

Impressions from Abroad

Carla Adams – Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk Sachsen, Summer 2018

In the summer of 2018, I was the third Wellesley student to complete an internship at the Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk Sachsen (ENS) in Dresden, Germany. My first day in the office of the ENS was both a shock and a blur. I was an intern for a team of seven people. Everyone seemed to be working on equally important and diverse projects, all of which concerned developmental policy work in Saxony. There were so many people to meet, so many new things to remember and all of it was in German! It wasn't the German I was used to hearing at Wellesley, but *sächsische Deutsch*, which meant that the accent and some words were only used in this particular region of the country. For this reason, it took me a really long time to understand fully what my colleagues were saying.

During the first two weeks of my internship, it seemed as if the team had a meeting in another city every other day. Three hours roundtrip to Leipzig. Three hours roundtrip to Berlin. Taking the 12 AM train back to Dresden from Freiberg after a seminar. I got to meet so many people doing great and interesting work in their communities, but all of the travel and stimulation was exhausting at first.

Things turned around for me around the beginning of July. I began the project I am most proud of from this summer: a promotional film intended for the donors and supporters of the ENS and its partners. It was a five-minute video that showcased the work of three non-profit organizations in Leipzig connected by the theme of “*weltoffen-solidarisch-dialogisch*” (open-mindedness, solidarity and dialogue). It took almost the entire month of July to edit and included the input of leaders from all three organizations. The video was well-received and when I was finished with that, I translated the ENS webpages from German to English and wrote an article for their magazine, *Fairquer*.

Some highlights of the summer include, having lunch and attending the opera with visiting Wellesley alums, participating in a demonstration in support of Mission Lifeline – a search and rescue organization famous for saving sinking refugee boats in the Mediterranean – and taking a hiking trip with my bosses and their families at the end of my internship.

Looking back, I learned a lot about German and German culture, developmental policy work and a lot about myself through this summer experience. My reading and writing are better than they were at the end of last semester. I left Dresden with a greater appreciation for the outdoors, the *Straßenbahn* and *quark*. I became more aware of the US-centric ways in which I view the world sometimes. Most of all I think, I'm leaving encouraged by how many people there are out there fighting to make the world a better place.

I can't wait to get back to Wellesley and share what I've learned. Thank you to the donors, Career Education, the German Department and everyone else who made this summer possible!