ASSE Exchange students Ines Constante (Spain) and Marie Amelie Brevet (France) are spending their exchange year in Nashville, Arkansas USA with the Morris Family. They have jumped right into their American experience by joining the Howard County 4H Show Stoppers Club. According to host mom, Louise, both girls are really amazing even though they had never been on a farm or cared for animals.

Ines said, "I came to America to learn English and change my routine. Here I'm learning to feed goats and cows...When my host family talked to me about showing the goats at the Howard County Fair, I was so excited because I thought that it was so cool. My first time to catch the goats was so funny because I couldn't catch my goat by myself. My host mom taught me how to show my goat at the fair and I practiced every day. I had to wash and blow dry my goat's hair up so she would be pretty for the fair." Ines continues, "We loaded the goats in a trailer and took them to the fair. We put them in their pen and decorated the pen with a sign that was really neat. I had my name and the Howard County 4-H club, Show Stoppers which is the club I represented. A few days later, I showed my goat in front of the judge. I won three ribbons and a belt buckle. My host family was so excited for me. I was so happy, everybody was congratulating me. It was new for me!"

Marie Amelie was not able to show her goat at the County Fair but both Marie Amelie and Ines showed their goats at the District Fair. Ines won 2 first place ribbons and Reserve Grand Champion. Marie Amelie won a first place ribbon and Grand Champion. ASSE host mom Louise said that both girls have embraced other opportunities in their host community including playing basketball.

"I love Arkansas and Nashville! It's full of new things and I'm really lucky with my great host family!" exclaims Ines Constante, ASSE Exchange Student (Spain).

**Goats and County Fairs – American Experience!**

ASSE is happy to announce that the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET) has recognized ASSE and World Heritage with an award for 30 years of support and cooperation. Bodil Dencker was honored to accept this award from CSIET Executive Director Chris Page at the recent CSIET conference.

It is through the dedication and hard work of all in the ASSE/WH family that this was made possible. Thank you!!

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ASSE News / WH Recognized

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.

Editor’s Box

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Until next edition,

Mary Loving ASSE News Editor

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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!

What an Experience!

ASSE Area Representative Leigh Walker combined a summer visit of her 2011-12 ASSE host daughter Lea Blanchard (France) with her ASSE outbound orientation meeting for Sydney Gaddy, ASSE Exchange Student anticipating her exchange year in France. As Lea assisted in welcoming Sydney into the ASSE family, Leigh helped to make sure Sydney was prepared for her new journey of spending a year in France!

Now that Sydney is several months into her French experience, she says, “It has gotten nothing but better each and every day. The friends I am making and the experience all in one is absolutely amazing!”

"The biggest struggle is the language and how it may be just jibberish at times. I find myself speaking more than I ever thought possible in such a small amount of time! I came into the program thinking I knew what I was in for. But now that I’m here and living the days I was once so excited for, I am truly impressed with this whole experience!”

“Transitioning from familiar to unfamiliar really opens your eyes, I have been inspired to not only travel to more places, but to learn more languages, and cultures because it is so amazing to learn the history of something as little as a painting or sculpture, to as big as an entire country!”

“So far so good, and it only gets better!! What an experience!”

ASSE Exchange Student Randee Wigren (Coon Rapids, Minnesota USA) spending her exchange year in Mexico is on the right and enjoys a moment with a classroom

Describing her exchange experience, Randee says, “Mexico is a much different Ranches from the United States. I believe the largest difference is the people, they are so much more loving and kind here, than in the U.S. My school is so much smaller here, but I’ve found out I prefer it like that because the kids are more like a family. I have already traveled to Puerto Vallarta with my family and we’re soon going to Playa Del Carmen. I am so excited to experience so many more different things! Of course I love everything I have experienced already!”
First Impressions
By Charlotte Severns, ASSE Exchange Student (Spokane Valley, Washington USA)

My very first impression that gave me a positive outlook on Sweden was seeing the isles of candy in the store and seeing the beach so close to my home. When going on a student exchange, I've learned that first impressions mean everything. I have had a life, friends and family for the past 16 years that I was quite used to. Of course things change, but those changes seem quite insignificant compared to moving thousands of miles away to a new country that speaks a new language. As one can imagine, there is nothing normal or comforting about leaving everything you know for something new and different.

My first day, I went with my host dad and host siblings to a local store called ICA. There, I saw the biggest aisle of candy I had ever seen! And it was just in a normal store. I could grab a bag and choose any type of candy I wanted to mix together and try it out. It made me so excited.

