

IB VAP NEWSLETTER 2022

Around 150 young people are on the move right now absolving a volunteer service in different countries all over the world – prepared and accompanied by the teams of Volunteers Abroad Programs in Kassel and Franken. We are proud of that and happy to be able to refresh our partnerships in the host countries! The past year has brought us a new and great generation of volunteers abroad - in addition to trips (including Israel, Ecuador and Spain), a partner conference in Mexico and South-North volunteers. Both teams have gained new colleagues and said goodbye to old ones. We send our best wishes for a Merry Christmas to all the world and look forward to the coming year!

Wiebke Bornschlegl, VAP Franken

DIGITAL HOUR OF INFORMATION

After the Abitur is before the world - but before the Abitur there is usually an intensive phase of exams and learning, so that there is only little time for orientation. For this reason, we have introduced a new digital format, in which we will now provide information about a voluntary international year with us once a month. Anyone who is interested can dial in - parents and teachers are welcome as well. Participation is free of charge and requires no registration. We provide information about funding, our host countries & locations of assignment and answer questions. The next info hour is on January 19, 2023. All dates, current info as well as dial-in data can be found here: www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de/freiwilligendienste-ausland/online-infostunden

Wiebke Bornschlegl, VAP Franken



NEWS FROM THE VAP-TEAM KASSEL

In our VAP Team in Kassel, there was a lot of movement in the placement-team of the International Volunteer Services as well as in the South-North-Program in 2022. At the beginning of the year, our longtime colleague Andrea Schubert left the VAP Team in Kassel. With the new field of qualification accompaniment for international specialists, she still remains in the IB and the location of Kassel.

At the end of March, we also said goodbye to our colleague Sarah Wittwer, who has been in charge of the South-North-Program since 2017. We are very happy to welcome Stefanie Gaisendrees in the team as Sarah's successor of the accompaniment of the South-North-Program since the beginning of March.

Since April, we have a new colleague, Ellen Schaum, who has enriched the International Volunteer Services placement-team and supports our volunteers and partner organizations in Belgium, France and Spain.

At the end of August, our colleague Lotta Uhrmeister, who has been part of the International Volunteer Services placement-team for the countries of Belgium and France since 2020, left us.

Since October, we have been supported in this area by Pauline Windler, who has been a teamer for the VAP team for many years and absolved her voluntary service with the IB in Cameroon.

After an eventful and seminar-rich summer, we are now looking forward to an exciting winter with our second placement-cycle in January and many seminars to get to know each other and applicants for the placement-cycle of 2023/24. In February, we will be holding midterm seminars for our current cohort of volunteers in France and Spain. The preparations therefor are already in full swing in the team. A great enrichment and help for that was Gargi Umbarkar, who completed an internship with us from September to the end of November and supported us energetically.

Team VAP Kassel



NEWS FROM THE VAP-TEAM FRANKEN

The VAP Team Franken has been through some turbulent times: Wiebke Bornschlegel moved to the team management at the beginning of the year 2022 (formerly IB-Volunteers & application management). Kornelia Bodach is leaving the team after 14 years. As her successor, we were able to win Corinna Birner, who has been following her predecessor's example for about a year. Corinna made her brilliant debut in Mexico in February 2022 during the weltwärts partner conference.

Corinna introduces herself:

Hola dear ones! My name is Corinna and I have now come back to the VAP Franken just 10 years after my own voluntary service. Back in 2012, I spent one year in Mexico with VAP Franken and ever since then I have been passionate about international cooperation :)

I also bring a new four-legged VAP Franken mascot to the team (see photo).



In addition to Corinna (and her dog), the VAP team has received a new member in the person of Margarete Braun (Meggie), who will support the VAP team in the application process, public relations and funding management.

Meggie introduces herself:

I have done a voluntary service myself (in Germany), which had a strong influence on me and my career choice: After the year in a youth association I studied social economy in Nuremberg, a combination of social work, business administration and social law. However, the topic of voluntary service has never really let me go. Because of that, my bachelor's thesis also dealt with this form of civic engagement. Therefore, it was a happy coincidence that right after the passing of my bachelor's thesis the IB advertised a vacancy for a position that was intended for a social economist where you could also share the great experience of a voluntary service to other young people!



