volunteers. For several years we have been accepting young people from abroad to complete a voluntary year of social work (FSJ) in Germany.

With the South-North Programme, there are many opportunities to work closely together, be it advertising for placements, communal seminars, educational guidance, visiting host families and many other situations. So there was an overwhelming feeling of anticipation for exciting collaboration as in March, we packed boxes in Fürth and on 30th March moved to Nuremberg. It was, however, tinged with the sadness of saying goodbye to lovely colleagues in Fürth, the aforementioned office space and even a small oasis with a comfy sofa to take a break in, thanks to a renovated roof, which had been transformed from a storage room.

So, as Fürth and Nuremberg are both situated in Franken, practically we didn't need to change the name, so we are and will remain "IB VAP Franken". In the meantime, we've settled in well to Nuremberg, we've received most of the post at the new address and most phone calls to the new phone number. But for those who do not yet have our new details, here they are:



WE HAVE MOVED

- FROM FÜRTH TO NUREMBERG -

And we can now be contacted on 0911--94536-32

New Address: IB VAP Franken, Schanzäckerstr. 10, 90443 Nuremberg, Germany
VAP-Franken@internationaler-bund.de



FROM VOLUNTEERS ABROAD

Wiebke Rahlf, Mexico

Small things can have a great impact. Even though I felt like part of the "family" who I live and work with right from the start, it was thanks to so many little things that I settled in and felt at home. One of these little things was my newly selected, colourful, smiling favourite mug, which played its twinkling part. It's not around anymore, but I still remember it as, until recently, it would always help to sweeten the pre-6 am get-up.



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FROM VOLUNTEERS ABROAD

Miriam Forderer, Ecuador

You can't buy an experience.



Section of a picture. No mas dolores - No more pain. The picture takes as its theme the terror of different dictatorships in South America. Looking really closely or if someone knows how to interpret the picture, you can recognise some famous figures. It has been made to remember and to prevent it happening again.

Naturally moments accumulate. How much does spent time weigh? Are golden experiences weighed in carats? And how heavy must time be for it not to fly away again so easily?

My time is flying away, but I'm not flying with it. Meeting people, learning to love, seeing, shutting eyes, tasting, exchanging, enjoying.

Now and then turning round and reflecting:

A country that has welcomed me with open arms. How many kisses of greeting? How many times saying "I'm from Germany, and you?" How many cultures, tales of happiness and sadness? How many more? Spent time doesn't seem heavy to me. But it's heavy going to report something that has become normal for me. (Not that I don't ever reflect, amazed at what I have been able to experience here, and what I have built around me.)

Something that I'm living and that others do not experience with me.

A piece of Latin America.

How many of you think of drugs when you think of Columbia? How many think of poverty when you think of Bolivia, relate criminality to Brazil, sombreros to Mexico and beef to Argentina? How many of you think of good dancers, a fiery temperament, heat and palm trees? And street children. And Communism. I can't and don't want to describe Latin America and its culture. I know too little to do that. I also don't know how to answer the questions about my own country.

I love to talk about myself and I'm enjoying every experience that my placement here has given me: Venezuela, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Columbia, Costa Rica, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, ...

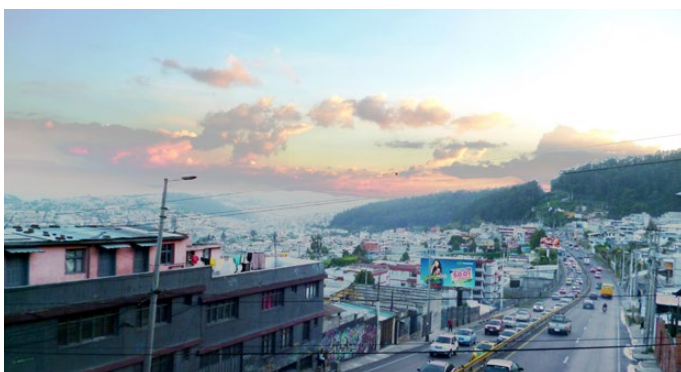
I'm listening and I keep noticing how similar we all are but how many differences we can learn from each other.

Do that make sense? Anyway! Don't attempt to form any kind of picture of Latinoamerica, our brains can't handle it. We must reject our simplified stereotypes (both "positive" and "negative").

Think of the people here as you would your neighbour. With other stories and tales but definitely with the same feelings.



On my journey to Otavalo, it wasn't just the friendliness of the inhabitants and their wonderful handicrafts that surprised me. I also had the unbelievable luck to marvel at an intercultural party with dances from several indigenous peoples. It was truly Multi-Culti!



Every day on the way to work, I am entranced by the sensational view over Quito. A city surrounded by mountains and volcanoes. Some mornings I can see the volcano Cotopaxi.



The historic centre of Quito is a World Heritage Site. There are colonial-style houses and countless churches to admire. It's like a journey through time.

