



Photo Essay on Study Abroad Experience

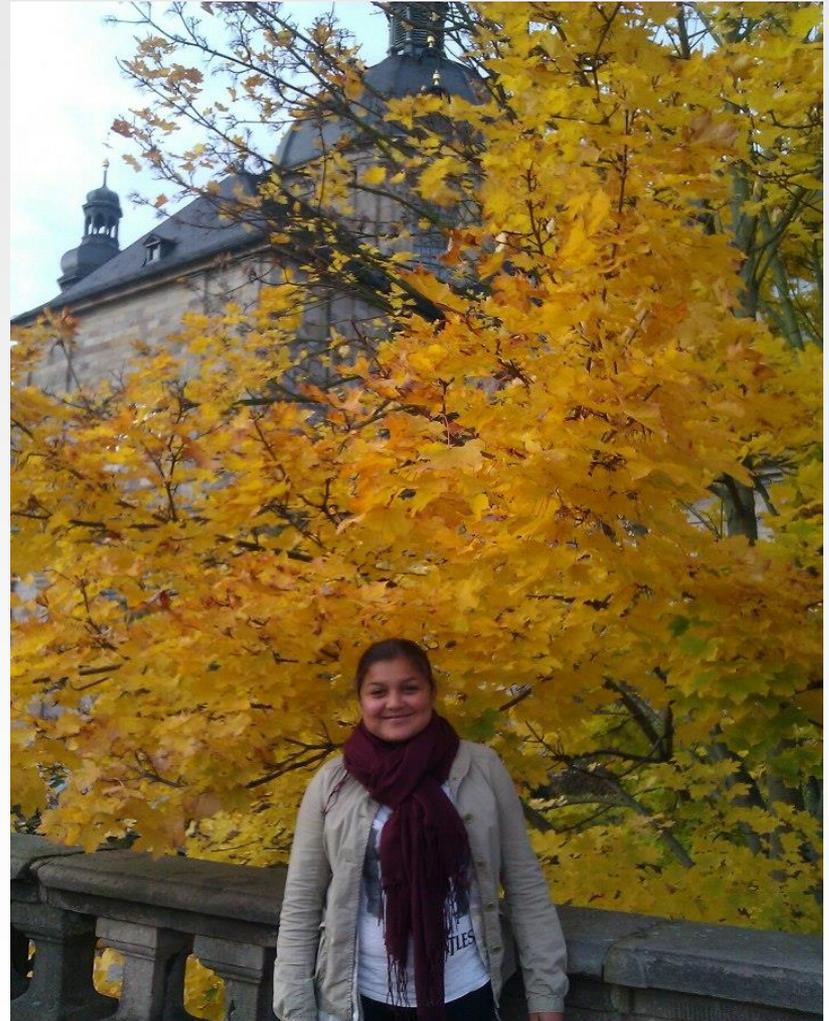
By Cynthia Flores, BASW' 2013
Alumna, Fulda Study Abroad Program



My name is Cinthya Flores and I am a 23 year old Social Work student at San Francisco State University. I am from Redwood City, California. I came to SF State as a transfer student, simply looking to get my degree and get out. I had no interest in studying abroad and didn't even think it was possible for financial reasons. When I found out about Germany and the scholarships available for study abroad students I decided to take a chance and try it out. I spent a semester living in and traveling throughout Europe and today I am so happy about that choice I made.



I lived in a small conservative town right in the middle of Germany called Fulda. Although it was very little and everything was within walking distance, I learned to appreciate the simplicity of its beauty. There was so much natural beauty in Fulda and all throughout Germany. The seasons were bright and colorful like nothing I had ever seen before, which is why I fell in love with Germany.





Studying Social Work in Fulda was a great experience because we really got to be a part of the social services in the community. We were all assigned internships where we volunteered on a weekly basis in organizations ranging from immigrant services to youth work. I worked at the Jugend Kultur Fabrik and learned what “street work” is and how it is used to help empower youth.



One of the best things that came out of my experience from studying abroad is the friendships I made with my classmates who now feel like family. We all became so close through many strange, fun and exciting experiences that we treat each other like brothers and sisters. It seems as if the world got so much smaller now that I have people in my life from all over the place.



It was very easy and affordable to travel throughout Europe, which we all took the opportunity to do any time we could. One of the prettiest cities I saw was Barcelona, Spain because of the tropical plant life and bright blue beach. A friend and I stayed for a weekend before rushing back to Fulda; but I would say it was an amazing trip. Traveling throughout Europe made me realize how capable I am of going wherever I want in the world and I plan to keep exploring.



Our class took a trip to Berlin which turned out to be one of my favorite cities in Germany. The culture filled streets had plenty to offer and at night it was just as exciting. The history of the city was even richer and we were able to experience it completely. We walked through underground barracks made during WWII in case of a bombing and we were taught about what life was like on either side of the Berlin Wall. It was an experience that made history come alive and I definitely plan to visit again.

