

Karime From Mexico Takes on France!

By ASSE Outbound Student Karime Kern who enjoyed a semester in France



Karime at the Eiffel Tower with her friend Elias

Karime Kern, a student from Mexico had the opportunity to participate in an exchange program in France, where she spent five months living in the city of Orleans. Karime said it was full of history and she felt very fortunate to live with a lovely host family who made her feel at home. Her relationship with her host sister was particularly enjoyable, and she expresses an abundance of gratitude for that.

Although Karime initially found it difficult to make friends and communicate

in French at school, she gradually improved her language skills with the help of her host family. During her time in France, Karime was also able to take a trip to the Netherlands with her host family as one of their children were studying there. Karime enjoyed learning about the culture and history of the region and felt very thankful to not only discover France, but the Netherlands as well. This is what participating in a cultural exchange is all about!

Thank you for sharing your wonderful story, Karime!



Karime with her friends at the skating rink



Karime with her host family in the Netherlands

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Exploring New Passions

By ASSE Area Coordinator Donna Baldwin

Aitana, a Spanish Scholarship Student, discovered her love for the arts during her exchange year in Oklahoma. ASSE Area Coordinator, Donna Baldwin, expressed her pride to us: "Aitana has developed a passion for theater, which she may not have discovered if not for her experience as an exchange student in the United

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Aitana is at the bottom, farthest person on the right.



Editor's Box

Many thanks to all of you who have contributed your wonderful articles and photographs. Without you, there would not be any ASSE News! Tell us about yourself and you may possibly find yourself highlighted in the next newsletter or posted on the ASSE or World Heritage Facebook page. Pictures are encouraged to be sent by email. Let us know the fun things you are doing as a student, host family or Area Representative.

Please send your best photograph and article to:
ASSE News, 228 North Coast Highway, Laguna Beach, CA 92651, USA
Tel: 949-494-5500 • Fax: 949-494-3579 • E-mail: breeana@asse.com

Until next edition,
Breeana Page, ASSE News Editor

Photo Gallery



It's an Easter Celebration!

An Easter Egg Hunt with your host sibling is a wonderful way to make memories and enjoy the beautiful weather of spring. It's a great opportunity to bond with your host family and experience a fun and festive holiday tradition in a new country. As you search for hidden eggs filled with candies and surprises, you'll also be creating lasting memories and strengthening your relationships with your host family members. Plus, you'll have a chance to explore the local area and learn more about the Easter traditions and celebrations of your host country.



Angela, a former CBYX student from North Dakota had a heartwarming reunion with her host family in Germany. Visiting her host family after 20 years, Angela expressed how hosting exchange students provides a lifelong gift. Reflecting on the last time she saw them in 2003, Angela emphasized that despite the years that have passed, they remain like family to her. She expressed deep gratitude for their love and generosity, as they played a pivotal role in broadening her perspective and allowing her to experience the world through a new lens all those years ago.



Marjona, a hardworking World Heritage Student from Uzbekistan, received the Outstanding English Award for seniors. This photo shows Marjona with her English teacher, Sara Cox, along with the principal, Josh Jennings, the assistant principal, Mandy Mathis, and the guidance counselor, Karen Brown. This award not only recognizes Marjona's impressive English skills but also highlights the support and guidance she received from her teachers and school staff while on program.



In this photo, ASSE Area Coordinator Jennifer Chambers and Area Representative Tessa Shumway are joined by a diverse group of ASSE students hailing from different parts of the world, including Luka and Mikheil from Georgia, Louisa from Germany, Mohitabon from Uzbekistan, Kristiana from Latvia, Juan from Spain, Leane from France, Giacomo from Italy, and Noah from Australia. Also pictured is the Governor of Montana, Greg Gianforte, who met with the group during their exchange program. It's great to see such a diverse group of young people coming together to learn about different cultures and make new connections!

Powerful Connections Through Difficult Times

By World Heritage Area Representative Cindy Thigpen

Anastasiia, a 17-year-old FLEX Scholarship Student from Ukraine, is currently spending her exchange year in Huntsville, Alabama with the Hinton Family. During a special weekend planned by her Area Representative, Cindy Thigpen, Anastasiia had a memorable encounter with a local Alabamian who shared a story that deeply resonated with Anastasiia.