Team day with nature mandala in September 2022 at the Icelandic horse farm Héstolar near Nuremberg (fltr. Margarete Braun, Elena Gröpel, Tanja Krüsmann, Wiebke Bornschlegl and Corinna Birner)

Team VAP Franken

DEBATE ABOUT COMPULSORY SERVICE

At the end of November, the IB Chairman of the Board, Thiemo Fojkar, speaks out on voluntary services and the debate about the introduction of a compulsory service. Therefore, the IB executive committee positions itself exactly as the umbrella association AKLHÜ had already done. Instead of introducing a new compulsory service, we demand a legal right for all young people to a sponsored voluntary service.

Link to the news with the text of Fojkar:

ib-freiwilligendienste.de/news-details/article/freiwilligen-oder-pflichtdienst

Bernhard Marien, VAP Kassel

VISITS OF THE LOCATIONS OF ASSIGNMENT IN ISRAEL

At the beginning of November, I had the opportunity to visit our locations of assignment, volunteers and partners in Israel. After a Corona forced break of the placement in Israel, we are back in the summer of 2021 with a small group of four volunteers, new locations of assignment and a new

partner organization. In the current year, seven volunteers are already in Israel and there are more to follow. Our new coordinating partner organization Tacheles Israel-Germany takes over the accompaniment of the volunteers on site and offers various accompanying seminars.

Together with mentor Anna-Maria Meier, we visited the deployment site ADI-Negev in the south of Israel, the centrally located Kibbutz Gezer, as well as the Reuth Rehabilitation Hospital in Tel Aviv. The volunteers are very happy in their jobs, enjoy the appreciation that they receive and are ready to take on the linguistic and work-related challenges. It is astonishing how quickly they settle in and adapt to the foreign conditions. The quality of communication and cooperation increases, if we can form our own picture on site and meet our partners in person. How nice that this is now possible again.

Bernhard Marien, VAP Kassel



PARTNER CONFERENCE

From 28 March to 01 April 2022, a regional weltwärts partner conference with over 50 participants from seven countries took place in Guadalajara, Mexico. We from VAP Franken had the pleasure to organize this conference together with our longtime partner organization Kiekare, and spent five days together with other sponsors and partner organizations exchanging about the challenges and opportunities of the "weltwärts"-program in the region of Central and North America. At the conference, both North-South and South-North program components were discussed and best practices regarding the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic were exchanged. Together with the representatives of the program Steering Committee, as well as the volunteer representatives and the country contact person for Mexico, the participants discussed a wide range of topics, from security to sustainability and engagement of returnees. We were very pleased to also be able to work with some of our Mexican partner organizations on these topics!



Corinna Birner, VAP Franken

VOLUNTEER SERVICE IN ECUADOR

Big city, living in a flat-share, working in a social institution, traveling, hitchhiking, writing a blog - my volunteer service consists of a series of first times. In addition, I think I have rarely been able to watch my own growth and development as much as I could this year.

I am writing from Santo Domingo in Ecuador, where I have been involved in the Fundación de Acción Social Cáritas (FASCA) since this August. FASCA is an organization with many different projects. Right now I am working mainly with the two age groups that are the furthest away from my own age in both directions: In a kindergarten with one to three year old kids and at senior citizens' meetings. I have never done either of these jobs before and therefore I am slowly developing from being a useless person who just gets in the way to a real helper. I am very happy about all my progress and at the same time, I see that something is happening with the others as well. With seniors, it is mainly that we are getting closer to each other, that we start to joke together and tell each other stories. It's similar with the children - it makes me incredibly happy when they enthusiastically tell me about something, climb onto my lap, or after a long time of practicing, are able to assign colors, animals, numbers, etc. correctly. It is nice to see that something is changing, even improving and I am grateful that I can be a part of it.

The small apartment, which I share with two other volunteers, is located directly on the grounds of the FASCA and thus only a few meters away from the kindergarten. The amusing consequence of this is that my cell phone saves all the photos I take at work under "at home". Somehow, it is also true. Not only the apartment becomes my home, but also the grounds, the kindergarten all the people I meet here - the entire organization. When I got on the plane in Germany, I first set off on my own and enjoyed my newfound freedom and independence. At some point, you automatically start to put down new roots, to arrive and to find home. This process probably lasts the whole year and sometimes it is not easy, but it is also very rewarding. I noticed this above all when FASCA and all its employees went on a weekend trip a few weeks ago. The two days we spent together, talked, ate and danced together and did not just meet each other in work context or in passing, helped me

incredibly to integrate into the organization. Now I feel much more a part of it, and I almost feel like FASCA is like a very big family.

