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# FRANK<sup>ly</sup> ☹️

THE FULBRIGHT ALUMNI E.V. MAGAZINE

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# Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

When I found myself elected to this position on a sunny, cold winter afternoon in Hannover, I could hardly imagine what I was going to have to do as the editor in charge. It seemed unlikely that I would be able to oversee the magazine of an association I had just joined the day before. However, a nicely entertaining Winterball evening and many Fulbright alumni providing advice and support helped to relieve my concerns.

Now, after a few months of organizing, putting together, and editing, I am happy to present the result. In these six months I have gotten to know the association and its members much better than before. During the process of communicating and working together with other board members, authors, photographers, and Regional Chapter coordinators, I realized how many people with different backgrounds and unique skills are involved in running our association.

A quite similar experience with the variety of people and characters brought together by Fulbright I made during my own, not so long ago Fulbright year. Roughly 100 grantees from 80 countries or so were assembled at the Fulbright Cultural Enrichment Seminar in Nashville, TN in February 2012. Coming from entirely different cultural backgrounds and majoring or doing research in multiple areas of study, Fulbright was the thing all of us had in common.

As various and diverse as the Fulbright alumni located nationally and worldwide are the issues covered in this year's edition of the FRANKly, taking the cover theme "Diversity" literally. The topics of the contributed articles range from the



challenges of intercultural school education to foreign candidates applying for positions in Germany, from the Arab Spring to Germany's national football team. Since the German Fulbright Alumni Association's magazine

headlining "Diversity" cannot ignore the prestigious Fulbright Diversity Program, we are featuring an account written by two of our alumni telling about their experiences as members of the selection panel.

Additionally, you will find a full range of reports on the various happenings that we organized or took part in. Even if you unfortunately happen to have missed out on one of these events, you don't have to feel left out.

Enjoy reading...

*Martin Kohler*

Martin Kohler  
Frankfurt, September 2013

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# Greetings from the President

Dear Fulbrighters and Friends,

The free encyclopedia wikipedia.org states that diversity is “used to describe [...] entities (neighborhoods, student bodies, etc.) with members who have identifiable differences in their cultural backgrounds or lifestyles. The term describes differences in racial or ethnic classifications, age, gender, religion, philosophy, physical abilities, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, intelligence, mental health, physical health, genetic attributes, behavior, attractiveness, or other identifying features.”

Many, if not all, of the above attributes apply to Fulbright scholars, alumni and friends as a group. Because of their diversity, it’s always a joy to meet with fellow Fulbrighters. They all are very unique individuals from different fields of study and phases of life, who share just one thing – having spent a year or so abroad with Fulbright. In fact, diversity is what the Fulbright program is all about: Bringing people of different backgrounds together to foster mutual understanding.

So I’m happy about this year’s Frankly that covers many aspects of diversity. Several authors explore this important topic from different points of view. In addition to that, there are exciting articles about the German Fulbright Alumni Association’s national events and initiatives. I especially like the reports from our regional chapters. They’re the core of our association and contribute to its very success by organizing Stammtisches and local events for our members and friends.

Therefore I would like to thank everybody who helped with this issue of the Frankly – especially Martin Kohler, who put it all together. Beyond that I’m very grateful for everybody who devoted some time to the association this year, either on the (extended) board level, as a regional chapter coordinator or a helping hand. You make this association great!

Enjoy this year’s edition of the Frankly

Florian Kühnel  
Munich, October 2013

## Meet the Board

### Florian Kühnel President

Florian Kühnel studied Electrical Engineering and Information Technology at FH Rosenheim before he started his Fulbright year at the University of Florida in 2005. Extending his stay, he finished with a M.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Today, Florian is working as a project manager for ESP systems at BMW in Munich.

Florian joined the German Fulbright Alumni Association immediately after his return to Germany. Soon he was elected Regional Coordinator in Munich – a post, he held for 5 years – before successfully running for President of the association.

As President, Florian is glad to be involved in projects at all levels. However, what he likes most, is the day to day contact with fellow alumni and current scholars. This is a constant reminder how great the Fulbright program is.

### Jakob Liss Treasurer

Jakob Liss studied physics at the Ruprecht-Karls-University in Heidelberg with extended stays at the University of Connecticut during his Fulbright year in 2009/10 and at the Center for Optical Quantum Technologies in Hamburg.

Currently, he is doing a PhD in theoretical physics at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich and is associated with the International Max-Planck-Institute for applied photon sciences.

Jakob joined the Fulbright-Alumni association in 2010 after his return from the US. He participated in regular meetings of the regional groups of Heidelberg, Hamburg, and Munich. In 2013, he was elected as treasurer of the Fulbright Alumni organization and is glad to be involved and to live on the Fulbright spirit in Germany.

### Charlotte Horn Vice President Communications

Charlotte’s Fulbright year turned out to be the “year of Obama” during the historic election of 2008/ 2009 right in the political centre of Washington, D.C. She studied journalism and foreign policy at American University and interned for various media outlets. Now, Charlotte is living in Hamburg and works as a reporter for North German Broadcasting (NDR).

Having taken part in many Fulbright events in DC, Charlotte is trying to continue this inspirational Fulbright life back in Germany. Since 2009 she is engaged with Fulbright Alumni Germany and is holding the position of the vice president communications since 2012.



# Meet the Board

## Vinzent Strobel Vice President Events

Vinzent Strobel spent his Fulbright year (2011/12) at the University of Kansas studying Chemical Engineering. Even in the middle of the midwest he happened to meet many international Fulbright scholars which he had not expected.

After coming back to Germany, Vinzent was excited about the Fulbright Alumni Association, excited to stick to that international crowd. Subsequently, he was elected as VP Events a couple of months later. Besides working on the board, Vinzent Strobel is a student of M.Sc. Process Engineering at RWTH Aachen.

## Çiğdem Yiğ Vice President Members

Having spent her Fulbright year 2009/10 at St. Louis University, MO as TA for German as a Foreign Language, Çiğdem is now living in Berlin und is enrolled as MA student in the teacher training program of the Universität Potsdam. She holds her position on the board since 2012.



Florian Kühnel



Jacob Liss



Charlotte Horn



Vinzent Strobel



Çiğdem Yiğ

# The Extended Board

## Wiltrud Hammelstein International Cooperation

Wiltrud spent her Fulbright year (1986/87) in Charleston, Illinois and obtained her Master of Business Administration. She has served on the (extended) board of the FAeV from 1994 through 2003 and again in 2010 and 2011, including 4 years as President. Being responsible for the international relations comes “natural” to her as she has extensive experience with the international Fulbright community, having attended a multitude of international meetings since 1993 and being a lifetime member of the US Fulbright Association. She also served on the board of France Fulbright Alumni from 2009 through 2012. In 2013 she is focusing on enhancing the communication among European Fulbright groups and strengthening the ties with the US Fulbright Association.

## Martin Kohler FRANKly Editor

Martin Kohler is majoring in History and Cultural Anthropology at Goethe University Frankfurt and is pursuing his master degree. Currently, he is working on his final thesis. The academic year 2011/2012 he spent at Marquette University in Milwaukee, WI. After having returned from his Fulbright year, Martin joined the German Fulbright Alumni Association that he already knew from some of the Stammtisch gatherings hold by the Frankfurt chapter.

As Editor he directs and oversees the creation of the FRANKly from the very beginning. Starting with finding a cover theme and composing a Call for Articles, he waits for the incoming essays and negotiates with authors, proofreaders, board members and all the other people who contribute.

## Henning Blunck Online Editor

Henning Blunck obtained a Diplom in Logistics from TU Dortmund. He spent his Fulbright year (2010-2011) at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta studying Industrial Engineering. Today, Henning works as a scientific assistant in the field of production logistics in Bremen. As online editor he manages the Association’s website.

## Shamaila Ghaffar Diversity Initiative

The liaison for the Fulbright Diversity Program Alumni co-organizes events on the local and national levels to sustain the energy and positive experiences of the 5-week US program. She associates being a Diversity scholar with an unforgettable adventure in the US, during which a group of students came together to realize an opened future of possibilities. Shamaila was a participant of the Fulbright Diversity Initiative in 2010, when she was immersed in student life at the University of Kentucky. Shamaila currently studies Economics at Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main.

## Susanne Döring Mentoring

The FAeV is currently establishing a mentorship program to connect young returnees and experienced members of the Association. Field-matched mentors will be available to assist mentees in matters of personal guidance in educational and professional careers. Efforts are being made to most effectively deliver positive outcomes. Reflecting the Association’s devotion to this program, mentorship is likely to be a high-lighted topic in an upcoming national event. Susanne received a Fulbright grant to study at Michigan State University in 2008/09 and completed her studies with a Master of Science in Accounting. Since 2010, she calls Mainz her new home.



From left to right:  
Wiltrud Hammelstein,  
Martin Kohler,  
Henning Blunck,  
Shamaila Ghaffar,  
Susanne Döring



# The Extended Board

## Simon Balder Social Media Editor

The Social Media Editor manages the content of the Association's Facebook-Fanpage, ensuring that all information is up-to-date and truly represents the current activities of the Association. In order to achieve this, he cooperates with other board members, as well as other contributors to the site.

Simon first came in close contact with the German Fulbright Alumni Association in 2008 as a High School senior and became a member of the German Fulbright Alumni Association in 2010. Since 2013 he is in charge of social media issues, after he was in the position as an Online Editor in the year before.

Beyond that he is enrolled at the Helmut-Schmidt- Universität Hamburg with a major in business studies. He is also looking forward to participate in the Fulbright Program in the years to come.

## Uwe Koch Webmaster

The Webmaster looks after all technical issues concerning our online presence: email addresses, editor accounts, content management system, and other IT-related aspects. He reports to the board and liaises with designers, editors, regional chapters, and event organizers.

Uwe spent his Fulbright year (1988/89) in Corvallis, Oregon. After returning to Germany, he completed his degree in Physics at Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen, where he became the Webmaster in 1993. His Fulbright alumni career started as Treasurer of the Frankfurt Regional Chapter. After several years on the board, he enjoys to still be able to contribute as one of the three members of the extended board who currently live abroad.

## Elke Handschug-Brosin Family Weekend

Elke founded the Fulbright Family Weekend because she wanted to stay active in the FAeV as a mother of three boys. Her twins were born in 2000, and the tradition of the Fulbright Family Weekend started in 2001. It is meant to target everyone who feels part of the Fulbright Family – not only those who have turned into parents. The event takes place on an annual basis in Königstein, near Dresden (Saxon Switzerland). The next gathering will be May 29<sup>th</sup> – June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014.

Elke spent three years (1992-95) as a Fulbright Scholar in Michigan and Alaska. She graduated from MSU with a Master's degree in Park and Recreation Resource Management and headed the Visitor Industry Program at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. Her heart has never really left Alaska, thus, she has turned her dedication to this beautiful state into a career, currently as the representative of the Fairbanks Convention & Visitors Bureau in German-speaking Europe. Elke lives in Radebeul near Dresden with her family.

## Hermes Winands Member Database

Hermes is responsible for the development and maintenance of our member database. This task includes office support (especially during the time of the "Lastschifteinzug" and "Spendenquittungen") and the creation of the yearly member directory. Our member database was custom developed and is now relatively stable.

Hermes lives in beautiful Munich. After his Fulbright years as a Computer Science major at North Dakota State University in Fargo, he started to work for Accenture in 1997. Today, he is a senior executive and is mainly responsible for managing large-scale IT implementation projects. He has administered our member database since 1998.



From left to right: Hermes Winands, Dagmar Schreiber, Johannes Schulz, Stephan Meyer-Brehm

## Holger Schöner Mailing Lists

The task of caring for the email lists has settled to be a relatively simple one, ever since the lists were established and have proven to work well over several years. What makes it interesting is the opportunity to stay in touch with members of the board and occasionally other association members or related people, when helping to sort out issues with posts or list membership.

From 1997-98, Holger very much enjoyed his stay in Boulder, Colorado, while working towards a Master of Science degree in Computer Science. Since then, he finished his PhD at the Technical University of Berlin and is currently working on data analysis in Austria. He started his Fulbright alumni career as head of the Regional Chapter Berlin. He was Vice President for Communications for two years and is now happy about the opportunity to participate in the Association's affairs, even from abroad.

## Dagmar Schreiber Sailing Trip

The coordinator of the biannual FAeV's sailing trip organizes the trip with operator Clipper – Deutsches Jugendwerk zur See e.V. This involves finding the right ship and determining the route, destination, time, crew, etc. From the invitation to all FAeV members, sending packing lists, and managing last-minute changes, the position entails doing sweet work while looking forward to a relaxing and inspiring week on the Baltic Sea with fellow Fulbrighters every other summer.

Dagmar spent her Fulbright year (1991/92) in Washington, D.C., obtaining a Master of Laws degree in International & Comparative Law from George Washington University Law School. She has enjoyed sailing on old wooden ships ever since her first FAeV sailing trip in 1993 and tries very hard to get other Fulbrighters hooked on the same sea adventure.

## Johannes Schulz Welcome Meeting

The Welcome Meeting coordinator is the first contact to the board of the Association for organizing the annual Welcome Meeting which is taking place in Düsseldorf this year. Organizing one of the national events for the Association allows him to connect with various people and makes for excitement throughout the year.

After spending his Fulbright year (2008 – '09) in Iowa City, IA and obtaining a Masters of Laws degree in International & Comparative Law from the University of Iowa College of Law, Johannes started working for one of Germany's major energy suppliers. After being the Regional Chapter coordinator for the Rhein/Ruhr Chapter for the past 2 ½ years, Johannes is organizing his first Welcome Meeting and is looking forward to many other valuable experiences with the Association.

## Stephan Meyer-Brehm Image Film / Video Project

The idea to document the experiences of Fulbrighters on video was born a few years ago. As the concept and goals have evolved, it seemed evident the program required a principal leader. Interviews of alumni from a range of backgrounds and exchange years, as well as historical footage, serves as a professional portrait of the Association's goals and activities.

Stephan spent his Fulbright year (1985/86) at the University of Texas at Austin. In tune with his field of study in Communications/Advertising, he went on to work for an advertising agency in Chicago. Today, he works as a self-employed consultant for Marketing Communication and teaches in the same field.

