



Winter
Volume 2, Issue 2

“Developing individuals, communities and cooperation through global exchange”

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NEWSLETTER WINTER 2004

STORIES OF IMPACT: WHERE WERE YOU?

“Calexico” by, Kara Honeycutt

It was in my sophomore year of high school that I took my first trip to Calexico. As a member of Las Ninas, a community service organization that supported the Los Angeles Orthopedic Hospital, I had the opportunity to volunteer at a clinic located on the border of California and Mexico. Since I had worked with patients before, I felt I was prepared for my trip to the clinic. What I realized when we got there, however, was that these patients were different.

Patients of this clinic would drive for hours or even days desperate for medical care specifically with orthopedic related problems. This clinic, no matter how far it was from their homes, was the only option. Although meeting the patients and interacting with their families was a deeply moving experience, the event that took place which truly affected me had nothing to do with the clinic.

The clinic building was located directly on

the border with its back window presenting a view of the tall border control fence. It was so surprising for me to see that this fence really existed. I had heard of the controversy surrounding the control of immigration from Mexico, but never thought a fence of this magnitude did the job of keeping most people out of our country. During the afternoon I remember something catching my attention causing me to look out one of the back windows of the clinic. What I saw is an image that remains clearly intact my memory today. A man was desperately climbing the border fence when a border control car raced up to the fence. Two border control guards jumped out of the car pointing guns at him and shouting for him to retreat back to his side. As he slowly returned to the Mexican side of the border, I began to feel truly

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MEMBER INTERVIEW INTERNATIONAL STYLE

By Jake Neher, Co-VPF

One of the benefits of being active in Aiesec is having the opportunity to start dialogues with people from around the world. We all know of the many chances to do this through exchange, but there are many opportunities open to members on a more local level as well. At the recent RoKs conference in San Jose, I had just such an opportunity where I met Noorie Baig, from Mumbai-India, and Bastien Medard from France. Through this, I have been able to get to know both of them and had the opportunity to interview Noorie about Aiesec and some of her experiences here in the US.

Jake: How long have you been in Aiesec?

Noorie: Exactly one year :)

Jake: When did you take a leadership role?

Noorie: As soon as I joined Aiesec; it's all about being a leader. If you are talking about being on the EB? Not yet!

Jake: Did you know right away that you wanted to be highly active in Aiesec's mission?

Noorie: Not entirely, I was quite confused at first... but now

of course the answer is yes! Must correct your question... "Highly active in Aiesec's Missions."

Jake: Haha, fair enough. Describe your home chapter.

Noorie: My home chapter, ah I miss it so much, AIESEC in Mumbai-India. It is probably the third/fourth best local chapter (LC) in India. We do a lot of exchange, not sure of figures, but it's about the same number as Aiesec in the Bay Area does!

Jake: What is your impression of the US to date?

Noorie: About Aiesec in US? Aiesec US needs to keep up with Aiesec around the world. The learning/knowledge level is not the same here.

Jake: Are there things you would like to see more of or see changed?

Noorie: Yes definitely! I feel AIESECers here aren't as motivated as we are in India! You guys don't do as much of work as we do in India, but I guess that's the culture here probably.

There you go AIESECers, a look at Aiesec here at home and abroad, through the eyes of one of our international friends. Hopefully in her time here in the US, Noorie will have the chance to see many changes take place in LC's as well as on a national scale.

TALES FROM STUDENT NATIONALS

SPOTLIGHT: BEIJING MORGAN WOOD TELLS THE STORY BEHIND HER TRAINEESHIP

Ni Hao,

It has been almost three weeks since I left SLO and almost two weeks since I left the U.S. Beijing is very different than what I expected it to be. I expected to see millions of bicycles and old people playing Mahjong on the sidewalk. Instead I am dodging cars and buses like I was in some crazy real life game of frogger. And as for the old people, I think they all die when the temperature drops below freezing and the wind makes your teeth hurt.

Ah, but I am painting a bleak picture and it is far from that. This city is teeming with life. But as any good scientist will tell you, things tend to slow down when it gets cold. The real action starts when it warms up in a month or so.

This city is also the biggest I have ever been in. Imagine New York City, grab it by each corner and stretch for about 50 miles in each direction. Then sprinkle about 17 million Chinese over what you have created.

