Best Decision Ever
By Melodee Ewing of Lima, Montana USA spending her ASSE Exchange year in China.

My name is Melodee from Montana and I have been in China for 5 months! I can’t believe I’m already half way done with my exchange! Time flies by in the blink of an eye so spend your time wisely and enjoy!

I have fun everyday with my classmates and even teachers. So much is going to change for 2nd semester. I also have a new host family that seem like wonderful people!

When I first arrived in China, I barely knew anything in Chinese. Now, after 3 months of being surrounded by it everyday, my Chinese has definitely improved! Although I’m still lacking, I study hard and the people help and encourage me which means a lot!

Choosing to study abroad was the best decision I have ever made. It will seriously change your life for the better and you’ll meet many people. Plus, like me, you can make everlasting friendships with people from all across the globe! Now, it is winter break and I am spending the first part of it with ASSE, as they are taking us to Shanghai and other cities to tour. I can’t wait for Chinese New Years and my birthday which is coming very soon!

~ Melodee Ewing

Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship
Keeping the Legacy Alive

In memory of Jodi Kiefer, dedicated advocate for the ASSE and World Heritage International Student Exchange Programs for over 25 years, the Kiefer Family offers a North American high school student with financial needs the opportunity to realize a dream of study abroad through the Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship.

The Jodi Kiefer Memorial Scholarship covers 100% of the 2016-17 program fee, comprehensive insurance and monthly pocket money, one optional field trip in the host country and roundtrip airfare for one highly motivated and deserving student.

Jodi began her exchange student experiences as a host sister to a student from Sweden and then as an exchange student herself to Germany. Having benefited from high school international exchange firsthand, after college she began a lifelong career with ASSE International Student Exchange. Jodi believed that one individual can make a huge impact and thousands of American families and teenagers from many countries realized the value of cultural exchange through Jodi’s dedication.

Scholarship applicants must be between 15 and 18.5 years old at departure and have a minimum of a 3.4 GPA. Scholarship applicants are required to be between 15 and 18.5 years old at departure and have a minimum of a 3.4 GPA. Scholarship applicants must be between 15 and 18.5 years old at departure and have a minimum of a 3.4 GPA. Scholarship applicants must be between 15 and 18.5 years old at departure and have a minimum of a 3.4 GPA. Scholarship applicants must be between 15 and 18.5 years old at departure and have a minimum of a 3.4 GPA.

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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:
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Tel: 303-227-7634 Fax: 303-252-0629 E-mail: mloving@asse.com

Until next edition,
Mary Loving ASSE News Editor

ASSE News is produced three times a year. It is provided free of charge to ASSE participants, host families, representatives and other friends of ASSE. Any copyright material is published with written permission of the published and is so indicated. Any other material may be used for publication without permission of ASSE.
The year I spent in Kelso, Washington, USA was one of the most important years of my life with many experiences and learning for life. When I arrived at the Portland airport and met my host family, I knew it would be a very good year. They were always laughing, easy-going, ready to help and made everything to be more comfortable.

At school I had the opportunity to play tennis, my favorite sport and now I know that Americans take sports so seriously. The school learning method was very different from Brazil, and it made me a new person without doubt. From percussion class to the practical lessons in physics and chemistry, the exchange of experience was valuable for learning and makes one grow as a human being.

I thank the whole team of ASSE who organized get-togethers and gave all necessary support. I could write a book of all my experiences and there are stories and moments that I will keep forever in my memory.

I recommend the experience as an exchange student to everyone, and if possible I will encourage my children to live it. Thank you Connie, Kevin, Greg, Sarah, Veryl, everybody who were involved and made my year more special than I expected.

--- Andre Manzotti

[Editor’s note: ASSE Western Regional Director Veryl Anderson was Andre’s ASSE Area Representative during Andre’s ASSE Exchange Year. The lasting legacy of a dedicated ASSE Area Representative is priceless in the life of a young teen!]