The members of the Extended Board not featured here are **Steffen Schmuck-Soldan**, organisator of the Jürgen Mulert Award, and **Heinz Neubauer** (Berlin Conference).



From left to right: Simon Balder, Uwe Koch, Holger Schöner, Elke Handschug-Brosin



# Social Media – Enemy Of The State Or Power To The People?

by Jean-David Herld

A quarter of our planet's population is connected to the Internet, granting individuals access to free knowledge and, increasingly, to each other. Social media companies have played a significant role at the forefront of recent Internet growth, as social activity online is progressively correlated with real-life action on the ground. This has allowed millions of people around the world to organize along lines of certain causes or beliefs, facilitated primarily by Facebook groups, Twitter followership features, and Google's various services. The Internet naturally tends to make openness easy and isolation more difficult. For example, the Internet presents a challenge to the backward forces of Arab authoritarianism. During the recent wave of revolutionary demonstrations, the Internet not only accelerated the exchange of information but also allowed new information to be disseminated across the public. In the face of all this, old centers of power structures are crumbling.

When emotive pictures of violence in Tunisia and its neighboring countries were posted online, they spread like wildfire across North Africa and the Middle East, ultimately catalyzing months of revolutions throughout 2011. Protests, riots, and rebellions shook the autocratic systems of the region. In Egypt and Tunisia, rebels were striving against the oppression of the system, strengthened by the widespread response to their calls for action. Events in Egypt appeared to have inspired the opposition in Iran to reignite the protests last seen in 2009. Libya fell into a civil war, spurring intervention by NATO. Syria is in a stalemate, while the costly conflict between the government and the opposition continues. In other countries, such as Morocco and Jordan, the regime reacted to the social protests and stabilized their status quo over the short term. The Arab Spring has marked a historic turning point for democracy, not only in substantial changes in the political machinery but also in the process by which upheavals may occur.

Overall, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Google have evolved quickly in comparison to other means of communication. Unlike inventions such as the telegraph or the telephone, new benefits and implications of social media can change on a daily basis. The purpose of social media compa-



nies was originally to facilitate communication between people. This started with the concept of friends and professionals messaging each other. On the Internet, the social constraints of the real world – such as segregation of the sexes – can disappear, giving groups of people who might otherwise never meet and converse the chance to connect and to exchange ideas with like-minded individuals. On the one hand, it homogenizes the way in which many of us consume information. On the other hand, the Internet promotes the further diversification of various information pools by allowing more and more citizens around the world to share perspectives and local intelligence. Through social networking sites, Arab Spring activists began to emerge and distribute footage of anti-government protests and strikes. They were the first to speak openly and explicitly about what was happening in their country, posting testimonies, pictures, and videos on the Internet.

However, how significant a role social media played in those revolutions remains an open-ended question. A study from the University of Washington found that there was a strong link between social media and the Arab Spring. "Our evidence suggests that social media carried a cascade of messages about freedom and democracy across North Africa and the Middle East, and helped raise expectations for the success of political uprising" said Philip Howard, a University of Washington Professor of Communications and the study's leader. Neverthe-

less, it should be emphasized that freedom movements had been brewing for years. Thus, social media was predominantly the facilitator of change, rather than the main element. Domestically, it allowed groups to organize themselves and debate contentious issues that could not be discussed in public. Internationally, it helped the world discover what was happening and respond by placing pressure on those regimes.

Many had been communicating through Facebook, Twitter, and blogs in the run-up to the unrest. In the Middle East, where almost two-thirds of the population is thought to be under the age of 30, it should come as no surprise that, as elsewhere, the youth are more likely to be informed by and express themselves on the Internet, generally finding it more trustworthy and accurate than mainstream resources. Many activists used social networks as a key tool in expressing their thoughts regarding unjust acts committed by the government. The people tried to shock the moral principles of both the regime and external witnesses by contrasting the violence and cruelty of the government with the demonstrators' own promise to nonviolent ways, many of which were met with brutality by the regime.

Whilst the Arab Spring was not a gender-based revolution, it did mark a turning point for the role of women in the public arena. Egypt's Esraa Abdel Fattah, who became famously known as "Facebook girl," as well as Libya's Danya Bashir, Bahrain's Zeinab and Maryam al-Khawaja, and Tunisia's Lina Ben Mhenni broke through traditional gender roles and methods of communication to support and organize virtual and street protests. These female cyber activists stand out for their use of media technologies to transcend national boundaries and bridge international media with activist groups. Social media has generally enhanced women's participation in economic and political life, allowing them the opportunity for self-expression. However, concerns have been raised that governments wish to turn back the clock and restrict women's rights to keep them out of politics. As countries begin to draft new Constitutions, initiate reforms, and replace old bureaucracies, it is crucial that policymakers account for the role of gender in participatory governance. The outcome of these processes is critical for the rights of women and their status in the new democracies.

The Arab Spring has shown the world what is possible when you combine social unrest with brave citizenry and powerful digital tools. However, social media platforms adopt very different approaches to claims of freedom of speech. With respect to international events, Twitter has taken a defined position on problems relating to expression and freedom of speech. In the first 18 days of the Iranian election protests, over two million tweets were sent from Iran by over half a million people. At its height, 200,000 tweets about Iran were posted every hour. Twitter is considered the modern bastion of free speech. While this development can be promising in terms of reaching a large



amount of people instantly, it also transmits the danger of being misused to spread racism, sexism, and discrimination. The Internet is open to everyone, and anyone can use it, whether constructively or destructively.

Early in 2011, an official blog was released stating that Twitter believes that open communication has a positive global impact and also openly stated that some tweets users submit facilitate positive change within a country. Also noted is that while Twitter employees have personal stances, they have a policy of not censoring or deleting content unless a post is considered illegal. It is important to pay attention to that last detail of legality because it raises an important question: If countries create the laws that define legal and illegal activities, by which country or creed is Twitter abiding? It seems that Twitter is applying the laws and values of the United States to citizens of all other nations.

Twitter has played a large role in facilitating communication in both Libya and Egypt. Protesters involved in the political uprising, and eventually also rebel combatants, were able to upload information onto the web in real time, immediately notifying networks of followers. Many uprisings have failed throughout history because information could not be communicated quickly or accurately. Social media has unintentionally solved this challenge. Twitter supports freedom of information and expression regardless of who pens them.

Google platforms, as well, allow this type of expressive freedom and, further, grant groups numerous tools to better organize. Some foreign governments have been openly opposed to this and, in some cases, taken direct action against Google. When these events have occurred, Google has maintained a consistent international policy. For instance, Google has experienced a number of clashes with China, where the government has upheld a position of censoring massive amounts of information. Google took a huge risk by pulling out of China. They chose to forgo the profits of the Chinese market because it clashed too much with their values.

In Egypt, Google openly opposed Mubarak's regime, especially when he ordered the cut-off of the country's Internet access.

Google fought back and developed an alternative means, allowing the protesters to send messages via Twitter, Google's competitor, over phone lines. This was a major statement, enabling the services of a niche rival when they themselves could not provide their own informational services. Google also owns YouTube and created a central hub for protesters to submit their videos. This access to new information pools and the transnational experience create a new environment in which cultural diversity is the norm rather than the exception.

On global issues, Facebook is significantly different from Twitter and Google. Facebook has not openly expressed an opinion on issues such as freedom of speech or individual rights in general. Because Facebook has not written an official memorandum to express how it addresses these concerns, we can only determine its viewpoint from previous behavior. Facebook's decisions in China, for example, indicates it prioritizes market share and profits. Although Facebook is currently banned in China, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg is eager to gain access.

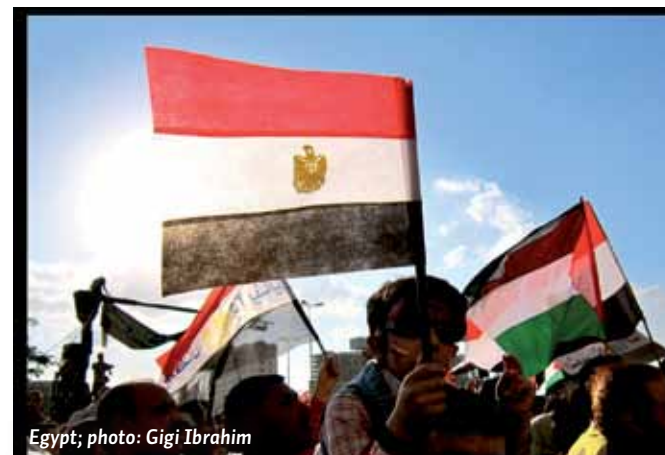
A Facebook representative stated that the website may block content in certain countries in order to do business there. In Egypt, Facebook was even touted as the cradle of the revolution by Google executive, Wael Ghonim. Ghonim stated that the revolution started in 2010 when information was shared between Egyptians on Facebook. Videos were uploaded and shared on as many as 60,000 Facebook profiles. Facebook has not made comments on this type of recognition likely because, to them, it does more harm than good to their business model. Facebook's priority, it would seem, is to gain worldwide market control, as it did in the United States. Facebook does not want to establish a position on these types of issues because it is not to their financial benefit to do so. If Facebook lacks a central value system to apply in an international strategy, they can tailor their product for individual countries. If China is concerned with what happened in Egypt, Facebook can strike a deal allowing the Chinese to cut off such information sharing.

Internet censorship is a very common phenomenon in today's world. The most common reason for blocked access is government censorship. Iran, for example, has the second highest online usage per capita in the Middle East. Many users saw the Internet as a means to bypass the strict censorship laws in Iran. Originally, the Internet services provided by the government within Iran were relatively open. Today, Internet providers are required to host state-controlled gateways, and prominent English-language sites are blocked permanently.

As of 2013, the Iranian government has planned to switch its citizens' Internet to a domestic network for declared purposes of bolstering the country's protection against cyber attacks. However, this process has been suggested to be a deliberate attempt to control access to the web. Governments realize that if they cut off the Internet access entirely, people will

develop ways to reconnect. Setting up state-controlled intranets fosters the illusion of having access to the outside world.

Iran is not the only country censoring information on the Internet. Internet censorship in China is among the most stringent in the world. China is a one-party state where, for 60 years, the Communist party has ruled with an iron fist. Here, the Internet simultaneously represents both a massive headache and a great opportunity. For the Chinese government, the challenge of the web is not solely about liberal western information entering the country. They perceive the greatest threat as originating from within their own ranks, from the building concerns of hundreds of millions of people among the local populace.



Egypt; photo: Gigi Ibrahim

On the afternoon of May 12, 2008, a 7.9-magnitude earthquake hit the region of Sichuan. The natural disaster killed about 70,000 people, and to this day, over 18,000 are still missing. Instantaneously, Chinese citizens were uploading pictures onto QQ - the most popular free instant messaging computer program in Mainland China - and Twitter. These were not external reports from reliable and professional sources; rather, they were generated among half a billion amateur sources from within China. Chinese authorities are also using the Internet domestically to harness its power to spread information instantly in a virtual battle of ideas.

The Chinese government started to hire what it called "Internet Commentators", citizens who would write favorable articles in an attempt to shape and sway public opinion of the government on the Internet. The commentators are said to be paid fifty cents of renminbi for every post that either directs a discussion away from anti-party opinions or sensitive content. Furthermore, the Chinese government leaves much of the work to Internet providers, only granting Internet licenses in exchange for harsh Internet censorship. Chinese citizens are permitted to question and analyze local affairs and address low-level corruption, as the censorship is so far limited to discussions of democracy or the national government. The Chinese government strategized that instead of simply preventing people from voicing their opinions outright, it would



Egypt revolution; photo: Mohamed El Dahshan

rather influence trends of public thought. Nevertheless, it is not easy to guide a digital society, where views can be shared instantly, widely, and anonymously.

North Korea, on the other hand, is following a different approach than China. Its own citizens are largely shut out from the Internet. Only a select number in the country, known as "elites", as well as some academics and scientists, are allowed to use the Internet. Most of the citizens are intentionally starved of any information, relying on state-run pages only. This isolation is doubtless affecting the country on multiple levels, not the least of which being economic growth.

Still, other oppressors rely entirely on the Internet. For the past two decades, the jihadis took advantage of the Internet - not only for political purposes, but also for financing, recruitment, propaganda, training, motivation to commit acts of terrorism, and the diffusion of information for terrorist incidents. Beforehand, the Internet extremists tended to be scattered in small numbers around the world. Radical Islamic preachers made use of cassette tapes to spread their messages, which were reproduced and distributed by word of mouth. However, during the 1990s and especially after 2000, preachers turned to satellite television broadcasts and the Internet to convey their directives. The Internet has effectively connected and empowered them, providing new tools and a modernized timescale to carry out their initiatives. Al-Qaeda quickly recognized the capacity of this new instrument to spread the message of fear and terror. Using the Internet, those groups can fully control how the information is disseminated.

Recently, Al-Qaeda has begun publishing advertisements on various jihadist Internet forums, proposing to recruit and

train potential suicide bombers. The Internet is playing an increasing role in radicalization, since it is an easily accessible incubator that provides a large number of influential materials. Al-Qaeda, like the Internet, has no center; it is a dispersed group of loosely associated people. Wherever jihadists are in the world, the Internet lets them communicate to like-minded people, further reinforcing their belief systems.

The Internet can redefine democracy and open up new horizons. On the streets of Iran, it brought the people together to oppose its regime. Yet, at its worst, it is fueling prejudices and closing doors. Simply changing the government won't automatically result in a fully developed and functioning democracy. In places where the revolution has been achieved, such as Tunisia, the use of social media is not finished, but has changed focus. Social media can help to send a more accurate image of the country to the rest of the world about their goals and aspirations in the aftermath.

The different behaviors of Twitter, Google, and Facebook have raised a difficult question. When put in an international context, these companies are faced with a "right vs. right" problem that has a different answer depending on who you ask. In the long run, social media companies who embrace freedom of information will benefit from their position. In the industry of social networking, access to the service is free. Many individuals mistakenly believe that they are receiving a service for free, when in reality, they themselves are the product. The network utilized by the most users will be the most powerful. Excluding retaliation from their governments, the majority of the world's population would support freedom of information and expression. For this reason, Google and Twitter will likely be seen as more socially and corporately responsible entities that care about the rights of their users.

