Every Day A New Adventure!

By Michaela, ASSE Exchange Student (Silverlake, Washington, USA)

Living in Spain has been some of the best times in my life. My hometown, Jaraiz de la Vera is a small town, but bigger than my hometown. Here the town is more put together, I love being able to walk around town and explore. It is a very beautiful place and I’ll be sad when my time here is up. I’ve been able to make so many new friends. My host family is very nice and I’m grateful for them. They’ve helped me improve my Spanish and have shown me so many new things about the culture. My family now isn’t only people I’m related to by blood, but includes those who have made a difference in my life and who have found a place in my heart.

Not only has my host family helped me learn and become a better person, they’ve helped me realize how much I’ve taken for granted at home in Washington. For example, I’ve never stopped to see how much my own parents have done for me, and I never really noticed how much I love them.

We want to host all of his brothers and stay close to his mother and father. We instantly felt close to his mother and father and brothers as if we had known each other.

We fell in love with Mohammad and the experience exceeded our expectations. We fell in love with Mohammad and the experience exceeded our expectations.

We felt in love with Mohammad and the experience exceeded our expectations. He was respectful, smart, kind, fun, positive, enthusiastic and a good example for others. Nearly every day he said “This was the best day of my life”. Throughout the year we felt like Mohammad was our own son. After he was back home for one year we couldn’t stand to be away from him any longer. My family of 6 went to Jordan to reunite with him and meet his family. It was the kind of experience that warms your heart and you’ll cherish for life.

His family felt like our own. Despite all the differences in religion, language, and culture we felt so comfortable, so loved, and so appreciated. They embraced us and celebrated our visit with big parties, surrounding us with love from their friends and extended family, teaching us more about their culture and religion.

We instantly felt close to his mother and father and brothers as if we had known each other. As a result of this experience, my family and everyone I know that met Mohammad has a deeper understanding and a love for the country of Jordan, the Muslim religion and the Arabic culture. We were able to witness firsthand what a true difference this program makes in the lives of people on both sides of the exchange.

The YES program really does bring countries together one student at a time. We feel fortunate to have had this unforgettable, life changing experience.

~ Michaela

Unforgettable, Life-Changing Experience

By Margot Hoffman, ASSE Area Coordinator and host mom (Mead, Colorado, USA)

Our family wanted to host a YES scholarship student from an Arabic country with a Muslim background because we knew the least about that culture and religion. It was out of our comfort zone and we wanted to grow and learn new things.

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We instantly felt close to his mother and father and brothers as if we had always been one big family. We want to host all of his brothers and stay close to their family for life.

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~ Margot

~ Margot, ASSE Host mom

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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Untill next edition,
Mary Loving ASSE News Editor

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Inside This Issue

• Every Day A New Adventure!
• Unforgettable, Life-Changing Experience
• Visit to the Air and Space Museum
• The World of Scouting
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• Gaining a New Family and Friends
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• Canadian Sleigh Ride!
• Photos and More!
I've visited this museum street smarts. They have figured out I was sheltered town girl with no experience with a stove and I lack I'm sure they have figured out that I am a small- one roller coaster to the next they have helped me stamps, to sleep with a comforter and to cook. From door, wear a coat, cut a steak, that Spain has its own words and phrases is the most frustrating, stressful, cause. Being in another country trying to learn new Nor did I realize the frustration and tears it would Spain studying irregular present indicative verbs. taught me a lot, especially the skills that are necessary for independent life, such as leadership. I am really happy I have the American Girl Scout troop, we volunteer and participate in activities such as camping or trips. I visited Corn Maze in Louisiana; we had a boat race in the swimming pool and had a great Christmas party. I am looking forward to February 22nd, Thinking Day. It is the day when scouts all over the world show unity through learning about scouting organizations in different countries. On this day I will be organizing presentations and activities about Scouting in Poland for the troops in my area. I am really happy I have the opportunity to try scouting here, I am sure it is beneficial for both of my troops and communities. ASSE Exchange Student Tatum (FLEX Poland).
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 Host mom Jan is very proud of her student Emmansuelle’s (France) talent, “We love having her here. She is a very outgoing teenager. She was involved in soccer and now she is cheerleading for the girls’ and boys’ basketball team. She has made supper for us and it is a different change to what we are used to eating. She fits in with us and taking her places is a joy because she reminds me of our kids at that age were always on the go. I can say it’s never a dull moment. It’s fun when we are sitting downstairs and we hear her singing upstairs. It has been a pleasure to hear about her country and for us to show her around our country.”