Constance and Kevin Mulcahy

ASSE Host Parents Year 2000

When our second child went to college we opened our house to an exchange student, Andre Manzotti from Brazil. Little did we realize how our lives would be impacted for the good and our experience, on a worldly plane, would be vastly grown.

Having Andre in our home was an experience that we still continue to enjoy today. He took his studies seriously yet we encouraged him to include lots of fun in his time here.

We have had the opportunity to meet his family several times since hosting and most recently met up with them in Tampa, Florida. We are so proud and happy for the man Andre has become and the successes he has gone on to experience in his profession and life.

Working with ASSE made the whole experience for our family very easy, safe and welcoming. We have gained a family of friends on the worldwide scene and we look forward to the day of visiting his home country of Brazil. We suggest hosting a student through ASSE as they are knowledgeable, experienced, supportive and very creative in their offerings and help.

Thank you for this great opportunity that has brought a loving family into our homes and hearts for life.

--- Constance and Kevin Mulcahy

--- Terry Forrester

ASSE Host Mom

What a great time it’s been having our ASSE exchange student, Emilie Strenzke from Germany with our family. Since arriving in August, we’ve had many fun moments together. We travelled to Sequoia National Park and had tons of fun in the snow. In October Emilie dressed up as the grim reaper on Halloween night. It’s certainly enriched our lives learning about Emilie’s culture and Skyping with her family.

--- Emilie Strenzke

ASSE Exchange Student (Germany)

I came from a small city in Germany so coming to Southern California has been a big adjustment. One of the first things I did with my host family was attending a University of Southern California football game where about 100,000 people were in attendance. This was exciting to see so many people. We have travelled to the beach, high school football games, the Redwoods, the Long Beach Aquarium and to the Wild Animal Park in San Diego. One of the most unique experiences was dressing up for Halloween and celebrating with all the kids that came to the house for candy.

Attending high school has been so different from what I was used to in Germany. The school is very big and has many students. I am currently involved in helping to be a manager for the girls’ basketball team. Also, I’ve gotten involved in attending pottery lessons at a master teacher’s home.

My host family has been great and we go somewhere every weekend. There is never a dull moment. My English continues to improve and I know many American friends.

Thank you ASSE for my placement with the Forrester’s in California.

--- Emilie Strenzke

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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!

*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

ASSE Area Representative, Audra Locke and her ASSE Exchange Students visited the Institute of Texan Culture.

Audra says, “It’s a great museum in San Antonio that focuses on the people of Texas (indigenous and immigrants). The kids had a blast!”

Student spelling out Texas from left to right:
Serhiy Kikunenko (* FLEX Ukraine), Alla Maria Castigl (Italy), Valentina Sul (Italy), Alberte Zeanis Martin (Oapan), Benoite Deve (France) and Natsumi Ikada (Japan)

Makhabat Omorova ASSE Exchange Student (*FLEX Kyrgyzstan) expresses the delight she felt when she visited the Atlantic Ocean for the first time.

“It was the first time that I saw the ocean. Unforgettable emotions that I felt when I saw the big waves, and beautiful huge ocean. For me it seemed like ocean does not have the end. I am really thankful for my amazing host parents/ASSE and the FLEX program!” Makhabat says she is learning many leadership skills that she looks forward to taking home at the end of the year. She also says this year is “great fun”!

ASSE / WH host mom Kendra Hansen of Cushing, Wisconsin, USA says, “My dad, Mel Elliott (or as Valentin would call him ‘Grampa’) taught Valentin to fish!” The family live on the lake and the photo was taken before the snow covered the ice. Kendra continues, "Over the Christmas break, we caught 46 fish on day 1, 1-1/2 hours of fishing, 43 on day 2, 2 hours of fishing, and 26 on day 3, 50 min of fishing. We caught mostly perch, as Valentin is showing but also some blue gills, crappie and sunnies!”