At the moment, a quarter of the world is connected, but what will happen when the remaining 75 percent comes online? As technology becomes less expensive and further approaches omnipresence, mass mediated representations of diversity, as well as shifts in power will increase. Will the Internet help us to achieve greater global understanding or will we face new dangers that we never even imagined? After 20 years, we are just beginning to realize the huge impact the Internet has upon us. It confronts the world with an incredible opportunity and an equally immense responsibility. The question for the future is how we will use it.



**Jean-David Herld** is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Finance from Imperial College Business School. He also supports the [startupnetzwerk.org](http://startupnetzwerk.org) team to foster a spirit of innovation by helping people in the German community learn about and implement entrepreneurship. Prior to Imperial College, he held various positions in the financial sector, including as an Investor Relations assistant at Air Berlin in Berlin, as an intern at Porsche France in Paris, and for the Commerzbank in Frankfurt am Main. Jean-David also worked at an NGO in

Mount Molloy, Australia, to help build trails in newly established nature reserves and to raise animals in and around the reforestation area. Jean-David holds a B.A. in International Business Management from the Berlin School of Economics and Law, Germany. While studying he was granted the Fulbright Scholarship and studied for one year at Bentley University in Boston. He also is a member of the German National Academic Foundation. Jean-David has lived in five countries, and speaks German, English, French, and Spanish.



# Diversity is redefining Germany

by Semira Soraya-Kandan

My Fulbright experience takes us back twenty-four years ago. In the fall of 1989, I studied at the University of Washington in Seattle. When I came home one November afternoon, my radio delivered the news of the German Wall being torn down. I was startled. This event changed our nation fundamentally. No one at the time imagined a future German chancellor as a woman raised in former East Germany. Ossi and Wessi remained a major cultural divide for the following years, until 9/11.

While studying cultural communication, dialogical rhetoric, and organizational communication, I also took a class from a neighboring department: multicultural education with Prof. James Banks. He is an internationally acclaimed scholar and still teaches at UW even today. What I learned about the history of multicultural education, respectively diversity, was absolutely fascinating for me. Various social rights movements in the US had, in fact, united in cause and attempted to pursue a common goal: redefining mainstream bias in the curriculum, in teaching and in developing students. Admittedly, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) rights had then still been quite a taboo even in the US context of multiculturalism.

One of my biggest struggles upon returning to Germany in 1990 was the lack of understanding for how we could use the modern insights about multicultural realities or diversity. It seemed incomprehensible to see a common ground for issues of race, class, and gender to most Germans at the time (in spite of such publications as Meulenbelt, 1988). Until very recently, Germany flatly denied being an immigration country. Only in 2005, the official redefinition started with a new immigration law.

The Corporate Charter of Diversity for Germany was only introduced in 2010 (sic!). It clearly showed that, at least in the workplace, many people have understood that there is great potential for leveraging diversity and making use of the insights about multicultural realities for collaborative success.

I am happy to say that, finally, diversity issues are more and more explicitly addressed as integral topics of organizational consulting and leadership training in Germany.

But society needs to follow this trend. Still, many struggle to differentiate descriptive and prescriptive models of multicultural society (Soraya, 1994, Möbius, 2003). Angela Merkel's statement "Multikulti ist gescheitert" in 2010 is a most



German national team promoted in Metropol Hayat, a Turkish newspaper from Mannheim

the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees underwent some identity changes and now addresses migration and integration directly with their mission.

Also, public administration is encouraged to include more ethnically diverse employees. Programs for developing a so-called "Culture of Welcome" are sprouting.

More and more ethnically diverse voices are being raised publicly. A discourse has begun of "new Germans". The old "Leitkultur" seems outdated even for many contemporary conservatives, according to their acceptance of recent judicial decisions on the equal rights of heterosexual and homosexual marriages. Yet, it is important that we do not only celebrate a "welcoming" culture to new migrants; we must also develop a competence to redefine who we are as a diverse society, considering the many members with migratory backgrounds, both fresh and firmly established. The question of the 'ability to integrate' never refers to newcomers alone. It requires adaptations from everyone. A new Germany needs to be created and redefined. We are right in the middle of this process.

Intercultural understanding has been a fundamental goal of the Fulbright Program. My deepened understanding of the roots of diversity gained during my Fulbright year continues to fuel my ideas and hopes of progress. It has not only taught me to better understand the USA, it taught me to better understand Germany and myself in transformation.

I am deeply thankful for this.

unfortunate expression of this misunderstanding.

The FIFA World Cup in 2010 displayed the first multicultural German national soccer team. The effect this had on new German identities was major and will hopefully tower above the trouble of the shamefully late uncovering of the NSU murder series of German migrants.

The current emphasis on demographic change places great pressure on today's economy and politics. Even an agency like



**Semira Soraya-Kandan** (Fulbright 1989/90 University of Washington, Seattle) lives in Mannheim. Her consulting firm offers systemic organizational consulting, coaching & international leadership development. Her focus is on dialogical leadership, leveraging diversity & digitally connected collaboration.



# From Assimilation to Integration. Intercultural Education in Germany

by Benjamin Becker

The following three developments necessitate a concept of intercultural education: 1. Worldwide migration, resulting in immigration societies; 2. the process of European integration; 3. the development of worldwide economic structures, i.e. globalization and worldwide interconnectedness through information technology. Migration has traditionally been seen as the defining factor, which may be due to its huge proportions: In 2005, 190 million people, or 3% of the world population, were migrants. In Germany, the rate was and is even higher: In 1995, the Conference of German cultural ministers declared that with a 7% share of foreign nationals, Germany was factually an immigration country. Nevertheless, it took the German government another ten years to pass an immigration law and thus officially recognize this status. This time lag in recognition of the societal status quo is indicative of Germany's reluctance to deal with ethnic diversity. To understand the gradual process that is still ongoing, a brief historical overview of the development of intercultural education within the German educational and societal system will be provided. This process can be characterized by a shift from assimilation to integration.

After World War II, Germany was in desperate need of qualified workers. In the 1960s, this led to the official invitation of so-called "guest workers" – first from Spain and Greece, and then also from Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and former Yugoslavia. As the name implies, guest workers were supposed to come to Germany, do their duties and help the German industry recover, and then return to their home countries. The expected duration for an average guest worker stay was 5 years, and initially, they were not supposed to bring along their families. Of course, it didn't work that way. Many guest workers settled in Germany and either brought along their families or founded new ones. Germany was thus facing a new, unexpected kind of diversity, which was only officially recognized in 2005 with the passing of an immigration law.

In 1977, the European Economic Community demanded the bilateral integration of migrants, which included teaching both German and the respective mother tongue. What the German government did instead was implement a strategy referred to as "foreigners' pedagogy" – a term which sounds stigmatizing today, but which was part of the official terminology at the time. Foreigners' pedagogy was based on a deficit hypothesis, which means that it regarded the presence of migrants as a deviation from the norm, or even a disturbance.

Hence, all proposed measures, which were directed exclusively at migrants, and not at the domestic population, aimed at compensation and assimilation. The ultimate aim was integration into the German society, and as language deficits were regarded as a main integration obstacle, many measurements focused on improving the German skills of migrants.

In the 1980s, the deficit approach was increasingly criticized, leading to the development of an early intercultural pedagogy. This approach was based on a difference hypothesis and stressed that people were different, but of the same value. Another major difference was that intercultural pedagogy now also addressed domestic people, and not exclusively migrants. This led to concepts such as community education, which for example puts a focus on celebrating cultural festivals together. However, the "culturalization" of the early intercultural pedagogy was criticized for focusing too much on culture, and too little on socioeconomic differences and institutional discrimination. This eventually led to the development of today's intercultural pedagogy, which unites the cultural approach and approaches such as antiracist education. This modern concept, which was officially enacted in 1996 by the Conference of German cultural ministers, regards intercultural education as a part of general education, and hence addresses all German students, no matter where they are from.

In contrast to intercultural education, the Anglophone concept of multicultural education has its roots in the American civil rights movement and aims at ensuring that all ethnic minorities have equal access to the educational system. It is thus a holistic approach which does not focus on single aspects, but rather on equal opportunities in general. Differences between the two concepts can be explained with their respective histories: While many European societies and educational systems have experienced extended periods of nationalism, the United States were – at least in theory – founded on the principle of equal opportunities for all. Hence, multicultural education was right from the start an introversive concept, while earlier models of intercultural education were rather extraversive in nature, focusing on minorities from the outside. This major difference also reflects in the fact that ethnic minorities in the United States are in many cases U.S. citizens, while ethnic minorities in Germany often lack this legal status and the related political influence.

So which implications does intercultural education have for teaching – and in particular, for language teaching – in the German educational system? The paradigm shift that many people refer to when talking about intercultural education goes back to the Cultural Turn in the Humanities: With the emergence of Cultural Studies in the 1960s, the former concept of high culture – sometimes referred to as Culture with a Big C – was supplemented by elements from pop culture – sometimes referred to as culture with a small c. Following Benedict Anderson's thesis of nations as "Imagined Communities," the deconstruction of national cultures and stereotypes came to the center of attention: Instead of teaching Great Britain or the United States by covering its institutions and its predominantly white, Christian traditions, curricula now increasingly focused on ethnic minorities and the plurality of cultures. In similar respect, traditional literary canons – mainly consisting of works by Dead White European Males (so-called DWEMs) and White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (so-called WASPs) – were supplemented by postcolonial literatures and works by ethnic minorities.

Already in 1983, German educational researcher Hohmann stressed that one of the guiding principles of intercultural education was ethnic diversity within the classroom. Multiculturality should hence not be regarded as a problem, but rather as an opportunity for better education. Back in those days, intercultural concepts were still inseparably connected to the idea of migration. Today, this exclusive legitimization of intercultural approaches with migration has become rather uncommon. Instead, intercultural education is now regarded as a self-evident and integral part of general education. In other words: People are starting to understand that multiculturalism does not necessarily come from the outside, but is rather an integral part of everyday culture and life. Based on this assumption, intercultural education belongs to what the European Union calls "lifelong learning" and has two major aims: first, to stress that multiculturalism and diversity are both normal and positive states; and second, to teach so-called intercultural competencies, among them the ability to deal with stereotypes, to be open for other cultures and values, and to understand the cultural subtleties of other languages.

However, despite the very active discourse on intercultural education, there is only very little pedagogic micro-research to empirically show what is actually happening in our classrooms. In addition, studies on the academic performance of people with a migration background suggest that intercultural concepts still show little

effect in everyday school life. One major point of criticism is that the socioeconomic gap within society also reflects in our educational system. Kiper, for example, argues that there are two different kinds of schools: on the one hand schools for intercultural citizens of the world, with lots of international projects, bilingual education tracks, and parents dedicated to the educational success of their children; on the other hand schools in ethnically segmented districts, where intercultural education is rather seen as a compensation strategy to help underprivileged students.

Of course, this kind of dichotomy is very simplified and exaggerated. However, it points towards another major discrepancy in our educational system, namely the early selection and assignment of students to different types of schools. In Germany, most students first attend a 4-year-primary school, and then receive a recommendation on which secondary school to attend. Choices are between a "Gymnasium," where students can get their university entrance qualification; a "Realschule," where students can get an entrance qualification for universities of applied science; and a "Hauptschule," which enables students to learn a craft or trade. In theory, this is a system designed to foster students' individual skills. In practice, however, it leads to socioeconomic and ethnic segmentation: As the PISA studies have shown, 40 % of all students with a migration background attend a Hauptschule, while only 13% of this group gain their university entrance qualification. This has immediate implications for our educational system, and for our society at large: Only a small fraction of our students have a migration background, and less than 1% of our Fulbright scholars are of non-German heritage. So where do we go from here?

Within the Fulbright context, one very successful approach to improve the situation is the so-called "Diversity Initiative." This program specifically addresses young people with a migration



(\*) Becker, Benjamin. Interkulturelles Lernen in Theorie und Praxis. Eine Analyse der aktuellen G8-Englischlehrwerke für die gymnasiale Oberstufe. Universität zu Köln, 2012. <<http://www.pedocs.de/volltexte/2012/5878/>>.





background, enabling them to participate in intense, 6-week summer schools at American host institutions. Many of the participants would otherwise not have had the chance to take part in a transatlantic exchange program, and it is the Diversity Initiative's declared goal to win them for a full-year study in the U.S. Another approach aims at winning more people with a migration background for a career to become a high-school teacher. In the federal state of Northrhine-Westfalia, for example, the government has launched an initiative for this. Unfortunately, this is just a single example, and our educational is still in need of an integrated concept.

To end on a more positive note, three things should be stressed: First, the German concept of intercultural education is a fairly recent one, but it has already transformed all federal curricula and text books. Several studies – among them the author's dissertation (\*) – have clearly shown that huge successes have been made during the last 20-30 years. Second, all teachers who are currently being trained at German universities learn that intercultural competence is one of the guiding principles in today's classrooms. Third, intercultural education has a strong affective component. In order to reduce prejudices against other cultures, intercultural encounters have to be constantly practiced. In today's interconnected world, this has become easier than ever, and the combination of modern curricula and well-trained teachers can play a decisive role in encouraging such encounters.



**Benjamin Becker** studied English and History at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne and holds a PhD in English Studies from the University of Cologne. From 2007-2008, he worked as a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant at Emory University in Atlanta, GA. Since his return to Germany, he has been active in transatlantic relations, lately as President of the German Fulbright Alumni Association and as Director of Programs and Events of the European Network of American Alumni Associations.



In 2010, the American Embassy Berlin launched the Green Ambassadors Program. The program is aimed at raising awareness of and slowing down global warming. The participants in the program first completed a workshop on the implications of climate change and were then called upon to initiate their own small-scale climate protection projects on a community level.

My own project focused on the impact of individual traffic. I wanted to create an incentive that would encourage people to ride their bikes instead of driving their cars as a means of reducing greenhouse gases. A friend of mine, Claudia Vehr, helped me create a sticker. It shows a bike and conveys a simple message: ein Auto weniger. The sticker can be attached to your bike and is supposed to serve as a daily encouragement to opt for your bike as your means of transport. The sticker could also help create a community of like-minded riders who are able to identify and support each other in their common effort.

