

Quebec – A Fantastic Place

By Nutcha Duriyapakit, ASSE Exchange Student (Thailand) enjoying her exchange year with the Fortin/Denis Family in Compton, Québec, Canada

Nutcha Duriyapakit
ASSE Exchange Student (Thailand)

“Since I’ve come here to Québec, Canada, there are many good things that have happened in my life. My host family Josée and Allen are very kind. They never tire helping me with my French or English. They are the best host family and I am proud to be their student.

Québec is very fantastic place with both nice weather and beautiful nature. There are many places that impress me a lot such as the Foresta Lumina, a night illuminated pathway in Coaticook, Québec. I also like Québec city and Montmorency Falls.

The people here are very gentle as are my friends at school. I study at École secondaire La Frontalière, a bilingual school so I can improve both English and French. It isn’t easy to understand them as they speak fast for me but I like the

exciting challenge. They teach me to be stronger and not to give up.”

~ Nutcha

Allen Fortin and Josée Denis
ASSE Host Parents (Québec, Canada)

Host parents Allen and Josée have hosted for 14 years and say that every year they have a nice surprise with each exchange student. This year in describing Nutcha, they said, “Every day we are surprised by her progress and desire to learn our language. She is very involved in school (dancing and album/yearbook). She already has a large circle of friends and the school is honored to have her among their students. We have no children at home and her presence keeps us young. Nutcha make us smile every day and also give a touch of madness in the household.”

~ Allen and Josée



Early in the year, ASSE Exchange Student Nutcha Duriyapakit (Thailand) took advantage of the opportunity to go riding with a friend.

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Ohio Amish Experience

ASSE Exchange Students, their host families and Area Representatives spent a day touring the Amish community in Holmes County, Ohio USA. After making their way through the traffic jam of horse buggies the group started a tour where they learned about the Amish school, tasted apple butter, rode a buggy and got to meet

the farm animals. They rounded up their day by having dinner at a family restaurant that serves traditional Amish food.

Sairem Khan (YES Pakistan) said that it was very surprising to learn that “the Amish do not get any sort of funding from the government but still are able to run their system just fine.” Most interesting for Italian exchange student Adele Fontana (Italy)

was to learn “how their school works because it’s basically a little building with only one class and they study only certain subjects.” Lena Schneider (CBYX Germany) and Julia Egger (CBYX Germany) were surprised to find out that Amish communities have a German background.

Ivan Hryn (FLEX Ukraine) said the best part of the day was communicating with all the other exchange students: “All of them are great and unusual.”

Students and host families not only learned about the Amish culture but also about each other’s cultures during the day!



ASSE Exchange Students learning about the Amish.

Front row – Left to Right:
Esther Ripoll Camps (FAO Spain),
Baurzhan Kalkabaev (FLEX Kazakhstan),
Julia Egger (CBYX Germany)

Back Row – Left to Right:
Giorgi Esaiashvili (FLEX Georgia),
Ivan Hryn (FLEX Ukraine),
Sairem Khan (YES Pakistan),
Jessica Joyce (Australia),
Anna But (FLEX Ukraine),
Lena Sophie Schneider (CBYX Germany)

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.

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Until next edition,
Mary Loving ASSE News Editor

Inspiration and Growth

By Gassan Kassim, ASSE YES Exchange Student (Israel) 2009-10 who spent his exchange year with Mr. John Jones, Copperas Cove, Texas USA

Being a YES student was a milestone in my ongoing path of growth and evolution. It was an experience that undoubtedly helped shape a larger part of the person I am today. It taught me the meaning of independence, leadership, commitment, tolerance, friendship and compassion. It proved to me that life is beautiful, that the universe is a friendly place and that all people are inherently

good. It showed me how our similarities far outweigh our differences. In fact, it made it clear to me that mutual understanding and human connection are crucial and of utmost importance when it comes to tearing down walls of prejudice, and building up bridges of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. I believe that these core values that the YES experience instilled in me are priceless, and they are ought to be shared with every global

citizen in our day and age.

Mr. Jones as my host father is truly a blessing. There are no words that can serve justice to this man and to all the great things he has done, and still does. For the past 20 years or so, Mr. Jones has been hosting 2 students every year and I was lucky to be one of those kids back in 2008 along with Mustafa Musayev (FLEX Kazakhstan) as my host brother. Mr. Jones taught us character, compassion, respect, courage and independence; priceless gifts! He opened his home for us, he cooked for us, he entertained us when we were bored, he taught us about life, he shared his endless life experiences with us, he took us to the hospital when we were sick, he sang with us, he played with us, he took us on vacations, whether it was Kansas, San Francisco, Hawaii, or Hollywood. Above all, he loved us like a father would love his son.