The second day here I went on a walk with my host family and I realized how close I live to the ocean. It was so beautiful, and only a 5 minute walk away. I knew that if I was ever homesick or sad I could just jog to the beach and take some time to myself on the magnificent Southern Swedish coast. That was a first impression done right.

I have learned that everyone can be a leader, but it takes hard work to be a successful leader," remarked Imane.

To continue the experience, Imane rode with the Mayor in a police car for the National Night Out, attended a City Council meeting later in the week.

American CBYX Students in Washington D.C.

ASSE American CBYX (Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange) scholarship Exchange Students gathered in Washington D.C. August 4-6, 2014 prior to departing to Germany. During the preparation meetings, students visited the offices of Senators / Representatives from their home state and district; visited and learned about the U.S. Capitol/ 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.

ASSE Affiliated Program Earns Recognition in Ocean City, Maryland USA

The Honorable Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Robin Lerner, who oversees the Department of State’s J-1 visa Exchange Visitor Program, visited Summer Work Travel Program (SWT) participants in Ocean City, Maryland USA, this past summer as part of her “Route J-1 Tour”. She attended cultural activities coordinated by the Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce’s Seasonal Workforce Committee. ASSE’s own Eastern Regional Director for the ASPIRE Worldwide Summer Work Travel Program, Carrie Linch, chairs the committee.

The Summer Work Travel Program has been an integral part of Ocean City’s summer season for decades. Nearly 5,000 participants come from 50 countries around the world to spend their summer break from university living in Ocean City, working, and learning about American culture. ASSE ASPIRE Worldwide has been a part of the Ocean City summer community for over 15 years.

Ms. Linch commented, “Ocean City has recognized the exchange program’s tremendous benefits to our community, and beyond for many years. The program’s significance to our seasonal workforce is unquestionable. But equally important is the impact on the lives of the residents and visitors who have had the opportunity to meet the participants and learn about their lives and cultures while also sharing our own culture with them.”

As a community, Ocean City has truly embraced the J-1 Summer Work Travel Program, and has worked diligently for a number of years to improve the quality of the program in their town. They could not have been more pleased that Ms. Lerner had the opportunity to see this first-hand by meeting Mayor Mustian and hearing the amazing stories from the participants and people in the community.

Ms. Linch said, “We deeply appreciate Ms. Lerner’s recognition of the community’s efforts and positive impact we have made on the program. To be held as an example for the rest of the country by the Department of State, of what a community can achieve with regards to the program, is a great honor for Ocean City.”
ASSE Exchange Student Ahmad Abdulfattah, 2005-06 (YES* Kuwait) reflects, “I’m lucky to have been an ASSE Exchange Student.”

After his ASSE exchange year in Washington State USA, Ahmad joined the YES* Alumni group in his home country. Through the Alumni groups, exchange students have an opportunity to put into practice the leadership skills learned as well as a way to pass on the care and compassion that was shared during their exchange year. As a member of the YES* Alumni group, Ahmad participated in many activities including volunteer work, leadership seminars and promotion of the YES program. They held parties for young cancer patients and recently distributed meals to sanitation workers during Ramadan. Ahmad graduated from his home country high school with honors and is currently studying computer science on a full scholarship at Kuwait University.

He says, “My exchange year had so many memorable moments. I can only say that I still marvel at my host family’s generosity and kindness. My advice to students who have just arrived is to open their hearts and their minds to be able to receive the love of their hosts and the vast amount of knowledge through the year.”

Ahmad was recently chosen to attend a YES Alumni Workshop. He says, “I look forward to acquiring the tools of social change and leadership so I can be as effective in my community as my beloved hosts.”

“Yes – Kennedy Logan Youth Exchange and Study, U.S. State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs sponsored Exchange Student”

Continuing the connection! ASSE Area Representative Gail Smith describes 2012-13 ASSE Exchange Student Ani Avetisyan (FLEX* Armenia), who spent her exchange year in Frankenthal, Michigan USA as petite, lively and intelligent with a great sense of humor.

Ani along with other FLEX Alumni organized a FLEX1-shirt flash mob to bring all the FLEXers in their University together. Ani says, “It gave us opportunity to tell our fellow classmates about FLEX and share our experiences. And most importantly, it made us feel united and part of a huge family.”

In reflecting on her experience in America, she says, “The single most important thing that benefited me from the FLEX program was international understanding. FLEX changed my world view, the way I understand people and their culture.”