As far as foreigners go, there are not many, about 100,000 to approximate. So imagine yourself in a cage without bars where everyone who stares is getting a free show that they can tell their family about over dinner. I am not exaggerating either. People don't break their stare even if it means running into the back of a bus.

The other day we were walking down the street and a guy on a motorcycle almost died because his attention was not where it should have been. To find your way around this city is a real art form. It includes some innate sense of direction and a whole lot of sheer luck. True, Beijing is built around the Forbidden City in concentric circles called the Ring Roads, but things that exist today may not exist tomorrow.

For example, a row of bars will be open one night and the next day they will be razed by an army of bulldozers to make room for some immaculate apartment complex that will only fill up half way before the next one is built.

That's the way it is. Construction is this hyperactive economy that is generating a lot of money and a lot of jobs. The sad thing is that the construction workers are usually the urban farmers who have moved to Beijing looking for a better life. More often than not they find something much different. But I won't go into that.

The tea here is amazing. I have never been into tea before, but when you see a culture that is so into something, it is kind of contagious. They have tea houses where you can go and mix your own ingredients and make a tea that is unique to your own tastes. I have started out on green tea for now because of its legendary medicinal properties and I have to say that so far it has been working. I haven't gotten sick. Maybe it is a combination of the tea

and washing my hands about a thousand times a day.

I have taken tons of pictures but haven't hooked my computer up to the internet yet. There is internet in the office building where I am working so the other teachers I live with and I have just been using that for now. But I will post them as soon as I can. I have some really sweet ones of Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City as well as some pictures of where I work and where I live.

I have not started teaching yet but we have been training more or less since we got here. But I am starting my first class on Monday so I will let you know how that goes.

I will end this with a Zai Jian (good bye) and a Gan Bei (Bottoms Up). Your Link to 16 hours into the future,
Morgan

CZECH REPUBLIC

EMILY FRYE GIVES US THE DETAILS

I have been working in Zlin, Czech Republic since June 2004. My experience here has been absolutely wonderful, but complete with the downs of the culture shock curve.

I was originally supposed to stay only six months, but four months into my traineeship I decided to extend for a total of nine. I can honestly say that these latter three months have been the best of the entire traineeship. In hindsight, I realized that the first months are just a time to adjust, learn and get over problems. In the later months, you are really able to take hold of your environment; enjoy the culture and make closer relationships.

Living in the Czech Republic has also given me the opportunity to explore other countries which are so close by. I've had the opportunity to visit Austria, Poland, Germany, Slovakia, Hungary, and soon Italy and Slovenia. I've picked up a little bit of culture and language from each of these countries, all giving me a better understanding of this region in the world and how things will be in the future for these post-communist countries.

Furthermore, I've attended about six AIESEC conferences as an AIESEC Zlin trainee. The latest conference was the January National Conference where we elected the new MCP. The system of elections is completely different from how it is done in the US. It was almost eight hours of presentations, questioning of candidates, and debate amongst LC's, more questioning and finally voting. As a trainee, I was able to voice my opinion of the candidate like any other member and participated with AIESEC Zlin in choosing the candidate for whom we would vote.

Speaking directly to future or potential SN's, anywhere you go will give you experiences you can't imagine were possible. Choose your destination country after research and thought, but don't limit your options. There is so much you don't know about the world. Anywhere you go will only excite your curiosity to learn more. This is exactly what I have realized and I wish the same for you.

A LOOK INTO THE CZECH REPUBLIC

By, Emily Frye



(Above) Here I am blowing glass in a glassworks factory in a tiny village in South Moravia, Strani. The glassblowing factory was like taking a trip to the 18th century.



(Above and Right) This is the Burcak party at a vineyard in south Moravia around the time when they produce a special drink called Burcak. It is grape juice that contains about 5-6% of alcohol. The direct translation is a “young” or “new” wine. In mid October, most vineyards produce this drink and there are some small festivals within the wine regions where you walk around to people's cellars and try their version of Burcak. If you like their Burcak, you can buy 1.5 liters for 50 CZK, about \$2.25. I went to a couple of these festivals with a colleague from the university and his friends.