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FROM VOLUNTEERS ABROAD

Lukas Siegritz, Australia

Straight across the outback to Uluru ("Ayers Rock"). Photos by Moritz Jäkle

It was like this: Moritz and I set off on our incredible road trip from Melbourne on the southernmost point of Australia to Uluru in central Australia, which was met by several Australians with a shake of the head (especially when they saw our car ^ ^). But anyway... to the central point of the continent and back, around 5,000 km. Easy! In the days before our journey, we went shopping and found a huge cool box (which we wanted to fill with ice on the way to keep our food and drink cool), two 15-litre water canisters and a replacement fuel can. We set off at 8am and drove to Adelaide. The next day, we covered the whole of the city centre on foot. My conclusion: Despite its 1.2 Million inhabitants, after Melbourne Adelaide felt like a backwater. Following a suggestion from an Australian acquaintance, that evening we went for some food at the beach. The next day, we continued on our journey - into the outback. But first to Port Augusta, the last big city before the outback. We bought some ice for the cool box, filled the car up and watched the beautiful windmills on the way. Straight after we turned from Port Augusta towards Uluru, I came across my first road train (they are the longest lorries in the world). Aha exciting! It's kind of depressing when the Sat-Nav shows that you have to continue along the road for another 1200 km... It's really extreme, just how wide it is with simply nothing there. We passed salt lakes, steppes and trees, passing dead kangaroos along the edge of the roads. We passed nothing, on the way to nowhere, until we reached the next civilisation. Every few 100 km there was a petrol station until we came to Glendambo, situated on the edge of a restricted zone (in the last century, the Brits

carried out bomb-testing in the desert, so it is a huge restricted area). In Glendambo, we threw a further 10kg of ice in our cool box and filled the car up. That was the last petrol station for 250 km. Finally we arrived in Coober Pedy (it is the world's biggest area for opal mining; 3/4 of the world's opals come from here. In summer it gets really hot so many flats and hotels are built into the ground.) We made our dinner on a cooker (noodles) and spent the first night in the car. The next day, we headed straight to the tourist information centre to find out about the history and current parking management. Then we went to see the Olgas. The Olgas, or "Kata Tjuta" is a group of 36 mountains around 30 km west of the Ayers Rock resort. My scarf also deserves a mention. It protected me from flies but nearly gave me heat exhaustion walking in the Olgas ^ ^ !!! After we'd walked around for a while, we drove to Uluru and walked and drove around the rock. Due to exhaustion we didn't manage to walk all the way around, so we drove part of the way. There were also a few idiots climbing the mountain, despite there being lots of signs everywhere. That was not cool. At the end of the day, we wanted to watch the sunset but a huge cloud unfortunately stopped us. So we just went back and went to sleep. The next day, we got up early to see the sunrise (which, if I'm honest, I didn't find that spectacular), and then we got back in the car and drove back to Coober Pedy. After 140 kilometres more (with cows in the road), we arrived at the car park we were aiming for in the middle of the Pampa. We stayed there with another eight campers. The last leg of the trip: back to Adelaide and to Hahndorf, the oldest German community in Aus-

tralia. It all looked quite German, for example, there were German trees all over the main street and in the evening we had German food. The next day we started off by going to the butcher and the baker. I bought sausages and a pretzel and also some gingerbread for the residents of the old people's home where I work. Then we were off again - homewards

The conclusion: The road trip was definitely worth it as it was really interesting, tiring, but also really cool - an extremely long stretch through the outback with a great mate. The emptiness of the outback can make you a bit depressed if you're not used to it. It can become somewhat oppressive after a while. Uluru was on the one hand truly impressive and huge, I could somehow sense a real power and I can see why it is sacred. On the other hand, it's just a big red rock. The road trip in numbers: We drove 5,000 km in 6 days, we saw 1 snake and 2 dingos, we used 30 kg of ice and spent about 400 Dollars on fuel.



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FROM VOLUNTEERS ABROAD

Jannik Brachmann, Mexiko

I took the picture you can see here in the Oblatos area of the city Guadalajara for my placement, Casa Cem. It is an organisation working in the field of environmental education and recycling. And on the roof of the house, they're TVs. On January 1st, analogue television was switched off in the Federal State of Jalisco. That meant that overnight hundreds of thousands of televisions became worthless and useless. Across the whole country, approximately 15.6 million televisions took their last breath. Of course, it would have been possible to continue to use the television with a digital receiver. But the majority of users chose not to do that. It wasn't just because a flat screen television is more energy and space efficient but also the fact that the government were giving away 10 million digital

televisions. The budget used for this exceeded that of the whole national budget for the Culture Department. This initiative made it clear that the TV is the media backbone of Mexican democracy. And it ensured that the used TVs ended up in the rubbish. In each tube monitor there is 2 kg of lead. Lead can kill fish in water systems and can damage the nerve system and reproductive organs in humans. Some lead derivatives can cause cancer. For this reason, and because the Federal State are responsible for recycling electronic devices, collection points for used TVs were set up in Jalisco. In many cases, this meant that small businesses that had previously dismantled TVs and other electronic devices continued to do so, but they were now contracted by the government.

In practice little has changed: the burning of plastic cable casing, the incorrect dismantling of tube monitors and contaminated glass in the streets.

In the photo, TVs are piling up waiting to be dismantled. They were probably collected by a Chatarrero (scrap dealer). As state-certified recyclers, the chatarreros earn their money by taking the valuable parts, e.g. copper wires, out of the TVs and selling them. They dump the rest discreetly on a street corner or in a field.

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