

From the response sent by **Evangeline Frey Kraus** (class of 2000). She writes that her study of German provided a very useful skill that remains a big part of her life.

A short update since graduation: I started working for an educational travel and language learning company after graduating from Wellesley and my first project was working with our Berlin office to translate our English website into German, so right away I was able to use my German skills. After two years at this company I received a Fulbright teaching fellowship in Trier, Germany where I continued my German studies at the University of Trier while teaching high school students in a German Gymnasium. After this was completed I wanted to stay in Europe. The company I had worked for in Boston had just opened a larger headquarters in Luzern, Switzerland and I took a job there and I've been here every since. I've had 4 different jobs in this company during the 12 years that I've been here.

In the 12 years that I've been living in Luzern the German language has had a daily role in my life. My husband is German and we speak a mix at home. My son was born in Switzerland and whether I'm speaking with his daycare, his doctor or other parents at the playground, I need German! Although I work for an international company where our office language is English, in my job I speak German daily as I communicate with Swiss colleagues and negotiate with external suppliers on behalf of the office of 300 employees.

I can't say that I'm fluent in Swiss-German, even after all those years living here. Perhaps it was all the good grammar and pronunciation I got at Wellesley that prevents me from speaking this "colorful" version of German. (Ha ha!) However, the Swiss don't mind. With so many ex-pats living here who don't speak German, they are always appreciative to learn that I speak German. I am always getting compliments on my "netten Dialekt" (the American twang in my German which will probably never disappear) :)

I originally started German studies at Wellesley to finally learn German. My father was born in Germany and emigrated to North America in his 20's. Although he spoke little German to me and my siblings, he had a huge family back in Germany who we visited every few years. I finally wanted to learn the language to speak with them.

My son is now learning three languages at the same time: English from me, German from my husband and Swiss-German at daycare.

My time abroad with Wellesley (January session in Vienna and my junior year in Konstanz with Wellesley) were certainly life-changing. It was only then, after living in a German-speaking country did I feel like I fully grasped the language. Little did I know back then that I would end up marrying a friend I met while living in Konstanz and living in German speaking countries for so long!

Viele Grüsse aus Luzern
Evangeline

Evangeline Frey Kraus '00