Mr. Jones has a very deep passion for the youth. He believes that we hold the key to a brighter future, and that is what drives him to do all the great things that he does for us. The way I see it now, teenagers that undertake the exchange student journey are thrown into such an exciting and intense experience, that all these values that I mentioned penetrate so deep into us and they are engraved into our souls. Mr. Jones has mastery when it comes

to teaching teenagers how to evolve and how to transform into the best possible version of self. Years later when we grow to become leaders in whatever field life brings us into, I believe that these values will be our subconscious operating system that will govern our decision making and insure that we bring this world into unity, peace, and prosperity.

Few words about myself: After completing my exchange year back in 2009, I went back to Israel and completed my high school education. I then went into my medical studies in the medical school of Debrecen, Hungary and I will be graduating in December of this year. This past summer 2016, I did clinical rotations at Mount Sinai hospital, New York City, USA and I visited Mr. Jones, while I was preparing to take the second exam of US medical licensing. After I graduate, I will start my 1 year internship in Israel and then plan to apply for a residency program in the US to continue my medical education. I hope to be able to give back for all the great things I have been given.

~ Gassan



Khaled Abu Ramadan (YES Gaza Strip), Host dad Mr. John Jones, Andrian Nani (FLEX Moldova) and Gassan Kassim (YES alumni Israel)

Reunion in Paris

By ASSE Alumni Exchange Student Giovanna Zaino (Italy 2010) and host sister Emily Rogers, Wake Forest, North Carolina, USA.

Host sisters, Giovanna Zaino, ASSE Exchange Student 2010 (Italy) and Emily Rogers were able to spend several hours together recently at the Louvre in Paris, France. Giovanna is pursuing her Master's degree in Paris and host sister Emily visited France with a school trip.

Giovanna Zaino

ASSE Alumni Exchange Student

I was pretty excited meeting my little host sister in Europe, and felt lucky to have the chance to be in Paris the same days that she was coming to France! I've been regularly talking with my host family and eventually, 6 years later, this meeting happened! I was so curious to see

how Emily had grown up and get to know her again. When visiting the Louvre we were plunged into a conversation! Hopefully I'll get to see the rest of my American family soon!

~ Giovanna

Emily Rogers

ASSE Host Sister (North Carolina, USA)

We hosted Giovanna when I was only 10 years old, so six years later I was a little nervous about how we might get along when we met up in Paris. My worries were proven unnecessary though as we had a lovely time walking through the Louvre having great conversations. I'm very happy to have gotten

to spend time with Gio so many years after hosting (in Paris, of all places!). Spending a week in France was an incredible experience and getting to meet up with Giovanna made it that much better!!

~ Emily

Coralee Rogers

ASSE Host Mom (North Carolina, USA)

So you see... at the end of 10 months, a new family is created... one that extends beyond your front door and without the limits of time or distance!

~ Coralee



Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship – The Legacy Continues!

The legacy continues with the Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship to Spain - In memory of Jodi Kiefer, dedicated advocate for the ASSE & World Heritage International Student Exchange Programs for over 25 years,

in cooperation with ASSE, SHE Herencia and the Kiefer Family, ASSE offers one full scholarship to Spain in the 2017-18 school year covering 100% of the program fee, round trip airfare, one field trip

in Spain, comprehensive insurance and monthly pocket money. Having benefited from high school international exchange firsthand, after college Jodi began a lifelong career with ASSE. She believed that one student can make a huge impact and helped thousands of American families and teenagers from other countries realize the value of cultural exchange.



ASSE 2016 Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship recipient, Bailey Ford of Cortez, Colorado USA is spending her exchange year in Ursem, The Netherlands. Bailey expresses her gratitude saying, "I just wanted to say thank you for helping me get here! It means a lot to me! Everything is going great up here with me!"

Bailey Ford in the center with her host family.



ASSE Photo Gallery

ASSE is very grateful to receive so many photos from around the ASSE and World Heritage world! Enjoy the following examples of all of the fun!



ASSE/ WH students had a 'super fun' activity in Danville, Vermont, USA visiting 'The Great Vermont Corn Maze', the largest maze in New England
First Row: Heidi Halkjaer and Lasse Heilesen (Denmark), Kajal Arya (YES India), Mariam Vardikyan (FLEX Armenia)

Second Row: Landry David, Megan Taufin, Clara Arocas, Clement Soler and Emmanuel Lafficher (France), ASSE / WH Area Representative Luciana Swenson, Elena Sanna (Italy), Rukayyah Kaita (YES Nigeria), Sara Bellon Martinex (Spain), Namwan (Onjira) Juabkwamsuk (Thailand)



ASSE American CBYX (Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange) Scholarship Exchange Students gathered in Washington, D.C. USA, August 1-3, 2016 prior to departing to Germany. During the preparation meetings, students visited the office of Senators / Representatives from their home state and district; visited Smithsonian museums and National Monuments; met with U.S. Department of State CBYX Program Officers and had discussion sessions to prepare for the new cultural experience awaiting them in Germany.