When asked about a special memory, Ani reflected, “My first American Christmas was one of the most precious memories of my exchange year. It was very special, warm and fuzzy, filled with family time, fun and games. It made me feel at home, especially when we decorated the Christmas tree and the cookies, made rock candy and went shopping for gifts. I could feel the magic in the air even if I was no longer a little kid.”

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

Opportunities and challenges add ‘spice’ to ASSE Exchange Student Sebastian Bay Granzow’s America experience!

On the way home from shopping, Sebastian and his friends stopped by the American restaurant Buffalo Wild Wings. Sebastian comments, “I kind of always loved spicy food so the other guys suggested that I try the Blazing Challenge. I was up for it right away.”

Sebastian continues, “The challenge is to eat 12 wings, covered in spicy sauce in 6 minutes. AND they are hot! The first bite I took, I could just feel the heat in my lips. Burned. I fought through the first 9 wings in 3 minutes while I was being videotaped by my friends. The last 3 wings were the worst because I just wanted to stop. I had lost momentum. But I got it done! And then I ordered my friends to start opening up the wet napkin packets. I think I ended up using 30 napkins.”

“It was so fun and one of the best days with good friends! Hot wings and ICECREAM after.”

Sebastian has started an American t-shirt collection. After winning the challenge he was presented with a t-shirt marking the event. Sebastian says, “I am proud to have that t-shirt and it is a day I will remember!”

“ASSE Exchange Student Sebastian Bay Granzow (Network) affectionately called ‘The Great Dane’ proudly shows his t-shirt reward”

Lasting Connections

Mark & Elizabeth Milby remark, “She got it! What joy it brought to our hearts! She is awesome and she followed our model in how we always reached out to our placements through relationship building activities via tours, trips, and gatherings. Pass the lighted torch to someone else and make the world a brighter place.”

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

And the ASSE influence continues!

ASSE Area Representatives Mark & Elizabeth Milby enthusiastically shared a message from their 2010-11 host daughter, ASSE Exchange Student, Yelena Surchina (FLEX* Russia).

Yelena tells her host family, “Did you know that I decided to follow your footsteps and be a coordinator for some of exchange students in my university? Now I fully understand you! I think it’s so amazing that I can learn a little bit more about the world and help the students to adjust to my culture. It is terribly interesting to show them some cool sights of our city! Now I don’t understand how people live without it - it should be really boring!”

“It was so fun and one of the best days with good friends! Hot wings and ICECREAM after.”

Marching Band is Cool!

ASSE Exchange Student, Cassandra “Cassy” Lampert (CBYX* Germany) stepped right into an ultra American high school marching band when she joined her school’s marching band. Her high school, located in Clayton, Ohio USA, has an award winning marching band that competes at both the local and national level.

Cassy, who plays the trumpet, was three weeks behind her bandmates when she arrived in the U.S., but the band welcomed her with open arms, providing one-on-one guidance to help her understand the terminology and the proper marching techniques.

Besides marching band, Cassy also takes a classroom band class during the school day. She says this is her favorite period of the day.

By the time the season ends in mid-November, Cassy will have performed in 10 football pre-game, halftime and post-game shows and performed competitively in at least eight shows throughout southwest Ohio and in Indianapolis, Indiana. Additionally, the band performs in several community events such as the Strike Up the Band for Hunger where the audience gains entrance by donating canned goods for the needy.

About her experience in marching band, Cassy says, “Marching band is cool!”

The Great Dane

机遇与挑战

亚塞交换生安德鲁·本特（YES*科威特）反思说：“我很幸运能成为亚塞交换生。”

他在美国的亚塞交流年的经历后，加入了亚塞校友组织。通过亚塞校友组织，交换生有机会将所学的领导能力付诸实践，并成为一个能够将关爱与同情传递给他人的人。作为亚塞校友的一员，安德鲁参加了许多活动，包括志愿者工作、领导力研讨会和YES项目的推广。

他所说：“我的交流年充满了难忘的时刻。我唯一能说的就是我对寄宿家庭的慷慨和善良感到惊讶。我要给将从YES项目中受益的建议是，要打开自己的心和思想，以便能够接收到寄宿家庭的爱和传递给他们大量的知识。”

当被问及一个特别的记忆时，安德鲁回忆说：“我的第一个美国圣诞节是我最珍贵的回忆之一。它非常特别，温暖而温馨，充满了家人的陪伴，充满了游戏和乐趣。这让我感到在家，尤其是当我们装饰圣诞树和饼干，制作岩糖和去购物时，我感受到了魔法的气氛，即使我已不再是小孩子了。”

“YES – 卡内基梅隆青年交流与研究，美国国务院教育与文化事务局资助的交换生项目”