Since only a quarter of my volunteer service is over, I am lucky to get to know this "family" even better and to spend a lot of time with change, arriving, being useful and finding a home. I am very much looking forward to this.

Author: Maria Henze



Maria in front of the lake Lago San Pablo during the excursion with FASCA to Otavalo.

FAREWELL AFTER 14 YEARS WITH THE IB-VAP-TEAM IN FRANKEN

... OR HOW KORNELIA B. LEARNED TO SHAKE PROPERLY

When I experienced my first working days in December 2008 at the pedagogical symposium in Bad Hersfeld, I knew that I was in exactly the right place at the right time. The appreciative, humorous and personal togetherness made the work seem more like a dedicated get-together of friends. In the office in Kopernikusstrasse in Nuremberg (at that time with Trixi Reuss, Carolin Wüllner and Anja Vitztum) and later in the Fürth office with Ann Lorschiedter we were affectionately called the A-Team... and it often it felt like that: committed idealists with many creative ideas to make the world a fairer place and and constantly challenged with risky adventures like the swine flu in Mexico, earthquakes in Chile, Mexico or New Zealand, volcanic eruptions in Ecuador, attacks or accidents, illnesses or pregnancies of volunteers worldwide or urgent actions with Amnesty International. But with the help of many guardian angels (like our insurance company Dr.Walter, our travel agency with Harald Klubertanz, the emergency phone of the Fid service center and the AKLHÜ) all volunteers came back home safely! Hallelujah, praise the Lord!

I love the heart of the IB VAP seminar work: the partially (!)-open concept and the biographical work. These were personal development and real encounters for me- not only for the volunteers! My heart topic post colonialism found more and more room and was later heard by team members: NADIMA was born! In terms of personnel, we became less "white" with the employment of Jacky Vintimilla from Ecuador 2014.... It was a very special time for me with many culturally (un)aware encounters and challenges and the attempt to work at eye level.

Thus, the partner work came into focus: various partner meetings in Mexico (Morelia and Guadalajara rocks!), in Argentina and Ecuador took place. The mentors in Latin America became a pillar of quality in the weltwärts program. The highlight was our mentor:ing meeting in Germany in 2018 with such wonderful people, who made the work even more enriching.

The incoming program weltwärts-Süd-Nord and IB Volunteers were the next missions. The A-Team got reinforcement from new colleagues (Elene Gröpel, Tanja Kruessmann and Wiebke Bornschlegl) on board. In the beginning, we were motivated and excited to finally be able to host volunteers from Ecuador and Mexico and to offer them such a formative experience. After 6 years, the sleepless nights prevailed since the welcome culture in Franconia unfortunately does not have its strengths in the sharing of apartment space or sun hours in winter. IB Volunteers seemed to be a playground for new target groups with the hoping to alleviate the increasing financial pressure... the struggle for savings remained... sometimes frustrating for everybody involved, but also filled with ideas to get the A-Team going on new projects ... because as we preach to our volunteers: in every crisis there is also an opportunity!

And there was Corona! We had to get creative again: Digitizing our seminar work, developing new formats like the SDG service, and showing solidarity with our cooperation partners abroad, if possible. For me personally that was the most challenging time, as real encounters online were only possible to a limited extent.

As my last challenge, I ventured into cross-carrier partner conferences in Mexico and the expansion of alumni work with team leader training and alumni event... which would not have been possible without our great structures, networks and partners. Therefore, here a huge thank you to our steadfast administrative team, our partner Kiekare in Mexico, Corinna Birner (the back-up for everything) and Oliver Dunkel as the enabler.

What I learned especially during this time: Go with the flow- because so many things in these 14 years turned out so different than planned, but worked out in the end! The IB VAP time has shaped me so sustainably and enabled me to have so many real encounters, like nothing else in this time!



Therefore, I am grateful to all of you and to God from the bottom of my heart... and I toast with a sparkling Cuba libre with you in my thoughts!

Kornelia Bodach (Captain Konni)



Carolin Wüllner and Kornelia Bodach 2009, during the seminar work on German stereotypes



Kornelia on her business trip in Buenos Aires, Argentina 2019



Partner meeting, 2019 in Argentina



Kornelia Bodach and successor Corinna Birner at the interim seminar in Mexico 2022

Translated by Anton Schreiber (anton.schreiber@ib.de)