Exchange Students from ASSE affiliated offices in Australia, English Canada, Germany, Italy, Taiwan and USA gather for several days in Copenhagen, Denmark for orientation meetings before meeting their host families in Denmark, Norway or Finland.



ASSE Area Representative Kathy Cross and her ASSE Exchange Students enjoyed hiking Cap Rock trail at Makoshika State Park, Glendive, Montana USA. After hiking and exploring the park, they had a campfire, roasted hotdogs, and made s'mores.

Left to right: Ketevan Kvashvadze (FLEX Georgia), Zuzanna Wojcicka (FLEX Poland), Sandro Maisashvili (FLEX Georgia), Nike Ange Djiade Ngalamo (YES Cameron), Davide Vittorio Bernasco (Italy), Danu Doina (FLEX Moldova), Elena Hortuic (FLEX Moldova), Anzhelika Harutyunyan (FLEX Armenia), Mei Omura (Japan), Chaiwat Buayyai (Thailand)



ASSE/WH Exchange Students Arianna Caprioglio (Italy) and Emiliano Barrera Fuentes (Mexico) joined ASSE/WH Area Representative Kelli Harris to visit the Moundville Native American Festival.

Arianna said, "The day was great! I loved watching the hula-hoop dance and learning about a different way of life. We listened to interesting stories and met lots of interesting people."

Arianna also said, "I love my American school even though it is very different from my Italian one. I am very thankful for my Italian family supporting my decision for this year and my American host family for making my dream come true. I'm feeling very lucky to be here with these amazing people!"



ASSE Exchange Students Dejan Tasdelen (Denmark) and Thachita Harfst (CBYX Germany) joined host mom Jessica Eisenbarth of New England, North Dakota USA in a community dinner theatre performance called "Pistols and Posies".

"It is a great experience to perform with such a wonderful cast. The weeks of rehearsal have been really funny and it is always great to meet new people" Dejan said about the experience. His German sister Thachita said: "It is a great opportunity to have a little role singing and dancing in an American play, as a girl from the '20's. I had a lot of fun performing on stage and watching the play, laughing till my stomach hurt. I can just say that if you have the chance to participate in a play or helping in the community, do it! Even my host mother plays in it and she is doing a great job and that brings us closer together too. So enjoy your year and have fun everybody!"



ASSE Exchange Students enjoyed visiting the Virginia Beach International Neptune Festival. Many of the students had never been to the ocean and they loved being able to experience the waves and see the dolphins.

According to ASSE Area Representative Tammy Tomanek, the students said that it was an activity they would always remember!

Back row left to right (standing):

Pablo Sanchez (FAO Spain), Hexiang Qiu (China), Lilit Ghandilyan (FLEX Armenia), Camila Ibarra Bernal (FAO Spain), Fatima Sol Jalmanni (YES Philippines), Yolaine Sclan (France), Valeriya Petrechkev (FLEX Ukraine), ASSE Area Representatives Tammy Tomanek and Linda Quick

Front row left to right (seated):

Lavinia Albrizio (Italy), Mariam Razmadze (FLEX Georgia), Yuka Tanaka (Japan), Jelisaveta Janicijevic (FLEX Serbia), Riska Maulida (YES Indonesia)

*FLEX – Future Leaders Exchange, U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs sponsored Exchange Student

*CBYX – Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange, U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs sponsored Exchange Student

*YES – Kennedy Lugar Youth Exchange and Study, U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs sponsored Exchange Student

USA is Amazing!

By ASSE Exchange Student **Antonio Segura Lopez**, Spanish scholarship student through Foundation Amancio Ortega (FAO) living with the Isenberg Family in Manassas, Virginia USA

Antonio Segura Lopez
ASSE Exchange Student

It all started when my physics teacher in Spain told me that there was a scholarship to study in the USA that maybe could be a good experience for me. When they told me I got the scholarship I was really excited! I'm glad I applied because I'm having an amazing time here and I think that is the best decision I've ever made.

My host family is perfect; I enjoy spending time with them. Colgan High School, Prince William County,

Virginia, USA is amazing! It's a huge new high school with a lot of great things such as technology, a great library, really nice teachers and sports opportunities with an Olympic pool, an awesome track, nice fields and great coaches. I joined the cross country team. I love practice and I like spending time with my teammates.

