

## REPORTS OF VOLUNTEERS ABROAD



Unfortunately), three months of my volunteer service are over. Up to now, it has completely met my expectations and though has been entirely different.



The first strange thing after my arrival was the greeting: a short tour through the community and a brief announcement during the breakfast ("This is Christian, a volunteer from Germany. He will spend the next year with us")-that was all. Although all of the inhabitants introduced their selves curiously there was no "wave of enthusiasm". Only step by step I have been learning that everything here is much quieter and more relaxed than in the world full of hustle and bustle I come from (you can barely imagine how quiet it can be in a room packed with 60 people having their meals). At work, I experienced the next disillusionment: "No, It's done like this...", "Hold it here...", "I prefer to do that, please glue the panels". Somehow, most things went into the wrong directions at the beginning. Wasn't it ME, who should help? Shouldn't it be Me, the person with the high school degree, who knows how things work? On the contrary, I needed help; I was the person to whom they had to explain every instruction twice, to make it clear. As a result, the first things I learnt were humility and patience. Nevertheless, I came to Tarija with the feeling of superiority, of being more civilized, even if I had tried to neglect it. Big mistake! The idea we have of Third World Countries misled me. There is no difference between a Bolivian and a European (apart from the appearance). That's why it is no surprise that I am considered as another "hermano" (brother) in this facility here – nothing more, nothing less. The exotic feeling, however, returns, when a little child on the street excitedly turns his head to his mother and calls: "Mira, eses ojos azules!" (Watch these blue eyes!).

*(Christian Gasteiger, volunteer in a rehabilitation centre in Bolivia)*

## Thanks for the Alfajores

*Meeting with Ricardo Schlegel from the IERP (Iglesia Evangelica del Rio de la Plata)*

On November 3rd and 4th 2011, the IB VAP team Franconia was able to welcome Ricardo Schlegel from Argentina. He is the coordinator of the IERP. Up to now, Ricardo has been working as a mentor and contact person in Buenos Aires for our volunteers. We exchanged the latest and ongoing developments of the IB and the IERP, and both sides were sure about improving collaboration. That means, to be more precise, that the IB will send 4 volunteers, in the context of the "weltwärts" programme and with the help of the IERP, to places of assignment in Asuncion, Buenos Aires and Mar del Plata. The IERP will offer an midterm workshop. We would like to



thank Ricardo for the exciting, informative and pleasant meeting in Fürth and looking forward to further cooperation.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

The end of their volunteer service is, for most of our current volunteers, already in sight. This causes different emotions. Many reports make it clear that already everyone has more than arrived, but most of you want to achieve more in your project. It is very exciting for us to accompany you – most of the time from a distance. For us, as employees of the IB VAP, springtime is a very busy and exciting season. The members of the Kassel section visited projects in India, Belgium and Spain. The female team from Franconia made trips to France, Poland, Spain and Chile. These kinds of visits are useful experiences and left striking impressions. We work simultaneously on other projects and ideas for our business. This springtime we are planning, for example, cross-team study days for health prevention and partner dialogue. The educational symposia with our extern teamers has just taken place, intermediation of our volunteers for the upcoming season (12/13) is underway, new project vacancies have to be requested and much, much more...

During our selection and acquisition workshops, which started in January, we were able to get to know almost every person who will belong to the next generation of IB volunteers. We are looking forward to cooperate with you!

### Invitation:



## Meeting of former volunteers

This year, the registered society "Zuhause Weltweit e.V." is again organizing a meeting of former volunteers and you are cordially invited. The meeting takes place from 1st June till 3rd June 2012 in Salzgitter-Bad. Besides the general meeting and the opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas, we have planned easy-going and exciting activities for all the participants. If you want to prepare some visual material, presentations or if there are anything you want to talk about – there will be enough time on the evenings. The fee (food, programme and accommodation included) has to be paid in cash at the workshop.

Interested? Please contact:  
<http://tinyurl.com/treffen2012>  
Regarding questions please turn to:  
[ehemaligentreffen2012@googlegroups.com](mailto:ehemaligentreffen2012@googlegroups.com)

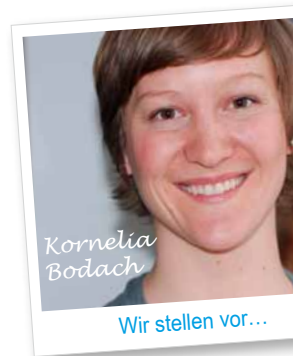
### MEMBERS of the IB VAP-Team

**Kornelia Bodach** has been a member of the IB VAP team in Fürth for three years.

**Who am I?** I love getting to the heart of the things in order to get aware of my inner longing.

**Education:** A varied mixture of comparative science and theology, European Studies and cross cultural communication.

**Time abroad:** I worked and studied in Great Britain and Spain for each a year. I did a three months research internship in El Salvador, and of course the last three years here in Franconia. **What is fascinating me?** Each day consists of 1440 unique minutes; none of them had existed before or will ever exist again. God loves us all in the same way.