The weekend began with Cindy and her students attending an ice hockey game, followed by a visit to their local NASA Museum. Later that afternoon, they participated in a fundraising event, where they helped local Ukrainians and friends. While there, they had the opportunity to meet Alex Drueke, a local Alabamian who shared his story of being captured by Russia for supporting Ukraine in battle. He had spent 108 days in a Russian POW camp. Anastasiia, whose father is involved in the military back home, was moved by Alex's story and became emotional. Alex gave her words of encouragement, assuring her that Ukraine would ultimately triumph. This meant a lot to Anastasiia, and Cindy was so proud of how courageous her students were.



Anastasiia on the right with Alex Drueke (left)



Anastasiia fundraising for Ukraine

Minnie Shares Her Love for Art

By Host Mom and ASSE Area Representative Michele Higginbotham

Meet Minnie, an ambitious student from Thailand who is spending her exchange year in Jourdan, Texas. At the International School of Americas, she has been making the most of her Art Class, where she recently decided to enter a self-portrait in the University Interscholastic League competition. And guess what? Minnie's piece was rated so highly that she made it all the way to State! She is constantly drawing and has a passion for the arts. Besides drawing, painting and color mixing, Minnie has taken up dance lessons including jazz, contemporary, ballet, and hip-hop, just to name a few! She is also thrilled to join her host mom for a classic: To Kill a Mockingbird. Her host mom couldn't be prouder of her!

Thank you for sharing this amazing accomplishment!



Minnie pictured with her self-portrait

Cathedral Preparatory Students Meet with U.S. Congressman Mike Kelly

By Area Representative Tim Dougherty

ASSE/WH International students from Cathedral Preparatory School had the opportunity to meet with Congressman Mike Kelly, who represents Erie, Pennsylvania in the United States Congress. The Congressman had initially planned to spend less than an hour with the students, but due to the insightful conversation he was having with the students, he stayed and talked with them for about 90 minutes! During their meeting, the students engaged in a meaningful dialogue with the Congressman and received some inspiring words of wisdom. According to Tim, ASSE Area Representative, the students found the experience to be incredibly interesting and thought it was "super cool" to meet with a member of Congress. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students of ASSE, and Tim expressed his gratitude for the experience.

Thank you for sharing, Tim! What a wonderful opportunity for your students!



2023-24 Outbound Scholarship Winners!

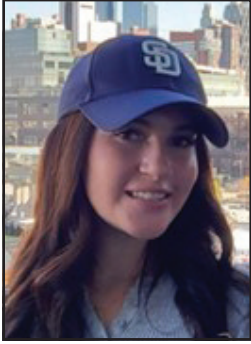
By Outbound Director Batima Myrzabekova

ASSE International offers a range of benefits to American high school students who are interested in studying abroad. As one of the largest exchange programs in the country, ASSE is dedicated to helping students explore the world. Unlike other programs that limit students' destination options, ASSE allows students to choose the country they want to study in. Additionally, ASSE doesn't require a foreign language proficiency, but many students return home with a newfound fluency in their host country's language.

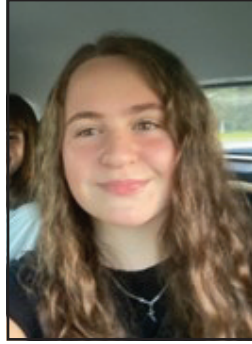
ASSE's program fees are among the lowest in the industry and are all-inclusive. Furthermore, ASSE offers multiple scholarships for outbound students each year. The Walter Danielson Scholarship, named after the program's founding father, pays for the complete program, including the program fee, domestic flight costs to and from the departure gateway, spending money for incidentals, and one optional field trip.

In addition to the Walter Danielson Scholarship, ASSE offers the Global Adventures Scholarship, which covers 90% of the program fee. Students are only responsible for paying 10% of the program fee, domestic travel to and from the international gateway, and their own monthly pocket money. Three students have already been awarded the Global Adventures Scholarship for the 2023-24 school year. With these scholarships and other benefits, ASSE makes studying abroad accessible and affordable for American students.