ASSE Exchange Students Elias (FLEX Moldova) and Bogdan (FLEX Montenegro) toured the Washington State Capitol with their ASSE Area Representative Penelope and visited with State Representative Edmund Occett.

Bogdan was very excited to meet with a government official, “I am sending you a thought that I was even more assured in after speaking with Representative Occett. ”The strength of any government is determined by the willingness of its political parties to work together”.

ASSE Exchange Students Eliza (FLEX Moldova) and Akziynat (FLEX Kyrgyzstan), Altynai (FLEX Kyrgyzstan) visited with State Representative Edmund Occett.

“It is a fascinating place to visit and the students were all excited to be able to attend, ” remarked ASSE Area Representative Luciana Swenson, Julie (France), Coco (Taiwan), World Heritage Area Representative Katie Powell, Chip Troiano (Vermont State Representative) Back Row, Left to Right: Artur (FLEX Ukraine), Miguel (Spain), Tania (Italy), Angela (Germany), Marcela (FLEX Moldova), Adriana (FLEX Romania)

World Heritage Area Representative Luciana expressed, “Weather cooperated this year and all were able to make it! We watched most of the House session, got a tour of the historic State House, and had lunch at the House’s cafeteria. Representative Chip Troiano introduced all students to the House Representatives by name, country and schools they are attending. He also spent time explaining the work done at the State House and answering the student’s questions. It was very informative for all! As we ate together, we were able to catch up on each other’s activities, and even had a cake to celebrate Coco’s (Taiwan) 16th birthday!”

ASSE Exchange Students Anna (Germany), Marin (France), Pojsja (YES India), Catarina (Portugal), Akziynat (FLEX Kyrgyzstan), Altynai (FLEX Kyrgyzstan) and Karolina (FLEX Poland) gathered to visit the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum in Simi Valley, California, USA.

They toured the museum as well as the Titanic Exhibition.

“ASSE Area Coordinator Barbara Walton.”

ASSE Exchange Students Mariya D (FLEX Ukraine), Pronpita “Ty” (Thailand), Mariya R (FLEX Ukraine) and Irfan (FLEX Serbia)

ASSE Area Representative Angie Lehmann arranged for her students to visit a glass art demonstration in Nevis, Minnesota, USA. After the demonstration the students chose what they wanted to make using glass. For example, they could make a picture frame, candy dish, ornament, etc.

Angie said, “We spent a few hours socializing with each other. We learned about each other’s creativity for the day, for example what they envisioned for a final project. Mariya made a candy dish, incorporating wire into the glass. I think she was going for a profile of a person infused in the glass.”

*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 Exchange Students joined ASSE Area Representative Gordon Wayman to visit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Illinois, USA. Luca (Germany), Victor (Denmark), Yohan (FLEX Ukraine), Roksolyana (FLEX Ukraine) and Ting Hsuan (Taiwan) posing in front of a figure of young Abraham Lincoln.

ASSE Exchange Student Tereza (Czech Republic) enjoys riding her host family’s horses in Norco, Southern California, USA. She also is involved in track and basketball at her school.

ASSE Photo Gallery

ASSE Area Representative Heather Bartlett and Clara (CBYX Germany), Ghalia (YES Jordan), ASSE Exchange Students Michael and ASSE Area Coordinator Teresa Weyer, Norco, Southern California, USA.

Aigerim (FLEX Kyrgyzstan) and Tereza (Czech Republic) enjoys Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA.

And basketball at her school. She also is involved in track

It’s fun when we are sitting downstairs and we hear her singing upstairs. It has been a pleasure to hear about her country and for us to show her around our country.”

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First, I want to say that my life completely changed during my time in U.S. The main thing I am so grateful for is my host family, because they support me, they help me every time and it is always fun to spend time with every one of them.

I tried basketball and became part of team, played for my school and heard people cheering my name. Sport is definitely what people need to try in United States. It is such fun. Also, I am singing in the choir and I took part in Christmas concert. I am heading to a music festival in Fargo and will meet many new people from North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota there. During my time here, I decided to start writing a blog about my life and United States.

While I was in United States, I have understood many important things. One should never give up on dreams, work hard for all aims, always be with a positive attitude, be open to new things, ways, people and feelings in your life. Love your life and enjoy it. Appreciate people around you and show how much you love them.

What happened to my hair? I had long hair for a really long time and I wanted some changes in my appearance, so, I asked my host mom. She said that I could cut it and then donate it. I thought that would be perfect. I think we all sometimes want some changes, big or small doesn’t matter, it will bring new feelings and will fill our lives with energy and joy.

ASSEx Exchange Student Leyla (FLEX Azerbaijan) shows off her new look after cutting her long hair and donating it for a good cause. We think she looks great!