In my first cross country meet, I ran in the junior varsity 5K and I won the race. The last race I ran was a really hard and muddy race but I won. Everybody was congratulating me!

I'm enjoying my time here with my

host family and my new friends. I'm living a great experience here and I can't wait to do new things and visit some amazing places here in the USA.

~ **Antonio**

Dinorah Isenberg
ASSE Host Mom

My family has been hosting for the past three years. Antonio is adjusting very well. He is a very nice young man who excels academically and we are coming to find out he also excels athletically.

~ **Dinorah**



Antonio Lopez, ASSE Exchange Student (Spain) with his first medal won in the junior varsity 5K cross country race.

The Memory Tree Flourishes!

By ASSE Host Family **Anthony and Susie DiSabatino**, Union, Ohio USA

In the Fall 2010 ASSE Newsletter, host parents Anthony and Susie DiSabatino shared a photo of a cherry tree, a 'memory tree', ASSE FLEX Exchange Student Yuliya Ivanyuk (Ukraine) chose for planting at the end of her exchange year 2009-10.

Yuliya returned to visit the DiSabatino family in August 2016 as she travelled to the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada to complete her graduate degree in peace studies.

The DiSabatino's are delighted that Yuliya and the tree have grown through the years. "Yuliya has become an incredible young woman who is representative of what the ASSE

Exchange Program is all about! She completed her undergraduate degree at a university in Kiev, Ukraine in 2016. Yuliya had rich and varied experiences: she interpreted for NATO conferences, participated in political and military presentations and operations, and volunteered with an organization that provided humanitarian care for displaced women and children due to conflict within her country."

Yuliya shared that her year with ASSE and the U.S. Department of State sponsored FLEX scholarship program provided her the basis for the path she's chosen in helping others globally.

Anthony DiSabatino continues, "We feel blessed that she has been a part of our lives and we have kept in contact with her on a weekly basis via Skype ever since she left us in 2010. Her parents must be very proud of the person she's become, and we are thankful to them for giving their daughter up for a year to live with us. They must be extraordinary people to have done so!"



ASSE FLEX Alumni Exchange Student (Ukraine) 2009-10, Yuliya Ivanyuk reunited with her 'memory tree'!

Time Goes By Quickly!

By **Megan Moyes**, ASSE Exchange Student (Ferndale, Washington, USA) enjoying her exchange experience in **Cofton Hackett, Worcestershire, England**

My time so far over here has been wonderful and I have loved every minute of it. School is very different for me compared to school back in the United States. Even though classes are harder here, I like it better.

Everyone has been so nice and friendly, I have made many new friends and I can't wait to keep these friendships for a life time. Time really does go by quickly!

My host family life is wonderful and they were very welcoming and helpful. My host family has 4 younger children so the house can be quite noisy at times.

My host mom is a good cook and she has made lots of different meals for us, which have been good. I really like how they still do a traditional Sunday meal every week.

I have loved learning all the differences between the two cultures. I realize by a blank stare that the word was not understood. For example, on my first day, I was offered crisps, I said yes not really sure what I was saying yes to. It ended up being potato chips. Another example is when my family said we are having pizza and chips for dinner and I thought that was a weird

combination, but chips over here mean fries.

One of the first things I think of when I think of England is the old red telephone boxes. Since there was one near our house after we got off the bus one day, we took this picture because it most captures England for me.

~ **Megan**

ASSE Exchange Student **Megan Moyes** (Ferndale, Washington, USA)



Maria Ledesma Rios, ASSE Exchange Student (Mexico) enjoying a moment with her host brother. Maria is the recipient of the 100% scholarship to experience an academic year in the USA.

So Happy!

By **Maria Ledesma Rios**, ASSE Exchange Student (Mexico) living with the **Smith family in Griswold, Connecticut, USA**

Since I arrived to the United States I have learned a lot of things with the new people that I have met. My family is so funny and we share many things in common. Many people have asked me how am I feeling in Griswold, Connecticut? Really I'm so happy, it is awesome! The people here is very nice, everything is different, the city, my new school, my friends, my family... but I like everything.

I miss so much the Mexican food, but also the American food is so delicious (mom and dad cook

so good). Something new is that the Mexican food in USA is not really our food. It is like a combination of Mexican and American food. It is crazy but pretty good! On Mexico Independence's Day we cooked tacos and made tortillas!

I've gone to different places here, to the beach, to the mall, football games, and also spent time with some friends in Griswold. I'm happy, enjoying this experience!

~ **Maria**