We are very excited to announce the ASSE and World Heritage Outbound Scholarship Winners for 2023-24 Program Year!



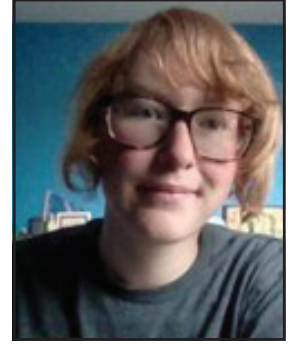
Danica Smith from Griswold, Connecticut is the recipient of the prestigious 100% Walter Danielson Scholarship. Danica will be spending her exchange year in Spain. She is very active in her community and high school. Danica's hobbies include art, drawing, making jewelry, cooking, baking, and swimming. She is part of the Student Leadership Council, the Yearbook Club and the Cross-Country Team. Danica has already been studying 3 years of Spanish and will increase her knowledge tremendously while in Spain. Her family has been hosting ASSE inbound students and now she will be hosted by one of their exchange students' family in Spain. Danica wants to learn more about the country by living in that environment, making friends, enjoying local food, celebrating holidays and experiencing everyday life.



Abigail Cousino of Longs, South Carolina will spend her exchange year in France as an ASSE Global Adventures Scholarship winner. Abigail enjoys writing, travel, drawing, singing, reading, running and lacrosse. She is a member of the Beta Club and the Track Team. She believes that getting out of her comfort zone would help to develop her character and reach her potential in a way no other opportunity in her life would. Abigail loves French language and thinks that she could thrive from being immersed into the culture of France.



Iylla Christiansen from Grand Marais, Minnesota is the recipient of a Global Adventures Scholarship and will be spending her academic year 2023-24 in Spain. Her hobbies are volleyball, piano, softball, painting, baking and playing the piano. Iylla is a member of her school's Student Council and Envirothon. She has been active in her community by volunteering at a daycare and clean-up groups in her town. Iylla's mother came to the US on a student visa, and it changed her life so she is hoping that an exchange year will have a huge impact on her life as well. We believe Iylla will have an adventure of a lifetime!



Riley Delaney of Prescott, Arizona is looking forward to her exchange year in Finland beginning this fall on a Global Adventures Scholarship. She is interested in drawing, playing the guitar, reading, astronomy, stargazing, hiking, and swimming. Riley has volunteered at the Heritage Park Zoo in her hometown for 3 years. Also, she has been helping at the local Salvation Army to prepare meals. She chose to become an exchange student because she wanted to go out and see the world. We think Riley will be a great addition to a Finnish family and learn the language and culture quickly!

We wish all scholarship winners a successful and exciting year abroad! Congratulations from ASSE and World Heritage!

Dreams Come True in the Big Apple (New York City)

By Host Mom and ASSE Area Representative Michele Higginbotham

Ofelya Sargsyan, a FLEX Scholarship student from Armenia, had always dreamed of visiting New York City. Her host mother, Lusine Doran, who is a founding member of the Armenian Community Club in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, rallied the members to help make Ofelya's dream come true. Thanks to their support, Ofelya and Lusine were able to spend the last few days in NYC, where they visited iconic landmarks, such as the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, Madame

Tussauds, and Ellis Island. They also explored neighborhoods like Brooklyn and Times Square. Ofelya expressed her gratitude to her host family and the Armenian Community Club for making this life-changing experience possible, saying that she feels fulfilled and grateful for the opportunity to live her lifelong dream.

What an amazing story! Thank you for sharing!



Ofelya in New York City



Exploring New Passions

By ASSE Area Coordinator Donna Baldwin

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States." Donna credits Aitana's newfound interest to the many opportunities that the exchange program provides. She is especially grateful to Edmond Santa Fe High School for having welcomed Aitana into their school. As her exchange year comes to an end, Aitana is

now searching for a university in her home country where she can continue to pursue her passion for the arts.

Thank you for sharing Aitana's wonderful story, Donna!



Aitana is second from the right side in white shirt.