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK “TWO CA COLLEGES END SPAIN EXCHANGE PROGRAM”

By, Kelly Fuson VPPR

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY—After a train bombing killed 191 people in Madrid last March, Spain pulled over thirteen hundred troops from the war in Iraq. This move prompted two colleges in the South Orange country to take actions regarding their exchange program in Spain.

According to Tom Fuentes, a board member trustee of the South Orange Country Community College District, “Spain has abandoned our fighting men and women, withdrawing their support. I see no reason to send students of our colleges to Spain at this moment in history.” The board of trustees claims that their decision to eliminate the program was an issue of “student safety,” and Professor

Carmenmara Hernandez-Bravo, the study-abroad program director, is absolutely appalled and confused about their decision.

The two colleges involved, Irvine Valley College and Saddleback College, have been involved in the Spain Exchange Program for the past fourteen years. Their decision to withdrawal from the program didn't actually take place until March of this year—one year following the bombing in Madrid. Students were allowed to study abroad in Spain in the summer of 2004, but not this year.

The board voted 5-2 on the issue, citing Spain's troop withdrawal from Iraq as one of the main reasons. This suggests politics and liability, not so much “student safety.”

Professor Hernandez-Bravo is taking steps to bring the program back. Sending video tapes of the trustee's meeting to the Spanish Consulate in Los Angeles, the US Ambassador in Spain and the Spanish Ambassador in Washington is her first step. Getting publicity about the event is another way she hopes to attract attention and put pressure on the board to reverse their decision.

INTERNATIONAL JOKES

IRISH WAKE V. IRISH WEDDING (PG)

Q: What's the difference between an Irish wake and an Irish wedding?

A: There's one less drunk.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE (R)

A Japanese guy is at Los Angeles International Airport, waiting for his flight back home to Japan. While he's waiting, he goes to the currency exchange counter to change his remaining dollars.

He counts his money at the counter. "Wait a minute," he says to the clerk, "When I came here I got more dollars for my yen. What's going on here?"

"Fluctuations," says the clerk.

The Japanese man stiffens. "Well! Fluck you Americans, too!"

VERY LOST (PG)

An American and his wife were driving in Canada and got lost. Finally they came into some city. They saw a gentleman on the sidewalk, so the gentleman pulled up to the curb, and the lady let down her window and asked, "Excuse me, sir. Where are we?"

The gentleman on the street replied, "Saskatoon, Saskatchewan."

The lady rolled up the window, turned to her husband and said, "We really are lost. They don't even speak English here!"

MONTREAL (PG)

A patron in a Montreal café turned on a tap in the washroom and got scalded.

"This is an outrage," he complained. "The faucet marked C gave me boiling water."

"But, Monsieur, C stands for chaude – French for hot. You should know that if you live in Montreal."

"Wait a minute." Roared the patron. "The other tap is also marked C."

"Of course," said the manager. "It stands for cold. After all, Montreal is a bilingual city."

THE UN SURVEY (PG)

UN sent out the following survey to everyone in the world: "Please give us your honest opinion as to how to resolve the problem of food shortage in the rest of the world." The survey resulted in a miserable failure because--

The Latin Americans did not know what "please" means.

The Asians did not know what "honest" means.

The Eastern Europeans did not know what "opinion" means.

The Middle Eastern did not know what "resolve" means.

The Western European did not know what "shortage" means.

The Americans did not know what "the rest of the world" means.

ADAM & EVE (PG-13)

A Brit, a Frenchman and a Russian are viewing a painting of Adam and Eve frolicking in the Garden of Eden.

"Look at their reserve, their calm," muses the Brit. "They must be British."

"Nonsense," the Frenchman disagrees. "They're naked, and so beautiful. Clearly, they are French."

"No clothes, no shelter," the Russian points out, "they have only an apple to eat, and they're being told this is paradise. Clearly, they are Russian."

GREEKS VS. ITALIANS (R)

A Greek and Italian were sitting down one day debating who had the superior culture.

The Greek says, "We have the Parthenon."

The Italian says, "We have the Coliseum."

The Greek says, "We had great Mathematicians."

The Italian says, "We had the Roman Empire."

And so on and so on ...and then the Greek says: "We invented sex."

The Italian says, "That is true, but it was the Italians who introduced it to women."

Jokes taken from JokeCenter.com, SpicyJokes.com, and Active-Freebies.com.

Want your voice to be heard? Have something to say? Then write it!!!