According to ASSE/WH Area Representative Tanya Tretsven, Valentin is "an outstanding guy and so well liked in his community. He’s fun to be with and has great manners as well as excellent grades in school!”

ASSE / WH students enjoy a Mile Hi view on a visit to the Colorado State Capitol in Denver, Colorado USA.

Left to right: Maria Garcia Outeada (Spain), Ida Eskildsen (Denmark), Anna Maria Castigl (Italy), Valentina Sul (Italy), Alberte Zeanis Martin (Oapan), Benoite Deve (France) and Natsumi Ikada (Japan)
By Vicky Muth, ASSE Exchange Student (Germany) and Tracey Hudson, ASSE Host Mom

**Sharing Sweet Traditions**

Every year the Scheu girls (all ages from 72 to 3 months) get together and exchange cookies to help reduce the cookie baking burden. This year, we also started a cookie making weekend tradition with the Hudson girls. We had four generations of girls starting with my mom, Patti Scheu, myself, my two girls Ashley & Joskie, my German ASSE Exchange Student daughter Vicky Muth & my granddaughter Charlie. The following weekend we meet up with the ladies from the Scheu Family for our cookie exchange. Everyone brought an appetite to share and cookies to trade. We were missing about 15 of the ladies this year due to illnesses or other commitments with the children—but for those who did, it was a day full of sweet treats, good conversation and lots of love.

Vicky shared another family favorite, Hussenrollekipfel with raspberry jam filling that we took to Christmas dinner. Our family has some new cookies to add to our tradition and hope Vicky takes some new ones back to her family as well. Our family loves to gather together to celebrate big and small things in life. Food is our way of expressing love and binding family ties from the past and future. Experimenting in the kitchen is one of my personal passions. We have spent a lot of time cooking and sharing traditional foods as well as just foods we love. I am sending an 85 page photo album/cookbook home with Vicky to have as a keepsake full of pictures from her time here and recipes that we made or shared at different family functions.

--- Tracey Hudson

Vicky Muth
ASSE Exchange Student (Germany)

I have had an awesome experience here in America with lots of football, great people, very good food and fun times with friends and family. Since my host family here volunteers a lot, I got to experience a lot of fun stuff, like helping out in the kitchen, working in concessions, and helping to clean in Germany during their Christmas play.

One of my favorite things was to cheer and watch football games. We even got to go to 3 Vanderbilt University games since my “host” cousin plays there. I also loved the big family get-togethers on Thanksgiving or Christmas.

--- Vicky Muth

**Enjoying Canadian Winter in Québec**

During my year in Québec I took the chance to try a new sport for me, Cross-Country Skiing. I started training in a group in Sherbrooke close to my new home. In fall training started on roller skis so I had already a bit of practice before starting on the snow. I got the chance to participate in a competition of our club. We had great weather even though it was quite a bit cold. But that’s the Canadian winter.

--- Tanja Scholler

ASSE Exchange Student (Germany)

I am very lucky to live in the Claussen Family. My host mother Elizabeth and host sisters Nadia and Ashley are all very motivated and my host mum is very supportive when it comes to school work. My host family also take me to so many places like the Halloween festival, Mt. Rushmore and to see Vanderbilt University games since my “host” cousin plays there. I also loved the big family get-togethers on Thanksgiving or Christmas.

--- Tammy White

ASSE Host Mom Tammy White and Tania J. Juan, ASSE Exchange Student (Mexico)

This is our first time hosting—something we always wanted to do and decided to “take a chance.” It was a GREAT chance! We just love Tania. My husband and my older son, Michael, went to San Diego in November to see a Bears game and it just so happened that Tania’s parents were in San Diego at the same time for business. They had never met so they arranged to meet and have dinner. My husband said it was a great time…like he had known them forever. Tania was so excited and proud to know that her parents were actually meeting her family here in America.

We are truly enjoying our time with Tania. She is such a blessing to our family this year!!

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