

## REPORTS FROM VOLUNTEERS FROM ABROAD

*(Beat, Mexico, on the left in the front row of the photo)*

After one month, I finally arrived. Arrived in Mexico, the land of the heat, of the differences, of Tacos and Sombreros.

The last weeks in Germany flew by far too fast. A pre-departure training, many different things one really wants to do again, meeting family and friends, eating favourite dishes. Only in the end I realised how much I really enjoy my time in my home place. My anticipation of my year abroad even wasn't too great anymore.

Having arrived in Mexico, it immediately started: welcome party, processing new impressions, getting to know people, experiencing new things, eating exotic dishes, getting to know better the co-volunteers – and starting to work. Slowly finding a structured daily routine.

I am working in a city park in Guadalajara four



times a week, and at the weekends in an educational adventure camp in the mountains. There is little free time left, but the work is great fun. I am developing my own projects and I am realising them. Doing this, I am getting to know many people who invite me to all sorts of activities and who just want to spend time with me. I do feel perfectly comfortable. However, I feel as if I am currently enjoying my honeymoon and I have to get prepared for other times to come. Me being volunteer is completely different from how I imagined it to be, but it is surprising me every day with new things and I can only dive into a new world and enjoy it.



## Winning photo

Daniel Drews is the winner of the photo competition "BILDe dich" advertised in the last newsletter.

He served his voluntary service in Mexico, in 2006/07 and used the photo within the scope of a fundraising action for a prosthetic arm for a migrant from El Salvador.

Many thanks for the submission!

## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF

The volunteers of the year 2010/11 returned to Germany this summer 2011, while their successors left Germany between August and October and scattered to many different countries.

Thus, all the preparatory and returnee seminars have now been completed, and the two IB VAP teams wish all those who now start a vocational training course or a course of study or return to their professional life a good "reintegration" into their lives in their first old home country or in a home country that is new again. We hope that you will treasure the memory of last year and that you will live off these memories for a long time! And we wish all those "out" in the world an exciting, instructive and very special year!

To those who are interested in voluntary service with the IB, we recommend to thoroughly read the information concerning our application procedure for the year 2012/13 on our website [www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de](http://www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de). We are looking forward to many interesting applicants!

Whoever wants to send us contributions for the next newsletter, which is to appear in March 2012: please send an email to [VAP-Franken@internationaler-bund.de](mailto:VAP-Franken@internationaler-bund.de).

**Contribute to YOUR newsletter!**

## application process 2012/13 !

The application process with IB VAP for the voluntary year 2012/13 has started: The application form and information on the application process can be downloaded under [www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de](http://www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de). The application deadline is 31/01/2012.

## FEEDBACK FROM THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE RETURNEE SEMINAR FROM 19 – 23/09/2011 NEAR FULDA ON THE YEAR ABROAD AND ON THE SEMINAR



» I very much enjoyed meeting all those people again, and I was pleased to see that all have kept their agreeable and pleasant natures.

- » I like that things are critically analyzed and that needs are catered for individually. Keep it up!!
- » it was a super seminar, as always. The working atmosphere was very agreeable and relaxed and it was great joy!
- » once again, many thanks for a super year, great seminars and good supervision throughout the year. It was a great time!
- » it makes me sad to think that volunteering with you is now over! :(

- » you are a great organisation for a voluntary service abroad!
- » before the seminar, I was not overly motivated, but it was really nice and important for me to be here.
- » due to the project flow, I could reflect on my year very well.
- » many thanks! It was an awesome time which is far from over!

## Always ask: WHY?

Intercultural communication and the supervision of voluntary services By Maximilian Engl

I returned from my two voluntary with a wealth of new impressions each time; by far too many to convey them in a few sentences to those who had stayed at home. Instead, I experienced how my concrete experiences from this period assumed a personal character. The impressions had literally pressed themselves into my biography, where they constitute an essential part of my personality. But WHY have these impressions sometimes depressed me but couldn't press me down completely?