The project won first prize in the 2010 Green Ambassadors project competition as the jury liked the simplicity and positivity of the approach. Somewhere along the way the idea of taking the small-scale campaign one step further emerged. Towards the end of 2010, Aylin Jordan, a fellow Green Ambassador, and Daniela Schilling-Mühl from the American Embassy Berlin stepped in and we set out to design ways of addressing a greater community. We realized that, as a first step, we would need to issue an English version of the sticker. The slogan now reads: Minus One Car. Moreover, we want to get our Green Ambassadors network involved to spread the word. 5,000 postcards with the sticker on them will be distributed among all Green Ambassadors. Each Green Ambassador receives ten postcards and is invited to send the remaining nine postcards to his family and friends all over the world. We have also created a website which serves as a platform for the Minus-One-Car community. In addition, the website hosts our Minus-One-Car photo contest. Everyone is welcome to join! All you need to do is take an inspiring picture of your bike with the sticker on it and upload it on our website. For more information, please go to [www.minus-one-car.org](http://www.minus-one-car.org).

**Aylin Jordan:** Aylin graduated from Freie University Berlin in 2010. Through the Fulbright Diversity Initiative she attended a summer school at the University of Anchorage, Alaska, in 2007. Aylin is currently doing research for her PhD in Education while also working as a mediator and trainer for intercultural communication.

**Susanne Grautmann:** Susanne graduated from Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster in 2003 and spent the 2003/04 academic year at Juniata College in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, as a teaching assistant (Fulbright program). She currently teaches English and philosophy in Berlin.

# Diversity as a Program...

by Jürgen Simon

## The Idea

The term "diversity" covers a wide selection of issues ranging from women policy to sexual orientation and ethnic background, to name just a few. The Fulbright Diversity Initiative focuses on the latter. It is a short-term scholarship program intended as a "Schnupperkurs" (discovery program), master-minded and organized by the German Fulbright Commission in 2006. This "Discover the USA" summer school is based on two core premises:

- A diverse society with input from many groups is more robust and is overall economically and socially better off than a homogeneous (part of the) society would be.
- National students with immigrant background are vastly underrepresented in the traditional Fulbright programs not only in Germany but in other European countries as well. This may be so for a number of reasons: because they do not know enough about the Fulbright exchange programs, they do not feel comfortable with staying in the USA for a whole year, they prefer to finish college as quickly as possible as first-generation higher education students in their families, or because they do not have a German passport, a prerequisite for a bilateral U.S.-sponsored Fulbright exchange. As a result, only few students with immigrant background had applied for "classic" year-long Fulbright scholarships in the past.

It was the German Fulbright Commission's goal to change this and open the Fulbright scholarship program to include all groups of students representing the current, diverse German society. The so-called "Fulbright Diversity Initiative" as a major integrative player in the transatlantic dialogue was to become a new, powerful symbol of this approach.

## The Program

As a response to the above premises the German Fulbright Commission designed the Diversity Initiative specifically for recent high school graduates who have enrolled in college, and for students in their first or second year. They could apply for a "Schnupperkurs", a short-term test study program for a group of German students at a U.S. university. The personal experience gained there in a group on campus in a "typical" U.S. academic and cultural environment, so the theory, might reduce the cultural and emotional barriers that had prevented qualified candidates with diverse backgrounds from applying for a year-long Fulbright grant right away.



In 2009 the Fulbright Commission expanded the program to include a group of 20 American "diversity" students to spend four weeks in Berlin as a matching part of the program philosophy, administered together with the University of Kentucky.

The Commission had set several application criteria: applicants were supposed to have an immigrant background, i.e., the applicants or at least one of their parents must have been born abroad. Furthermore, the applicants had to have passed the German Abitur (high school diploma) with good grades. More importantly, they should have shown social commitment and activities within their respective ethnic groups, schools or universities.

Once selected, the grantees visit a U.S. university together in a group of 20-25 for four weeks to experience the American way of life. Starting in 2006 they went to the California State University - East Bay at Hayward, CA, plus a few other universities in Alaska, Pennsylvania and Nebraska. Since 2009 the University of Kentucky at Lexington, KY has been hosting the program participants. Here they attend English language classes and selected regular undergraduate courses in their future fields of study. The arrival date coincides with the Introduction Week when American students return to the campus for the Fall term. Thus, a true first-hand experience of life at an American university is assured for the grantees from Germany.

## Funding of the Program

Even though the Diversity Initiative was implemented and is administered by the German Fulbright Commission, the program is not part of the regular Fulbright mandate. Therefore, the Initiative requires external funding which comes from several sources.

The alumni of the Fulbright Program have been generous and steady supporters of the Initiative. They give back in many ways, and regarding the Diversity Initiative they do it in cash via the German Fulbright Alumni Association. The Fulbright alumni have been a regular sponsor of the Initiative for the longest term and have funded more than two grants annually with their donations.





## Results

The Diversity Initiative generates beneficial effects for the grantees, the American hosts and the Fulbright Commission

The first typical American small talk question “Where are you from?” triggers among the grantees a sense of being “Germans” rather than immigrants to Germany with their initial national identities. Thanks to the experience of being a member of a group from Germany, the grantees develop a common German national identity, in many cases for the first time. After all, being German is the strongest common link for this diverse group of students sent from Germany to the USA.

Among their families and friends the grantees often are the first ones to experience the American way of life on a first-hand basis. They return to Germany with a positive, multi-layered perception of the U.S. reality, which could not have been communicated as plausibly by the German media. And they return with additional intercultural competences and a taste of academic life in the USA.

As for the Americans in Kentucky the Initiative forces them to adjust their impression of what Germans look like and how they behave nowadays. The Americans face a group of German high school graduates and young students who, in many cases, have no resemblance to the historic image of tall, blond Germans.

And, finally, the German Fulbright Commission benefits from this program because it now receives more applications for regular Fulbright grants from applicants with immigrant backgrounds.

## The Future

Regarding the number of participants in the Diversity Initiative, the sky is the limit. However, the real limitation is funding since large supplementary funds will dry up because of statutory limitations.

Therefore, if YOU know anybody who wants to donate funds, or who believes she/he can convince her/his employer to spend money on a socially extremely beneficial program, just let the Fulbright Commission or the author know. We will assist you in any way we can to keep the money flowing into the Diversity Initiative.



**Jürgen Simon** is the Chairman of the VFF. He had just finished his Master in Economics in 1977 when a Fulbright travel grant and a direct exchange fellowship of Christian-Albrechts-University at Kiel, Germany, opened a new world to him at Indiana University in Bloomington, IN. He left its great Kelley School of Business with an MBA and a Ph.D. to start his professional career in finance and banking in Frankfurt, Germany. A few years ago he returned to the academic life as instructor and administrator for a university of applied sciences in Berlin.

# Diversity Program ... Its Implementation

by Claudia Musekamp

Each year, the German Fulbright Commission awards a number of scholarships to high school seniors and young students with an immigrant background. Each year in August/September the grantees study for four to five weeks at the University of Kentucky.

*“The summer school at the CSUEB, CA was a great chance for me to get a deep insight into a life on Campus in a different country. I enjoyed living together with other students from all over the world. I still remember some interesting talks and hot tempered discussions concerning culture and growing-up. During the five weeks I did not only improve my English knowledge, I also got the opportunity to visit the Western coast of the USA.”*



**Ga-Lem Ng**  
Medicine, Charité, Berlin  
Diversity Program, American Language Program, 2007

In the last three years, I was a member of the selection committee for the “Discover the USA” scholarship. The objectives of the selection process are first, to establish a coherent group which can jointly act as young ambassadors of Germany in the USA and second, to create a good mix of backgrounds.

Before the first meeting, I asked myself who would be sitting in front of me as applicants. The obvious answer: applicants with a Turkish migration background from Berlin and Hamburg – as Berlin and Hamburg boast large German-Turkish communities and the selection interviews take place in Berlin. Far from it! The Turkish community was not even approximately represented as one would have expected from their share of the German population.

Whom I met was a truly diverse group reflecting the diversity of immigration to Germany: from the devout Arab Muslim woman whose parents were already born in Germany, to the Russian student who first came to Germany at the age of 14, to the Vietnamese applicant whose parents had arrived in the GDR as migrant workers decades ago.

Many of the applicants had gone through a successful selection process for the scholarship programs “Talent im Land” of the Robert Bosch Foundation and for the START Program of the Hertie Foundation. Historically, the German Fulbright Commission had tapped into these networks for applicants to the Diversity Initiative. Nowadays, a high number of applications come from various additional sources nationwide.

In one of the interview sessions, a student asked why there is a separate program for students with a “migration background”. Such a program would – in her view – emphasize a feeling of exclusion rather than inclusion into the German society. The representative of the U.S. Embassy gave the answer: The face of the United States will change dramatically in the coming years as well as the face of the Federal Republic of Germany. In the ‘traditional’ scholarship programs, this change is not reflected. Students with an immigrant background are hardly represented in the program. Therefore, the Fulbright Commission launched its Diversity Initiative which is in part financially supported by the Fulbright Alumni Association.

To me, this is convincing. In fact, the U.S. – with its affirmative action programs in the last 50 years – triggered a remarkable transformation that we can only hope to achieve for Germany.

The Fulbright Diversity Initiative proves to be a successful enrichment of the grants palette. I am glad to have been involved in the selection of candidates for this program and wish that it may run until the regular Fulbright scholarship programs are representing the diversity of ethnic backgrounds in the German society.



**Claudia Musekamp** holds a master’s degree in political science from the University of Bonn. She spent her Fulbright year at the University of Pittsburgh in 1989/1990. Today, she is the owner of the e-learning company Infoport ([www.infoport.de](http://www.infoport.de)). She lives with her husband and her twin daughters in the heart of Berlin.



# Sensitivity to and appreciation for diversity are essential in today's labor market – and the more technological, the more important

by Dieter Lingelbach



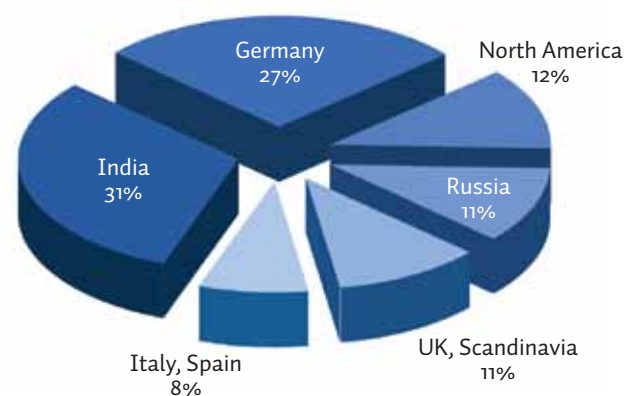
**The life sciences industry is in the forefront of national labor markets opening up to foreign employment candidates. This has rapidly changed the rules of the game and heightened competition for jobs. Just as companies have to reinvent themselves in response to changing technologies and competitive environments, so do the candidates for professional positions. A diverse workforce is no longer an option but a necessity.**

Job postings for Germany-based positions in the life sciences industry are attracting more and more applicants from countries like India or Egypt. And these applicants often have impressive international academic and industry experience. All Germany-based employers are insisting on excellent English language skills; when it comes to German they are increasingly accepting a more modest level of proficiency such as “German language skills are nice to have”. For example in the financial services industry: Deutsche Bank’s co-CEO, Anshu Jain, is of Indian origin and barely speaks German. What do these observations have in common? They are indicative of new forms of competition in not only the international but also the national labor markets.

Increasingly, candidates from overseas apply for jobs posted in Germany: a recent job opening in protein fermentation in Cologne resulted in more applicants with Indian than with German backgrounds (see figure). Russian backgrounds accounted for more than 10%.

What then does this imply for students with European roots? They will be seen and measured by international standards, including their comprehensive academic and technical qualifications. Simply earning a PhD from a school of high renown in the Western hemisphere will not be sufficient anymore.

**Applicants' home Countries,  
Example: protein fermentation**



Nonetheless, the standard repertoire of questions by a recruiter to an employer addresses the acceptability of overseas candidates for certain jobs. Why is that still a legitimate question if the job market has become so internationalized?

Objectively, employers expect additional expenses for relocation, language training and overcoming hurdles for the overseas candidate to get up to speed in day-to-day processes at work. Of much greater concern, though, are cultural issues like the meaning and interpretation of ‘team play’, or a common understanding of ‘leadership and control’. What does ‘strategy’ mean, how detailed does it have to be, and what does it mean in terms of directions to the reports and the peers?!

It is regarding these issues that cultural backgrounds and up-bringsings differ significantly. Within large global corporations and specifically between headquarters and country organizations, these problems are familiar. The vast majority of employers, though, are small to mid-sized companies who have had less experience with such matters, and they are sensitive to possible friction among critical employees. It is here where national candidates still have a decisive advantage; they are more ‘predictable’ in their management behavior.