Kornelia Bodach

Wir stellen vor...

## Midterm workshop means half-time by Franziska Müller

After six months of my service, it was time for the midterm workshop. The mid-term workshop means: recall the last 6 months, think about the events and feelings - focus on the next six months and on the things you want to change and are still to be done. It was just awesome to interchange ideas and impressions with others, who share the same experiences – positive and negative ones. The headline of the workshop was: Reflection! Two by two, as well as, in small groups we talked about our “ups and downs”, about poverty, our aims and we also talked about

the issue of leaving and how we wanted to be remembered by the people we met. Together as groups we analyzed disputes. During the workshop we had individual sessions with our mentor Ricardo, too. For me, the integral aspect was the interchange between the volunteers outside the programme and prepared sessions. I benefitted from the conversations and the exchange with people who have experienced similar things. It was terrific to hear which kind of experiences other young people had made. During our conversations we support each other with advice

and new ideas. It was a fantastic week: as a group we had a lot of fun, reflected a lot, but also talked about the bad and sad things. I am still happy to be here. I got to know great people and I have made extraordinary experiences. During the interim workshop, I once more gained new power and inspiration for the second half of my year. Days have been passed by very fast, and unfortunately they will pass faster till the end. What is happening with the time?

## Statements and opinions of applicants after selection and acquisition workshops



- I really liked the focus which was put on the pleasant get-to-know each other atmosphere by the members of the team

during the workshop. All the time, I felt very comfortable. Somehow, I had the feeling of being at the right place.

- I would like to thank the IB for the fantastic selection and acquisition workshop, in which I enjoyed the informal atmosphere among the applicants, former volunteers and the team members. I was sufficiently supported, didn't feel excluded and despite all the fun, - I felt well informed.

- It is really astonishing how “empty” you started the workshop and how “inspired” with new thoughts you finish it. In the wake of the workshop, the meaning of volunteer service seems much clearer to me. Now, I have more understanding of the intention of the whole work, the different sides and perspectives, and also of all the people who take part in this kind of service. Of course, I had a vague notion before, but not least because of the group-work and the conversations in smaller groups I have realized that there are various points of view and aspects which can (and could) enhance and broaden the own ones.



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

## REPORT by Manuela Stender Trainee at the IB VAP Franconia (September 2011 – February 2012)

*“One does not discover new parts of the world without being brave enough to lose sight of all coasts” (André Gide)*

During my internship at the IB VAP Franconia, I could experience how fast the day passed by. I spent five exciting months at the IB office and in this time I was able to learn much about the sector of international volunteer service. I got to know an exciting and qualified team, which handles everyday tasks with joy and dedication. I had the opportunity to gain impressions of the diverse areas of responsibility and play part in tasks, which I was most interested in. Both the work in the office, participation in various activities throughout Germany and the working methods and views of all the team members broadened my horizon and enabled me to collect experiences which are very useful for

my further studies. One of my highlights was the participation in two selection and acquisition workshops. There, I met those young people, who are causing all the paperwork in the office: the future volunteers! Within the scope of a project work I created a kind of guide for you. It should help you to be better prepared for your year abroad. Due to the nice team and the enriching work, I had a great time. Thank you very much, dear VAP team! You gave me the opportunity to do a great internship.



Yours Manuela

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Headquarters: Frankfurt am Main/Germany,  
Register of Associations Nr. 5259

Volunteers' Abroad Programs  
[www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de](http://www.ib-freiwilligendienste.de)

Internationaler Bund Franken  
Mathildenstr. 40, 90762 Fürth  
Telephone (0049) 911 766108134  
[VAP-Franken@internationaler-bund.de](mailto:VAP-Franken@internationaler-bund.de)  
IB Franken now on facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/ib.vap.fuerth](http://www.facebook.com/ib.vap.fuerth)

Internationaler Bund Kassel  
Königsplatz 57, 34117 Kassel  
Telephone (0049) 561 574637 0  
[VAP-Kassel@internationaler-bund.de](mailto:VAP-Kassel@internationaler-bund.de)

Editor: Oliver Dunkel,  
Managing Director IB Franken  
Design: Silvia Günther  
[www.internationaler-bund.de](http://www.internationaler-bund.de)