The central task within the supervision of volunteers before, during and after their stay abroad is to offer a consistent framework in which people can learn to get aware and to form their communication and processing patterns. In the intercultural communication training, the focus is increasingly on the concept we have of the foreign. And the point is WHY we are able to have such a concrete image of something we don't know.

And, afterwards, loaded with so many experiences: WHY did it go off this way and WHY did the local people behave the way they did – and WHY wasn't I able but to exactly react the way I did? Sometimes, the unremitting question for the WHY is as tiring as the intercultural encounters themselves can time and again be. But it also leads to a better understanding of the origin of one's own view of things. This is because on the way to the other I must get past myself – there, where impressions imprint themselves.



As a trainer on issues of intercultural communication, Max Engl supports the IB Franken with preparatory and returnee seminars.

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- At the "ConSozial" fair in Nuremberg, on November 2 and 3, 2011, ([www.consozial.de](http://www.consozial.de)) the IB will be represented with an information stand, and on 3/11/2011, an information hour with the Fürth IB VAP will be held at BIZ [Vocational Guidance Centre] in Nuremberg.
- Information event in relation to various possibilities to go abroad in Kassel, on 4/11/2011, with reports from ex-volunteers. The IB VAP is

a joint organizer. Place: Kulturbahnhof Kassel, Südflügel, Franz-Ulrich-Strape, 34117 Kassel. Time: 14:30 or 16:30. In the morning for school classes.

- On 26/11/2011, the Kassel IB VAP can be visited at the "Hessen Total International" information fair ([www.hessen-total-international.de](http://www.hessen-total-international.de)).

## news

### HISTORIA DE MI VIDA A LOOK BACK TO A YEAR IN MEXICO BY A VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2011/12

Going. Beginning. A departure. The first steps. And, finally, it starts. There is euphoria, energy and so much desire. However, already at the beginning: A huge STOP sign. Why, you are asking yourself, do I take such a lot of trouble? And: Will I tough this out? What follows is hard to describe in words, a new world, so much that you are often not able to catch it. Excessive demand, learning, injecting oneself, ups and downs. Becoming part of a whole. You dare more. And: who dares wins. It shows up from out of nowhere: A big stumbling block. But you make another attempt ... and: you've done it! Afterwards: Deceleration, being free, happiness. And all this as a permanent condition. Hopefully it will stay like that, for good – the better. From the very far distance: a babel of voices. But the foreigners are talking in a language you don't understand and you continue dancing. You start to run, against the course of time, you are stopped. You lose yourself....

... when you wake up next time you are standing there all alone. The foreign voices are closing in on you, are tugging and pulling at you. A real test? Your eyes are looking for the mirror, but there is nobody to help you with your search. Suddenly, it shows up from out of nowhere, very small, however, caught in a rainbow bubble. You recognize your mirror image inside the bubble, you try to touch it, want to be close to it. However, it continues to rise up into the sky, moves away from you. You reach out your arms for it, but are held back by the foreign crowd surrounding you. You are pushed onto a new path. Walking. Beginning. A departure, it dawns on you. Not without me, the bubble whispers. And you stop to look up to it ... You see yourself shouting out loudly. But nobody hears you. Where do you want to go?, you ask, is that all about us now? And... when do we meet again? Around you: steps, a babel of voices...

The whole text is on our homepage <http://ib-freiwilligendienste.de/index.php?id=12097>



### MEMBERS OF THE IB VAP Team

**Veronika Weniger** has worked with IB VAP Kassel as an administrative employee since 01/06/2011.

**Who am I?** Versatile and whole-heartedly in it;-))

**Professional background:** Industrial clerk

**Foreign experience:** Backpacking holidays, among others in Israel, Sinai, and Cyprus

**Nice motto:** In my childhood friendship book there is a poem which reads:

"If life happens to give you a nudge, Don't shed a tear.

Look for a branch, sit down on it and let your legs dangle in the air ..."



Qualitätsmanagement im Bildungs- und Sozialbereich

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The Internationale Bund (IB) is one of the largest service provider of youth, social and education work in Germany.



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