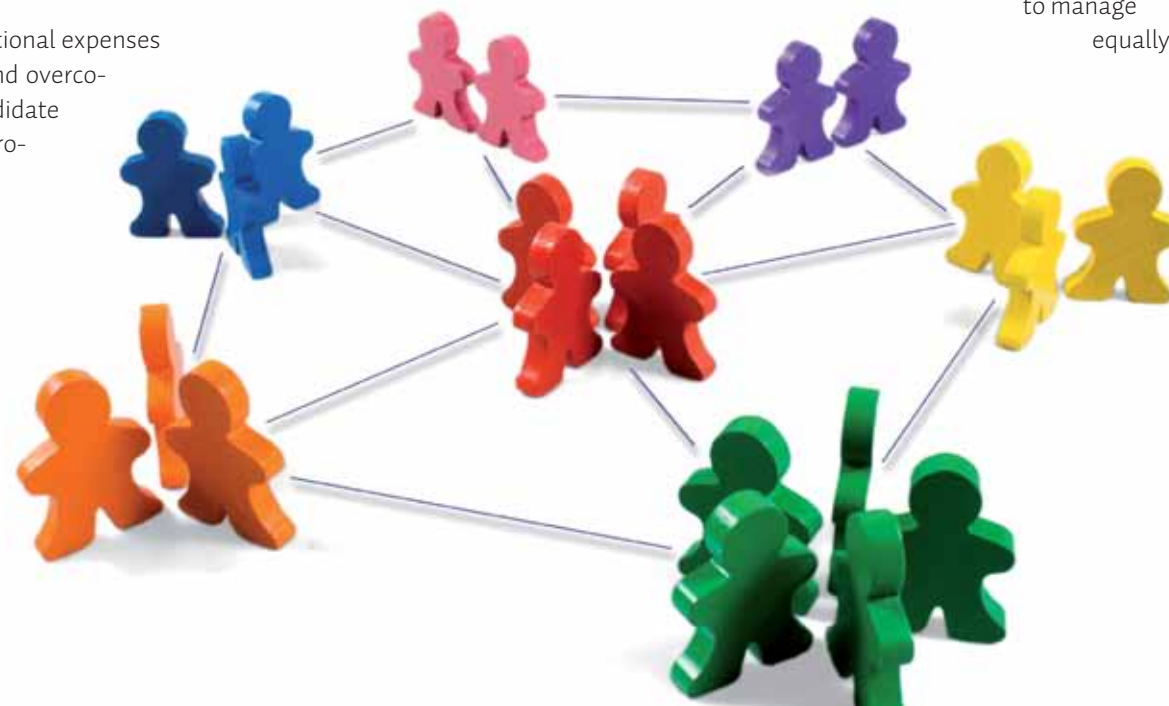
Given the overall dynamics, then, the young professional can no longer rely on just technical-academic competence, experience with conferences and post-docs at over-seas locations and good grades and references. Dr. Manfred Baier, with many years experience at Roche Diagnostics in charge of the collaboration with Japan-based Hitachi, notes: “a critical prerequisite for a professional career today is to be able to manage equally

effectively colleagues from Japan, India, the USA or France and/or work effectively for a boss from one of these countries”.

Accordingly, job candidates who expect to learn about the ‘tricks’ of leadership from a seminar or two will most likely fail. Yet there are many who believe just that, especially among European men.

What counts, according to knowledgeable human resource professionals, are ‘social competence’ and ‘emotional intelligence’. One must have a sensitivity to and appreciation for diversity. It is essential to make use of every person’s talent, no matter what their cultural background. You have to ask questions as opposed to stating opinions, otherwise you won’t be able to successfully compete in a global market. The life sciences industries provide for plenty of examples.

The author is a Fulbright scholar who was selected by Jürgen Mulert himself; still today is he grateful for the impact Jürgen Mulert has made on our thinking in general.



**Dieter Lingelbach** was a German Fulbright scholar at Indiana University’s School of Business, 1982 to 1984. He started work in Ohio, then transferred to Booz & Company’s Health Care Practice in Düsseldorf. Later he held senior management positions in Roche Diagnostics and MorphoSys. Together with 5 partners he offers business development and search services to the life science industries with offices in Oxford, UK, Philadelphia, Tokyo and Wellington, NZ. The partnership’s Life Science Talent Network™ describes in detail a network of over 7,000 life science professionals with whom to develop businesses.



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- 2009 [change@crisis](mailto:change@crisis), Munich
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- 2005 J. William Fulbright Centennial, Frankfurt
- 2004 EU Enlargement, Berlin
- 2002 Quo vadis USA, Berlin
- 2001 Nutrition, Calw
- 1999 Biotechnology, Frauenchiemsee
- 1998 Intercultural Communications, Frankfurt
- 1997 Managing Public Organizations, Frankfurt
- 1996 A Chance for Global Understanding, Berlin
- 1995 Environmental Strategy, Heidenheim
- 1994 Where is our New Frontier? Stuttgart
- 1993 Market Leadership and Brand Names, Böblingen
- 1992 Health, Cologne
- 1991 German Reunification and the Future of German-American Relations, Berlin
- 1990 Signs for Tomorrow's Architecture, Landscape, and Urban Development, Darmstadt
- 1989 The French Revolution in American and German Perspectives, Regensburg
- 1988 The United States and Germany: Corporate Cultures in Comparison, Mannheim

### History and Purpose

The German Fulbright Alumni e.V. was founded in Frankfurt in 1986 by former Fulbrighters and now has over 1,200 members. The Association is guided by the ideas of the program's founder, Senator J. William Fulbright, to bring together people of different nations to contribute to world peace through better international understanding.

The Association gathers globally minded students, scholars, and practitioners of a wide range of academic fields and professional expertise. Most of our members have spent a Fulbright year in the United States, and the Fulbright Alumni e.V. serves as the platform for which former grantees can continue to promote and work toward global understanding. We are committed to diversity, acceptance, and true internationality and perpetually strive to encourage further education regarding others' customs, histories, and challenges.

Based on personal and academic experiences and insights gained through participation in an international exchange program, the fundamental tenets of the mission of German Fulbright Alumni e.V. members are the following:

- to strengthen and support cross-cultural contacts and exchange between Fulbrighters from all over the world
- to encourage dialogue and interaction between international scholars, experts, and activists on topics important to the political, social, and cultural life of our societies

In promoting its political support for the Fulbright program, our Association maintains close but independent contact with the Fulbright Commission in Berlin to support the German-American Fulbright program.

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. is supported solely by its members. Grants and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals are welcomed.

### Activities

Based on a young, lively, and broad-based membership, our Association organizes a diverse range of regional and nation-wide events. Admission is reduced for members of the Association, but all events are open to guests and members of partner organizations.

### National Events

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. organizes a series of national events every year in order to realize the goals mentioned above. Equally important are the exchanges fostered among our members and interdisciplinary discussions on current issues.

### General Assembly & Winterball

Every year, all members are invited to the General Assembly. At the Assembly, each board member reports on his or her activities during the year, followed by the election of a new board. After the General Assembly, the Winterball takes place to mark another year in celebration. The weekend event is held in a different city every year and is one of our annual highlights.

### Welcome Meeting

Each Fall, the Welcome Meeting offers an exciting opportunity for contacts and networking. Our main goal is to welcome back German returnees as well as get to know American Fulbrighters just embarking on their Fulbright experience in Germany. The meetings foster discussion forums to address issues relevant to those newly returned from a year abroad and jointly serve as an introduction to the Fulbright family beyond the exchange year.

### Strategy Meeting

At the Strategy Meeting, the most devoted core of our members gather to discuss the present and future of the Association we all hold so dear.

### Sailing Trip

“Bright People under Full Sail”: International sailing trips on the Baltic Sea have been organized every two years since 1991.

### Family Weekend

Our yearly summer event, which has been held in Saxony since 2000, is primarily geared towards families with children – however, anyone is welcome to join as a member of the Fulbright family!

### International Activities

Our Association places emphasis on strengthening personal contacts among Fulbright alumni from around the world. Some core activities are listed here:

- 2012 Fulbright Associatons 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in London
- 1<sup>st</sup> ENAM Annual Conference in Rome
- 2010 Fulbright Association 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference, Buenos Aires
- 2008 Fulbright Association 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference, Beijing
- 2006 Fulbright Association 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, Marrakesh
- 2004 The International Interdisciplinary Fulbright Conference, Olympism and the Fulbright Spirit: Humanism in Action, Athens
- 2000 3<sup>rd</sup> European Fulbright Alumni workshop, Toledo
- 1998 European Fulbright Alumni Workshop, Strasbourg
- 1993 European Fulbright Alumni Convention, Brussels

### Regional Chapter Activities

Regional chapters organize more informal cultural and social events on a monthly basis, including lectures, discussions, and *Stammtische*. To find out about the next *Stammtisch* in your area, contact the regional coordinators listed to the right. Other typical events open to everyone include movies, outdoor activities, and cultural events. Of course, we also celebrate American holidays, such as Independence Day and Thanksgiving.

### Our Services

The Association publishes the national journal, the *FRANKly*, every Fall, as well as an Alumni Membership Directory.

As a service to the general public, the national office provides information and assistance to any private person, university, or institution on questions of cultural and academic exchange with the United States.

Each regional chapter contacts and assists American Fulbright visiting scholars in its local area. A host program for American Fulbrighters in Germany was successfully established in 1993.

For further information, please contact our national office in Frankfurt or one of our officers listed here.

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# Local Atmosphere and Global Perspectives

by Reinhard Koch

The Frankfurt suburb of Sindlingen was a wet place on the morning of Saturday, November 10, 2012. Heavy rain had fallen for hours and would continue to do so for the remaining day. Groups of Fulbrighters with umbrellas tried to avoid the large puddles on their way from the local train station to the International School, the venue of the Fulbright Alumni Welcome Meeting.



The Welcome Meeting is about meeting people who share the Fulbright experience. American grantees currently studying or teaching in Germany meet German grantees who recently returned from the US. Both groups are welcomed by and introduced to the German Fulbright Alumni Association.

Many of the participants had already met on Friday evening at the Get-Together in a traditional Apfelweinwirtschaft in Frankfurt-Sachsenhausen and had gotten used to the local cuisine, with specialties such as Apfelwein, Handkäs' mit Musik and Grüne Soße mit Eiern. The waiter, however, was less traditional than the premises, with his amusing toasts stretching the boundaries of political correctness.

But back to the main event on Saturday. After everybody had been warmed up with coffee and croissants, the official part of the Welcome Meeting started. We were greeted by Jeffrey



M. Hill, Public Affairs Officer, US Consulate General Frankfurt; Charlotte Securius-Carr, Chief of German and Special Programs, German-American Fulbright Commission; and Benjamin Becker, President of the German Fulbright Alumni Association.

David Patrician was next, with his talk about the German Fulbright Alumni Association and its structure, activities and benefits. While everyone was in the middle of the short introduction round, suddenly and surprisingly Philipp Murphy appeared in the room. Yes, it was the US ambassador to Germany indeed, accompanied by his wife. The coincidence was quickly explained: Murphy's daughter, the captain of the Berlin-Brandenburg International School's soccer team, was



competing in a tournament in the gym next door. When one of Murphy's bodyguards took notice of the Welcome Meeting, he informed his employer who came over spontaneously. The brilliant speaker he is, Murphy extemporized a short speech including a brief personal analysis of the recent US Presidential Elections.

After a short coffee-break, Lucian Morariu from the Boston Consulting Group and a Fulbright Alumnus himself, talked about "Managing Uncertainty". His presentation was about the quickly changing and increasingly unpredictable economic cycles and which strategies companies can employ to be nevertheless successful in the long run.

Not everybody would have expected an exquisite four-course lunch from a school cafeteria, but that is what we got at the International School. Excellent catering by a friendly and attentive staff had a big stake in making the event successful and unforgettable.

After lunch the workshops began, an important part of every Welcome Meeting. Most workshops are chaired by Fulbrighters who share their knowledge on a particular topic with other Fulbrighters. This year, the following topics were discussed:



Photos: Reinhard Koch

- "How to become a management consultant?", with Adrian Schulte-Steinberg of the Boston Consulting Group.
- "How to survive Germany?", the classic for American exchange students with our expatriate Bryan Baker.
- "Transatlantic relations in the stone age", about Stephan Meyer-Brehm's involvement in the ABORA project, where scientists are trying to cross the Atlantic Ocean from America to Europe in a reed boat in order to prove that cultural exchange between the two continents was possible many thousand years before Columbus.
- "Energy transition" with Dr. Wolfram Krause on the transition towards a sustainable energy supply system.
- "International Interdependence", where Carsten Fischer and Carsten Kuschnerus sparked a discussion about the benefits and drawbacks of further globalization.



Now it was time for the keynote speech by Political Science Professor Joseph A. Kunkel III from the Minnesota State University, an expert on elections, legislation, and political parties. He told us about his German roots and that he had just arrived in Frankfurt after a visit to his relatives in the Spessart. Then he profoundly analyzed the recent presidential election in a historical context and ventured some predictions of future developments. Expert as he is, he frankly admitted that he had never expected Obama to win as clearly as he had done.





Time flew by during Prof. Kunkel's vivid speech, and it was time to close the meeting and lead over to the unofficial part of the day. The traditional candy-filled coffee mugs with Welcome Meeting motif were handed over to the hard-working organizers and helpers of the event. On our way back to the train station, we were met by less rain, but even larger puddles. The train to downtown Frankfurt was late (as usual), but finally we reached the location for the rest of the evening: "Zu den 12 Aposteln", a traditional German restaurant in downtown Frankfurt with a wonderful historical cellar reserved for our event. With a delicious dinner, beer from the on-site brewery, and plenty of space for both discussions and dancing, midnight quickly passed long before the last ones went home, to their hotels or Fulbright hosts.



On Sunday, brunch at Café Extrablatt gave the opportunity to awaken with the help of some strong coffee and resume the conversations of the night before. For many of us there was time to say good-bye after brunch, but a group of about 20 unwearied Fulbrighters joined the city tour with Carsten Kuschnerus. Carsten, not having been a resident of Frankfurt for very long, proved to be a knowledgeable guide. The weather was much better than the day before, so a visit to the 200 meters tall Main Tower provided us with a good overview of the city of Frankfurt and the Rhein-Main area. A short walk from the Alte Oper via Börse, Hauptwache and Paulskirche to Römerberg concluded the tour and the Welcome Meeting 2012.



An exciting weekend had gone by far too quickly, but everybody went home with the feeling of having made new friends and become part of the big Fulbright family. Special thanks go to Carsten Kuschnerus and Aline Klingberg, the main organizers of this great event, as well as to the US Embassy and to The Boston Consulting Group, whose generous support helped to keep the fees at a reasonable level.



Photos: Reinhard Koch

# ENAM Conference in Cyprus

by Florian Kühnel



Florian Kühnel explores the city of Larnaca.

In the spring of 2013, I was invited to attend the European Network of American Alumni Associations (ENAM) Conference and Cyprus American Alumni Network (CAAN) Founding Ceremony on June 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in Nicosia, Cyprus.

Cyprus is still divided into a northern (Turkish) part and a southern (Greek) part, separated by a demilitarized zone controlled by the UN. The only other country in the world divided like this is Korea. Upon arrival at Larnaca airport, I learned another curious thing: Cypriots drive on the left – a remainder of being a British colony.

The conference started with an ENAM leadership workshop at the hotel on Thursday afternoon. It was followed by a reception at the US ambassador's residence. Both events provided a great chance to get to know the other participants and mingle with exchange alumni from Cyprus.

Friday started with the second part of the ENAM leadership workshop at Famagusta gate, one of the old city gates. "Media Strategy" and "Designing New and More Effective Events" were discussed. Next was a magician talking about the art of innovation using a number of magic tricks.

For lunch, all participants walked to the Green Line – the UN buffer zone dividing not only its capital, but the whole of Cyprus – and crossed into the northern part for a traditional lunch at a historic caravansary. Crossing the Green Line is nowadays easy for both tourists and Cypriots alike, although only four checkpoints exist altogether. I used the break after lunch to wander through the northern part of the city and visited its famous sights including Selimiye mosque and the municipal bazar.



In the afternoon, CAAN was introduced to Cyprus alumni, who had previously participated in an exchange program to the US. This was followed by two speeches highlighting the conference topic "Empowering entrepreneurs in a time of crisis". Mrs. Jenner of Junior Achievement – Young Enterprise Europe talked about "Inspiring Future Entrepreneurs: Lessons from Europe". Mr. Kaufmann of Veritas Venture Partners presented "Developing a start-up region: Lessons from Israel". After a short reception, the evening was officially closed by a celebratory dinner at Bastione restaurant. A few of us, however, continued celebrating at Club Nuovo.

This sums up the official part of my trip. I used two additional days to explore more of southern Nicosia including the City Museum, the Archbishop's Palace, the Liberation Monument and the narrow passages of the Old City. Before flying back from Larnaca I still had the time to visit the Turkish fort there.

For me, the ENAM and CAAN conference was a great opportunity to meet and connect with people from all over Europe, who've been to the States with an US sponsored program as well. As participants were from countries as far east as Russia and as they were involved in very different US exchange programs, their focus differs, too. This different background enriched our discussions during the conference to great extent. That's why I would like to include people from all over Europe in events of the German Fulbright Association whenever possible. As always, sharing best practices gave me some great new ideas.





# Berlin Seminar 2013

by Zachary Erickson

On Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup> 2013, over 300 American Fulbright Grantees converged in Berlin for the 59<sup>th</sup> Fulbright Seminar. The motto for this year was “Fulbright networks...” and throughout the next four days we were given myriad opportunities to connect with fellow Fulbrighters and to share stories of our experiences thus far. Although most of the American grantees were stationed in Germany, an additional 25 European countries were represented, broadening the scope of the Seminar and providing us with an extended view of the Fulbright experience. Also participating in the seminar were approximately 200 German Fulbrighters preparing for their coming year in the United States. Through meals and evening socials we could connect with our German colleagues and give advice on the American culture.

Along with providing us time to share experiences, the Fulbright Commission prepared a program of talks and discussions, encouraging us to engage in crucial issues. We learned,

for example, about immigration problems facing the country from Özcan Mutlu, a member of the Berliner Abgeordnetenhaus. Especially as the US considers its own immigration reform, it was enlightening and informing to hear of similar difficulties here in Germany.

Much of our time at the Seminar was spent in workshops led by current Fulbrighters. A wide array of topics were discussed, ranging from the serious: “The European Crisis”, or “American and European environmental perceptions”, to the more relaxed, such as “Cultural Differences between Europe and the United States”, where we came up with tips for the German Grantees heading to the US (“Pizza is to be eaten with your hands, not with a fork”). Later workshops were more detailed; for example, a networking workshop helped us understand the importance of networking and gave us tips on how to network more effectively.



On the last day of the Seminar all of the attendees crowded into a full ballroom to hear ten current Fulbright Students and Scholars share their research in short five-minute talks. The subjects ranged from solar cells to civility in politics to producing leather from orange peels. The results of this latter talk had been shown the night before in the BORDERS Exhibition, a non-official Fulbright art show organized by current Fulbrighters Trevor Amery and Linnea West (both Hungary). The exhibition showcased the work of nine current Fulbright grantees placed in nine different European countries. This first-time event was a great addition to the Fulbright Conference and will hopefully be repeated in the future.

Along with hearing about our colleagues’ research and viewing their artwork, we were also treated to a concert of former and current Fulbrighters during the Opening Ceremony. Judging by the applause, the highlight of this event was a combination flamenco/tap dance by current grantees

Alice Blumenfeld (Spain) and Alexander MacDonald (Ireland). Other performers were current Fulbrighter Francesco Camuglia (Flute, Berlin) and alumni Catherine Compton (Soprano), Natalia Kazaryan (Piano) and Joseph Nykiel (Piano).

Even after only three and a half days new friendships were formed and a new Fulbright network was created. Before the seminar ended a Facebook group was created and soon after the first posts started flying: asking for sightseeing companions, free couch space, or general advice. The connections we made at the seminar will help us during the rest of our Fulbright experience and beyond.



Photos: Wiltrud Hammelstein





# Minding the Gaps – and bridging them!

by Wiltrud Hammelstein

Since its 2004 inauguration in Athens, it has been a tradition that the annual conference of the US Fulbright Association takes place in the city of the Summer Olympics every four years. Thus, the 2012 conference led us to London for a three day event from October 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. As London is so close to home, more than 20 German Fulbrighters crossed the Channel to participate, with more than half of them being sponsored by a generous grant by the US State Department. Next to the US contingent we were the second largest group and some of us also were actively involved in the conference.



As advisor for international relations to the German Fulbright alumni board I had the great honor to co-organize and facilitate the day-long pre-conference for European Fulbright groups. The goal of this pre-conference was to share best-practices and ideas to make our network more effective in terms of membership growth and communication. Thirty representatives of the US and several European Fulbright Associations, Fulbright Commissions, and State Alumni coordinators were welcomed by Michael Scott-Kline and Penny Egan, both from the British Fulbright Commission which hosted the pre-conference. The morning was dedicated to presentations by the US Fulbright Association's Executive Director, Mary-Ellen Schmider (who was succeeded by Stephen Reilly in January 2013), the Europe and Eurasia Regional Alumni coordinator at the State Department, Megan Huber, and the Secretary General of ENAM, Massimo Cugusi. The afternoon was spent in workshops focusing on topics like social media management, membership, and regional alumni networking. Benjamin Becker (then the German Fulbright alumni president) and Daniela Schilling-Mühl (alumni coordinator at the US Embassy in Berlin) participated in the workshops.

After the day's work the participants of the pre-conference were invited to join in for the evening reception of the US Fulbright Association which gave us the great opportunity to meet with the participants of the annual conference. This was a time of great "hellos" with a lot of old friends who had made their way to London both across the Atlantic and the Channel.

The conference itself opened on Friday morning with a first plenary discussion focusing on finance and economics. The panel included international experts Ben Broadbent (Bank of England), Krishna Guha (Federal Reserve Bank of New York), Rainer Riess (Deutsche Boerse AG and FAeV member), and Charles J. Whalen (London School of Economics).

After lunch the participants had the great pleasure of listening to a thought-provoking speech by Baroness Kishwer Falkner, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for the Ministry of Justice in the House of Lords, on multiculturalism in the UK, followed by several presentations on the topic of "Minding the gaps: global inclusion in the 21<sup>st</sup> century". Benjamin Becker was one of the panelists and talked about "Intercultural Education in Germany" based on the results of his PhD thesis.

The afternoon continued with two rounds of break-out sessions. Topics focused on global financial/economic standards, accessing cultural heritage in art and literature, volunteerism, international teaching, and the use of technology in teaching. The day ended with a reception hosted at the US Embassy.

On Saturday the annual Selma Jeanne Cohen Lecture was delivered by Josephine Dorado on the theme of "Instant Online Collaboration: Just Add Dance!". A social entrepreneur, strate-



gist, producer, and educator whose work focuses on innovation in hybrid online spaces, Dorado initiated the Kidz Connect program, which is a virtual cultural exchange program that connects youth internationally through creative collaboration and theatrical performance in virtual worlds.

After another round of break-out sessions, our lunch speaker was John Nagl, a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army and an influential expert in counterinsurgency. He gave a fascinating talk entitled "People, Technology and War", which triggered an animated discussion with the audience and a lot of questions.

In the afternoon it was again time for break-out sessions. Topics were the arts as bridge builders, the situation in Egypt and Tunisia one year after the Arab spring, transport security issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and science serving humanity. The latter one was moderated by FAeV member and former *FRANKly* editor Julianne McCall. The German Fulbright Alumni Association had been asked to organize a workshop and I had the honor to moderate a panel with FAeV members Janosch Delcker and Stephan Meyer-Brehm. Janosch presented his 2012 Jürgen Mülert Memorial Award winning project "Urban Observations", while Stephan in his function as video project coordinator gave insights into the making of the video and we showed the short version as a world premiere. Both presentations were very much appreciated and we were asked to show them again for people who had missed our workshop.



Photos: Wiltrud Hammelstein



A banquet hosted by the BFSA (the British Fulbright Scholar Association) officially concluded the 35<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The theme of the evening was "The Four Nations of the British Isles: Celebrating Distinct Heritages and Common Allegiances", and it featured a menu that reflected cuisines from around the British Isles. The folk band, Tir Eolas, played traditional pieces from England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, including Parting Glass, a tune with both Scottish and Irish roots, and David of the White Rock, a Traditional Welsh air. The banquet also included a photographic display by Fulbright alumna Alibhe Greaney (School of Visual Arts, 2000).



On Sunday some of us made use of the opportunity to join the BFBS members for their annual Fulbright lecture in Oxford. Sir John Holmes talked about "When can international intervention be justified and effective". The lecture was followed by a three-course lunch generously hosted by the President of Kellogg College, Professor Jonathan Michie. After lunch we visited Pembroke College, where Senator Fulbright had studied as a Rhodes scholar in the late 1920s. The day was concluded by a visit to the famous Turf Tavern with its motto "Education in intoxication".

All participants agreed that the conference was a great experience and we look forward to the next one in Washington D.C. in October 2013.



Neues Rathaus, the venue for the evening



# Winterball 2013

by Dana Müller-Hoeppe

At a Hannover Stammtisch a couple of weeks before the Winterball 2012 in Schwerin, discussing transportation and sleeping options, we at some point realized that proposing a Winterball 2013 in Hannover would be a great idea for two reasons. First, as a relatively new (and small) regional chapter, it might help us to draw attention to its existence and interest Fulbrighters in the Hannover area. Second, as a relatively new regional chapter, we thought that sooner or later the board would realize that there had never been a Winterball in Hannover, and that in this case it would be a lot better to start organizing a year in advance than a few months. Also, taking a picture for the invitation would be considerably easier at a time of the year when there is not so much greenery around and one doesn't have to make sure there aren't any people wearing flip-flops in the picture.

That said, we slid around icy Hannover looking for venues and finally went to Schwerin with several options. Thanks to the Stuttgart regional chapter, there were even more options to decide from, which left the board with the „luxury“ of having to make a choice between two volunteers.

Having secured the central venue so early left us a couple of months using our Stammtisch to test locations for the Get Together and the brunch. Towards Christmas, the pace quickened, and January found us at Gabriele's place every Wednesday packing presents, taking care of the table decorations and all those little things. However, during the summer, the number of active members of the regional chapter had doubled already, and together with Berit, who had emailed me to ask

about the Fulbright program and the application procedure, we ended up tirelessly shopping for everything from candles to paper napkins, and the preparations went very smoothly.



Finally, the big day arrived. For the Get Together, Hannover presented itself at its best. Romantic snowflakes? Hey, this is northern Germany! Why not have some local, authentic rain instead that gives you an impression of how the end of the world could be like? Within the organizing committee, after removing the life vests and drying off, nervousness increased. Would everybody make it without drowning? Would, although highly unlikely among Fulbrighters, somebody think that choosing a gay location like Café Konrad might be a little too progressive? Needless to say, everything was all right in the end. The rain enhanced the cozy atmosphere of the historical building, the staff got used to the crowd of excited people refusing to be stationary, and the crowd of excited people finally became more stationary and formed the usual groups discussing just about everything.



The old board



The King is dead, long live the King!  
The old president and the new one



Watching the Fulbright Alumni Video



The organising committee that made this event possible

The next morning found us in the Welfenschloss, the main building of the Leibniz Universität Hannover – some hunting for the bathrooms tucked away at not so obvious places, some enjoying the shy sun rays illuminating the „Niedersachsen-ross“, and some actually taking part in the general assembly. This time, the board needed quite a number of new people, and unfortunately, some positions were still open on Saturday morning, which led to Martin being volunteered for the editor of this wonderful magazine in the course of the afternoon. Needless to say, things took a while, especially as Jürgen Simon, who usually takes care that everybody has sufficient time to sample the local baking goods, was absent. However, with some help, the cleaning up was done in no time at all, and everybody rushed off to change for the big event.

Even without snow, approaching the grand, illuminated „Neues Rathaus“ and knowing that one would spend the evening there celebrating was impressive. Being myself born and raised in Hannover, this was still rather special. Inside, all was calm before the storm of guests arrived, among them our special guests Thomas Miller, Dr. Rolf Hoffmann, Regine Kramarek as representative of the city of Hannover, and of course Sherief El-Helaifi, winner of the Mulert Award. Dinner was soon served, the courses alternating with thanking the old and introducing the new board as well as greeting from our special guests, with the Mulert Award presentation being the final highlight. At last, the dance floor was open, and again, same procedure as every year, the Fullies showed extraordinary determination, which was met by the DJane. To cool off, more and more people stepped into the main hall for a while, which

with its high dome, half hidden in darkness, had an interesting atmosphere – and we had it all to ourselves at this time of the day. However, at some point every party has to end, irrespective of the dance floor activity (intense to the very end), and around 4am, we collapsed into our beds...just in time to arrive at the brunch more or less at 10am. There, some found they barely had enough time to stock up on caffeine before the Sunday program started for those who were longing for some culture. A small group went to the Sprengel Museum for modern art, some back to the university, where they were awaited by one of the organizers of the Leibniz exhibition, including reconstructions of the original calculating machines constructed by Leibniz. The third group took a walking tour with the theme of famous criminals and crimes in Hannover's history, which was matched by a criminally cold wind. However, our guide knew the spots to hide from the wind, and I'm sure everybody had the opportunity to warm up on the way home.



The morning after.  
The new board at work.

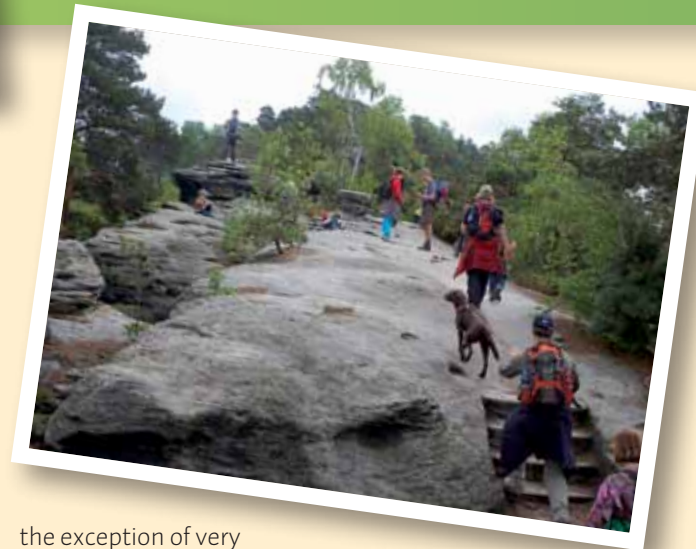
Photos: Wiltrud Hammelstein





# The Fulbright Family Weekend

by Martin Söhngen



This year's family weekend in the Sächsische Sachweiz took place on Ascension weekend from May 9th through 12th, 2013 in the Familienoase ("family oasis") Königstein nicely located on the Elberadweg („Elbe Cycle Route“) at the river some 40 minutes by local train upstream of Dresden.

The weather in the Dresden area on the morning of Ascension day, Thursday, was - initially - sunny, summerlike and warm. Those arriving in the early afternoon, though, were welcomed by constant rain - and joyfully playing kids accompanied by watchful parents, not to mention the bazillions of cyclists who flooded both the Elberadweg and the picturesque little ferry crossing the river between the railway station and the family oasis to such an extent that pedestrians sometimes had to wait for the next turn.

Outdoor activities that afternoon fell, as we say in German, literally into the water (were abandoned) so a concert in the nicely refurbished Königstein Protestant church filled in the void. Ludwig Güttler, a highly acclaimed local trumpeter, and the Virtuosi Saxoniae performed classical music composed by folks such as Messrs. Bach, Händel, and Mozart. Fortunately, sufficient remnants of the oasis' lasagna awaited the culturally savvy returning from the concert.

The weather gods decided to let it rain Friday morning. A democratic though efficient decision-making process led nearly all of us to go to the historic iron ore mine "Marie Louise Stolln" in Berggießhübel. The mine was not flooded by the rain but by people because of it. Still, a competent guide skilfully showed us around and the kids were thrilled - even more so after two adults consented to accompany seven of them to the water park Bad Schandau in the afternoon. Fortunately, the rain receded in the late afternoon so a hike back from Bad Schandau became a viable, or dryly walkable, option.

Saturday's weather was, for this weekend's standards, picture perfect: No rain during the hike, with

the exception of very few drops during the lunch break. The hike led us from Wehlen, two stops by regional train, across scenic sandstones back down to the river and from there back home. Some - adults only, though - took a detour to climb up to impressive Königstein fortress offering medieval defense facilities that even Don Rumsfeld would dread, and spectacular views thateven, say, Inge Morath would have enjoyed.

The rain still wanted to be taken seriously and duly poured down when the BBQ charcoal was set on fire in the early evening. The local Rostbratwürste and Schnitzel found their way into empty stomachs, the kids were tired, well, some of them, at least, and both Saturday and the family weekend (apart from Sunday breakfast) came to an end.

The weekend provides very good opportunities for families and non-families to get to know this part of Saxony close to the Czech border. Of course, to mention the weather one more time, less rain would have been helpful. But perhaps this is why there will be next year's family weekend!

Last but not least: Many thanks to Elke for taking care of the organization!

PS: Mark your calendar! These are the dates for the Fulbright Family Weekend in 2014 and 2015: May 29 until June 1, 2014 and May 14 until May 17, 2015.

Photos: Elke Handschug-Brosin



Sunset from Carsten's balcony;  
photo: Martin Kohler



## Regional Chapter Frankfurt

### We ♥ Mainhattan

by Bianca Allendorf

Mainhattan as many call Frankfurt, the financial capital in Germany, is attracting many people to live and work, or just for a visit. It's a melting pot that is fostering diversity via the many cultures that live here.

So does the Frankfurt regional chapter: being one of the largest and most inventive chapters, it attracts an interesting mix of both new and long-time committed members, running from their early 20s to late 50s.

The heart of our chapter remains the monthly Stammtisch on the first Thursday of each month. Our Stammtisch offers a regular gathering at changing locations, allowing us to try out new restaurants and cuisines, taking a culinary journey from Poland to Africa. Sometimes, members of the regional chapter also open their homes to us for the Stammtisch, like on August 1st when Carsten Kuschnerus invited us to a BBQ on his balcony with an amazing view and excellent food. Besides planning the next Stammtisch or events like cinema, theater, musical, museums, indoor and outdoor opera performances or sport events, there is always an interesting discussion about current topics or just a bit of reminiscing of our own Fulbright year when fresh returnees join our Stammtisch.

The Frankfurt regional chapter has some annual events which everyone likes to mark on their calendar: The Thanksgiving dinner, specially prepared for us at the Arche Nova with lots of great food, Frankfurt's Christmas market and the "Let's dance" crash course to prepare for the Winterball.

Doris' magical garden;  
photo: Reinhard Koch



August Stammtisch at Carsten's;  
photo: Mario Reichel

During the 4<sup>th</sup> Art and Wine Social which Cem Yucetas organized in his downtown Frankfurt studio on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2013, we were not only taken on a wine trip through Italy, but also introduced to some of his latest, very impressive, work. This year's 4<sup>th</sup> of July bicycle tour was organized again by Isabelle Boeddinghaus ending with a yummy BBQ at Knut Mitwollen's home. An almost annual highlight during the summer is the open air opera in the Palmengarten. The atmosphere in the Palmengarten is magical and fitted well to this year's opera "Carmen" on July 31<sup>st</sup>. Also following tradition, we celebrated Labor Day by BBQ'ing at Doris Ammon's house in Dreieich – the yummy food almost making us feel like being back in the US again.



Happy Labor Dayers;  
photo: Reinhard Koch

Having the US consulate in Frankfurt offers special events and opportunities to the members of the chapter, like the consulate's election party or an invitation to the interesting "Kennedy" exhibition in the Römer. Mario Reichel and Carsten Kuschnerus always inform us via e-mail and post the events on the homepage of the regional chapter, which was set-up and is managed by Reinhard Koch.

Being new in Frankfurt is all about making new friends, exchanging experiences and getting to know Frankfurt. Feel free to have a look at our website <https://www.fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/frankfurt.html> or just come by for a visit. We are always glad to welcome you at our chapter and happy to receive new input!



# Regional Chapter Rhein/Ruhr



## Ready to host you in October

by Johannes Schulz

After 2 ½ years of coordinating the chapter activities of one of the largest regional chapters of this association, it is time for me to pass on the baton. Doing so is also a good opportunity to look back on what we have achieved since my taking over from Ulrich at the beginning of 2011. Looking back at this year, we had a lot of great events, including an American Sunday brunch in October at Amanda's home in Duisburg which consisted of homemade pancakes, waffles, and lovely conversation (thank you Amanda!). In December we had a large group visiting the Christmas markets in Düsseldorf, and in January we went to the Paul Rubens exhibition in Wuppertal. We were also fortunate enough to have the opportunity to celebrate the American Independence Day twice this year, once with the Amerikahaus NRW, and our own 4<sup>th</sup> of July barbecue party which had a record number of participants from our group, as well as from other regional chapters. Having the Amerikahaus NRW holding events in nearby cities provides our group with great opportunities to come together as a regional chapter, and also to meet and talk with other people who are involved with the US.

Along with periodic meetings (our "Stammtische") in both Bochum and Düsseldorf, our group has also spent a lot of time organizing the Welcome Meeting 2013, which will take place in Düsseldorf for the first time since 2004. In addition, planned future events include cooperation with the Boston Consulting Group and the US Consulate as the vice consul at the US Consulate General in Düsseldorf is also a Fulbright Alumna.

Finally, I would like to say a big "Thank you" to all the members who offered their support over the past 2 ½ years, like Doris, Sigrid and Rainer for organizing events like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ, Claus and Herbert for visits and guided tours at museums and Ines for stepping in during my personal absences. This goes to show how truly great the people and spirit of this association are.



Photos: Johannes Schulz



# Regional Chapter Hannover

## Winterball – The days after

by Dana Müller-Hoeppel

Last year was dominated by the Winterball 2013 for the Hannover Chapter. Having started the planning process early, we had the time to have a Stammtisch at each possible location for the Get Together to sample as much of the menu as possible. Also, as the organizing committee and the regional chapter were made up of the same people, we regularly ended up with notepads and laptop on the table (at the more organized stage), after first having to borrow pen and paper from the waiter.

Timo's first announcement of the Winterball changed things considerably, already showing one of the effects we had hoped for when volunteering for the Winterball. Fulbrighters having recently moved to Hannover but not being aware of the chapter started showing up, with new ideas and new topics to discuss.

December brought a dramatic increase in organizational email and intensive testing of the Christmas markets, and in January we finally skipped Stammtisch because Wednesday night was preparation night at Gabriele's place, who generously provided us with dinner before we cluttered her floor with gift wrap and her table with lists.



Fulbright Alumni Winterball preparation ... handicrafting ...

The Winterball itself, finally, helped us to reach yet another group of Fulbrighters, some of them having lived in the area longer than some of us are alive. Fortunately, we successfully convinced them that although being a rather young group, we would love to increase the average age. So we did, for the first time at the asparagus feast in May, where we also discussed where to have burgers this year. Gerda and Werner spontaneously invited us to their place with a large garden and a large dining table, for the unlikely event of rain.

Thus, the 4<sup>th</sup> or rather 6<sup>th</sup> of July found us travelling to Bordenau close to the Steinhuder Meer, where Gerda and Werner had prepared a delicious barbecue, with hand-picked lettuce and cheesecake for dessert, just to mention some of the highlights. As the weather was perfect, we set the table underneath apple and cherry trees, sprayed ourselves generously with bug spray and had a simply wonderful evening. Thank you again for hosting us!



... and calculating.

Photos: Dana Müller-Hoeppel







Food

# Regional Chapter Mannheim/Heidelberg

## Say Hi, If You're Nearby

by Benjamin Pflieger

Located in one of Germany's finest regions, the regional chapter Mannheim-Heidelberg encompasses everything between the Palatinate Forest in the west, the "Odenwald" in the east, and all the way to Karlsruhe in the south.



The chapter's boundaries boast two internationally renowned, top-ranked universities. Several students from abroad choose to study in Mannheim-Heidelberg on Fulbright scholarships.

As a result, the chapter has the pleasure of frequently welcoming Americans to the "Stammtisch", and often bids a joyful farewell to German students from the region headed to the US.



Stammtisch April



Thanksgiving dinner 2012

Generally, the regional chapter meets either in Mannheim or Heidelberg. Some of the chapter's annual highlights include a traditional Thanksgiving dinner and a 4<sup>th</sup> of July Independence Day BBQ. Last year's Thanksgiving served as another testimony to Julianne McCall's incredible cooking skills. Participants at the event enjoyed one of the most delicious, delectable and succulent turkeys ever! Thanks again Julianne!

In the Spring of 2013, Prof. Dr. Markus Hilgert invited us to his Collaborative Research Centre for "Material Text Cultures" at the Ruprecht Karl University Heidelberg. Prof. Hilgert and his team research the material presence of writing in non-typographic societies using various fields of practice. That is, societies that possess no typography, or no widespread method for the mass production of writing. During the presentation, the Fulbrighters learned that 5000 years ago, urban life was already very sophisticated in the city of Uruk, which is now Warka in modern day, Southern Iraq.



Schrifttafel from Uruk

Photos:  
Benjamin Pflieger

The regional chapter is pleased to invite everyone to say hi, join in on one of the regularly held Stammtisch, or participate in any of the various other activities. For more information, please send an email to [rc.mannheim-heidelberg\(a\)fulbright-alumni.de](mailto:rc.mannheim-heidelberg(a)fulbright-alumni.de) or visit the calendar on [fulbright-alumni.de](http://fulbright-alumni.de).



Thanksgiving/Bowling Night



Ingo Zamperoni (ARD Moderator) and David Patrician



"Fireside Chat", Residence of US Consulate General



"Fireside Chat" with US Consulate General Inmi Patterson

Photos: David Patrician

# Regional Chapter Hamburg

## Moin aus Hamburg

by David Patrician

The Hamburg Regional Group has had another fun year of meetings and activities. After the success of our first Thanksgiving/Bowling night, we repeated the event and had over thirty people attend! For some of our Fulbrighters it was their first time ever to go bowling. We are already looking forward to having our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Thanksgiving/Bowling night this upcoming November.

We had several Stammtisch meetings in different areas of Hamburg. Sternschanze, Barmbeck and Stadtpark are some of the places we visited. During our Stammtisch in Stadtpark, it started to rain heavily (we are in Hamburg after all!). The Biergarten set up a large tent and within five minutes it felt like being at the Oktoberfest!

This past winter we had ten members from our group attend the Winterball in Hannover ... thank you again Hannover for hosting a wonderful weekend. In addition, this past February we co-sponsored a very special event with the US Consulate in Hamburg. Consulate General Inmi Patterson invited us to her residence for a "fireside chat". Fulbright Alum Magnus Graf Lambsdorf, Berater bei Egon Zahnder International, delivered a thought provoking presentation entitled, „Verändert die neue Generation der Digital Natives unseren Arbeitsalltag?“ It was a special evening and I wanted to thank Stefan Heumann for helping arrange it.

Finally, I wanted to thank Fulbright alum Ingo Zamperoni (ARD Tagesthemen Moderator). During the filming of our Fulbright alumni video in Hamburg, Ingo invited us to the ARD studios and gave an interview about his Fulbright experience. Just another example of where Fulbrighters can be found in northern Germany!





Baking for Obama. Berlin Fulbright Alumni welcome the US President in Berlin on a hot June afternoon

## Regional Chapter Berlin

it was an interesting and probably “once-in-a-lifetime” experience (and not just for the unbelievable security precautions one had to endure!) to hear a US president speak in Berlin!

A member of the Cambodian Fulbright Alumni Association, Rottanak Theam, visited Berlin in July 2013 and got in touch with us. A few of us met him at Prater Beer Garden and had an interesting exchange on developments in Southeast Asia and intercultural perceptions.

The Berlin Fulbright Alumni Stammtisch takes place on the first Monday of each month at varying locations. The Berlin Chapter is looking for volunteers who are interested in helping sustain our network and initiate and organize events and outings. Please contact the regional coordinator: rc.berlin(a)fulbright-alumni.de

## Berlin, Berlin

by Karin-Irene Eiermann

On September 23, 2012 the Berlin Regional Chapter organized a Welcome- Barbecue for the new American Fulbright grantees who had just arrived in the city in early September for the academic year 2012-2013. The event with about 40 people took place in our own rented BBQ area in the beer garden “Mauersegler”, right by the famous Berlin Mauerpark.

A joint Thanksgiving event by the Fulbright Commission, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Alexander-von-Humboldt Foundation and Fulbright Alumni e.V. was held on November 19, 2012 in the Frannz-Club of the Kulturbrauerei. Twenty members of the Berlin Regional Chapter participated and met alumni of the other organizations.

On December 13, 2013 the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) invited the younger members of the Berlin Regional Chapter to attend an information and recruiting event exclusively for Fulbright alumni. Three BCG consultants introduced the company and presented entry options, possible specialization areas, and career paths. Afterwards the participants could network and ask the consultants questions at a small reception with finger food and drinks.

On June 19, 2013 some members of the Berlin Chapter witnessed President Obama’s speech at the Brandenburg Gate. It was a very hot June afternoon without any shade on Pariser Platz, so we were literally “baking for Obama”. Although there wasn’t much in Obama’s speech to fill the history books,



The Berlin Regional Chapter welcomes a Cambodian Fulbrighter



BBQ of the Berlin Regional Chapter in September 2013

Photos: Karin-Irene Eiermann

## Regional Chapter Köln/Bonn

## Wo man singt, da lass Dich nieder...

by Julia Anderlé de Sylor, Martina Domnick, Isabel Wasgindt

In our small, fine regional group we meet approximately every 4-8 weeks to attend cultural events, cook or sometimes to make music together.

Our cooking events are now well established in our regional group gatherings. In April, we combined the cooking event with a visit to the exhibition “The American way. Die USA in Deutschland” at “Haus der Geschichte” in Bonn. We were delighted to see that one of the display cases was dedicated to the History of the Fulbright program, featuring pictures of the first grantees to the States. Afterwards, hungry Fulbrighters prepared together a colorful mix of German and American dishes from “Roulade with roasted sweet potatoes” to “Death by chocolate” – but we can happily report that all participating Fullies are still alive.

In June, we visited the Museum Ludwig in Cologne for the exhibition “Saul Steinberg – The Americans”. At the core of the exhibition were Steinberg’s large brown-paperbag collages that were his great contribution to the American pavilion at the World Exhibition in Brussels in 1957. His very own satirical comment on American society and everyday life amused us very much.

For the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, some of us joined up with the Rhine/Ruhr regional group. And just recently in August, we looked at the International Silent Film Festival at the University of Bonn with Charlie Chaplin’s “Easy Street”.



Fulbrighters then and now: Martina Domnick; photo: Isabel Wasgindt



The American Way – Fulbright program flyer from the 1950s; photo: Isabel Wasgindt

As already mentioned, musical happenings now are very much part of our regional group life thanks to Julia Anderlé de Sylor, who came up with the idea.

In December 2012, Ulrich and Angela Götz, in the spirit of Christmas, invited the Köln/Bonn Alumni for “Plätzchen” and Advent music. After eating some truly delicious cookies, we ended the evening by playing an arrangement of several traditional German and American Christmas songs.

Since then, we have made music a part of two other gatherings: in May, a few Köln/Bonn Fulbrighters dusted off their instruments to sight-read some tango, jazz and classical music together. And at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ with the regional group Rhein/Ruhr, we spontaneously decided to play The Star Spangled Banner and were joined in song by the other Fulbrighters.

The joy of these performances has highlighted a new aspect in Fulbright events: live music. It is incredible how many Alumni musicians there are in the NRW region alone, eager for a chance to make music together. Not many Fulbrighters have the opportunity or time to join a formal orchestra or band, but these impromptu musical soirees were fun and rewarding for both the musicians and listeners alike. Why not try mustering together some of the musicians in your own regional chapter? You might just strike a chord.

Fullies trying their hands at Christmas Carols, from left to right: Isabel Wasgindt, Julia Anderlé de Sylor, Angela Götz; photo: Ulrich Götz



# Regional Chapter Munich

## Munich – Traditional on the Go

by Martin Söhngen

The Regional Chapter Munich got a significant blow earlier this year – we lost our regional president Florian who was lured away to preside over the entire German alumni association. A big thank you from those (seemingly) left behind and best wishes for the challenges that lie ahead! The four-person regional steering committee now consists of Sabine (Outdoor), Marion (Members), Andreas (Treasury and Newsletter), and Martin (Spokesman – now rather “Wrotesman”).

Traditions have not changed much, though: Our backbone remains the Stammtisch, which, as a rule, takes place every last Tuesday of the month at ever changing locations throughout Munich. Most other events mirror the recent past as well: In October, the regional welcome meeting in the private apartment of a veteran member attracted a large and mostly American crowd. In November, Thanksgiving could not possibly be moved to a Tuesday so we decided to duly kill the Turkey once more on a Thursday – if I were a Turkey, I would watch Thursdays! In December, “Wichteln” drew a much more German crowd with Carolinita having flown in from San Francisco providing Spanglish cosmopolitan flavor. I would rather not mention here most of the gifts being exchanged...

Traditional you can also label our joint activities with other alumni groups – no intention to bore you, though. We sail a weekend in July on Lake Constance with the Regional Chapter Stuttgart, bowl one evening a year with the PPP Alumni (Parlamentarisches Patenschafts-Programm), and stammtisch together with the Boilermakers (Purdue Alumni). Some of us attend, slightly more formally, the charitable Magnolia Ball sponsored by the German-American Women’s Club Munich in January.

A substantial part of us attended the (predictable) Obamafest at Amerikahaus on election night. Even that becomes traditional in many aspects: Loads of hours have to be killed before the first results drop in. Usually you can see for hours that Republican X (2012: Mitt Romney) carried Kentucky. What a surprise! Then comes the part I love: gazillions of correspondents and cameras report the first results from polls in counties with silly names such as Cuyahoga or Arapahoe (apologies



to those from there, I even know someone from Cleveland), which permit to predict the election outcome in the respective states (you knew it: all-important Ohio and Colorado). Then smart analysts really really don’t know where Romney should get the votes to win. Then it is time to catch sleep, get up and learn in the news the next morning who won. But I will miss you for the next four years, Cuyahoga and Arapahoe!

April this year was colder and rainier than any full-grown November. Sabine arranged for a bicycle trip already in mid March. Boldness paid out: That Sunday we cycled to Wolfratshausen, some 50 km up the Isar river (creek?) in blazing sun. Great fun. Had we known that that November would return for the next weeks! The first Friday of July 2013 saw the traditional 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ taking place at Andreas’ grand balcony (thank you very much!!). The circle will continue in late August with a tour to the royal Bavarian Königssee.



Photos: Andreas Schoberth

# Regional Chapter Leipzig

## 200 years Battle of the Nations – Leipzig International

by Tilman Schenk

A summer barbecue in early July and a turkey feast in late November have become the tasty ingredients of Fulbright Alumni activity in Leipzig over the past years. For 2012, we were happy to give a group of young Americans living in our city a sense of home around Thanksgiving when we welcomed them to the Mehnert’s residence in the Plagwitz old industrial district. And they helped us recollect the recipes for all those traditional dishes that come with the turkey, pumpkin pie, green bean casserole and so forth. A productive mutual preparation of the numerous dishes was followed by a long night of chatting and exchanging experiences of living in either one of the countries, Germany and the U.S. We definitely are hungry for more!

For this year’s summer barbecue, a rather small group of Leipzig Fullies gathered at Damm’s house in Gohlis on a warm and cozy summer evening. Nevertheless, all the meat and salad and ice cream for dessert tasted delicious and we are grateful to Sabine and Winfried for welcoming us on their terrace and providing drinks and the barbecue gear.

So the Leipzig regional chapter is up and alive, and we are always looking forward to meeting new people who share the Fulbright experience! If you live in the Leipzig-Halle area and like to get in touch, write an email to [rc.leipzig\(a\)fulbright-alumni.de](mailto:rc.leipzig(a)fulbright-alumni.de) and we will put you on our email list so you will learn about upcoming events.



Photo: Dagmar Joswig-Mehnert



# Schülerpaten Deutschland

by Sherief El-Helaifi

This year's recipient of the Jürgen Mulert Award on Mutual Understanding is Sherief El-Helaifi for his project "Schuelerpaten".

Building relationships between people who most probably would not have met were it not for "Schuelerpaten" – that's what makes the members of this organization proud. "It is a very simple concept. People who usually just talk about, but not with each other, suddenly become friends or even like family to each other, helping and respecting each other. That's just hella nice as they would say in the bay area!" says Sherief El-Helaifi and laughs, visibly proud and amazed by the success of the organization.

The non-profit mentoring organization "Schuelerpaten" with the slogan "Integration – a mutual act, a mutual responsibility" aims at facilitating an exchange between people with different cultural backgrounds and, thereby, overcoming prejudices towards foreign cultures. The project promotes better educational opportunities for children with migrant backgrounds in Germany and encourages German citizens to engage in volunteer work.

Due to both language problems and structural discrimination, students with migrant backgrounds often need tutoring in order to achieve higher grades and increase their potential in school. However, many families cannot afford professional

tutors. But there is also enormous potential to engage in volunteer work, especially among university students all across Germany. Separately, they are merely two groups of people that seldom have an opportunity to interact. Together, they can become a powerful force for change in our communities. This is where Schuelerpaten comes into play: They bring together volunteers and children with migrant backgrounds by establishing one-on-one mentorships. By tutoring individually at the children's homes, Schuelerpaten promote exchange between people with different social and perhaps different cultural backgrounds and they promote better educational opportunities to foster integration and mutual understanding. Moreover, they offer supervision, seminars and opportunities for the matches to nurture lasting experiences together.

"My mother is a German Catholic, my father an Egyptian Muslim. That was never a point of contention in my family, but rather a bond that kept us close. It's the spirit of my family that drives my engagement in Schuelerpaten", Sherief adds.

The project began in 2009 in Berlin. Now, the organizational team is working on developing a social franchise strategy with which they plan to reproduce the success of "Schuelerpaten



Award presentation at the Winterball;  
photo: Wiltrud Hammelstein

Berlin" in other German cities and with students of other migrant backgrounds. In 2013 new projects started in the Ruhr region and in Frankfurt a. Main. In the future, an umbrella organization will coordinate the expansion, supervise quality, and provide seminars and room for networking as well as funding for the individual organizations.

More information about the project and the progress can be found on [www.schuelerpaten-deutschland.de](http://www.schuelerpaten-deutschland.de) or [www.facebook.com/SchuelerpatenBerlin](https://www.facebook.com/SchuelerpatenBerlin). Donations can also be made on the website and are very much appreciated!

Sherief El-Helaifi completed his Bachelor's in Industrial and Chemical Engineering at the Technical University Berlin and University of California Berkeley, where he was a Fulbright Scholar in 2011/2012. He holds a scholarship from the Heinrich Böll Foundation and will start his Master's in Fall 2013 at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg, Sweden, after founding "Schuelerpaten Deutschland".



At the summerfest; photo: Julian Groß



Sherief El-Helaifi; photo: Julian Groß



The organizational team of Schuelerpaten Berlin e.V.;  
photo: Julian Groß

## Mulert Award 2014 – Call for Nominations

Since 2010, the German Fulbright Alumni Association grants the "Jürgen Mulert Award on Mutual Understanding", in memory of the association's initiator and founder, Dr. Jürgen Mulert (1938-2008). The Mulert Award is bestowed annually to researchers, artists, professionals and volunteers across disciplines whose work reflects and advances discourse and peace through mutual understanding.

It is our pleasure to invite all Fulbright Alumni to submit online nominations for candidates for the 2014 Mulert Award. Nominees must be former participants of one of the many Fulbright programs worldwide. Nominated projects may be professional or volunteer, and may have of an artistic, social or economic character.

The prize package for the Mulert Award winner includes the following:

- recognition during the award ceremony at the Association's annual Winterball in February 2014.
- presentation during the Fulbright Commission's Berlin Week in March 2014
- project presentation and short author biography in the 2014 issue of the *FRANKly* magazine as well as on the Association's website
- reference in the Wikipedia article on Jürgen Mulert
- full travel support

The Call for Nominations will be accessible online until November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

For further information, please refer to <https://www.fulbright-alumni.de/mulertaward.html>

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«Dreivierteltakt im Dreiländereck»

# Winterball Freiburg



On behalf of the *German Fulbright Alumni e.V.* and the *Swiss Fulbright Alumni Association*, we have the great pleasure to invite you to the Winterball 2014 and the Annual General Meeting in Freiburg, the gate to the Black Forest.

Let us dance the night away in an elegant surrounding, enjoy an exquisite dinner and stimulating conversations with people from various countries.

For date and details of the program and location, please refer to [www.fulbright-alumni.de](http://www.fulbright-alumni.de) or contact [winterball2014@fulbright-alumni.de](mailto:winterball2014@fulbright-alumni.de).