This newsletter is dedicated to the right of free speech and will guarantee that all voices are heard. All news is guaranteed to print (space is limited; first sent, first to print). No sugarcoating, no rosy glasses, we give it to you straight. So if you have something you think is newsworthy, feel free to send it to the Editor in Chief, Kelly Fuson, at callmekelly@gmail.com. All privacy will be respected (i.e. you have the right to remain anonymous or change names). This opportunity is not limited to AIESEC members either! Any alumni or faculty advisor is welcome to be heard as well. Please include pictures and sources if you have any available. All submissions are subject to change due to editing and become the property of the editor in chief; who has the right to approve, edit, and format submissions.

NEW YEAR'S IN RUSSIA LEARN HOW THEY COUNTDOWN

By Mike Smith, Alumni

CZECH REPUBLIC—When we arrived in Moscow Efrain said it was the first time he went to a country where it was 90% like the movies. We had traveled for four days straight without having a proper bed to sleep when I witness, for the first time, an organized community of homeless people at the train station. One lady was collecting money, while another was giving orders to the others to get food, collect cardboard, dig through trash, etc.

The third night we were there was New Years Eve, which is the biggest Russian holiday of the year. Usually the Russian family spends the evening together leading up to midnight. They have a large meal, listen to the president speak and exchange gifts. After the family stuff, they meet up with their friends and party until the morning.

We mixed cultures and started our party at ten in the lobby of the hotel with Russian vodka and Champaign. Over 30 of us, delegates plus Russian friends, took the

metro to the Red Square. After going through security we entered the square, fulfilling a dream for many of us. It was unreal, but completely unforgettable. We started dancing and singing even before the New Year. We attracted the attention of photographs and news reporters, making it on BBC and Russian television.

As the clock counted down, everyone was chanting together in upbeat and unison tone, but when the clock struck 12, the place exploded with energy. Fire works were exploding above St. Basil's cathedral, people were kissing and everyone was signing. After the fire works, Putin gave a speech, but everyone was too busy celebrating to pay attention.

After a half an hour we took the metro back to the hotel and at two in the morning we had a fancy dinner. The organizing committee gave speeches to thank us for coming and to wish everyone success in the New Year. After the dinner there was a large dance party in one of the larger halls and everyone partied until the sun came up.

The next day we said our good-byes and left on a bus to Riga, Latvia.

MASTERING THE MASTERCARD ACCOUNT

By, Tamara Savluk, VPCSS

ST. LOUIS, MI—The MasterCard Account Team was organized to address the lack of human resources needed to handle 30 trainees in a city with no Local Committee. Individuals throughout the nation were hand picked to participate in this opportunity. I am lucky enough to be one of them. Being a new member, I had no idea what to expect besides getting to know people from around the world, working with other Aiesecers, and gaining valuable experience that I could bring back to my LC.

In February, I flew to St. Louis, Missouri (home of the Global Services Center for MasterCard) to help with the reception activities for the new trainees. There were eight new trainees arriving from Morocco, Tunisia, Italy, Egypt, Bulgaria, Austria, and Romania. The account team met to hold a retreat, create goals for the account and plan an eventual transition into the LC. Unfortunately, I was extremely sick and did not have much energy to spend time with the trainees. However, my recent trip back is another story.

Returning by myself in March to run cultural integration sessions made me very nervous. I wasn't going to have a car and would have to rely on the trainees. I was worried that the trainees wouldn't remember or like me because I was not very outgoing on my last trip. I was completely wrong. I ended up having a nightmare flight and lost my luggage. The support I got from the trainee who picked me up from the airport was amazing. He even took me to get some clothes to spare me until my luggage was found.

When I got to the apartment, I was welcomed with open

arms and dinner! At this point, I felt so silly about being nervous. It was like I was returning from a long trip to friends who were glad to have me back. The friendships I made and the things I learned that week will stay with me for the rest of my life. We are already planning other trips together and some of them are even coming to California.

Meeting people from around the world all in one place really made Aiesec's mission hit home with me. This is what we are all working towards. I was fascinated not only with meeting people with such diverse cultures that are very different from my own, but with the community they developed within themselves.

The current 33 trainees are a big family. When one person has a problem, it becomes everyone's problem. The care and support they show each other is remarkable. Some

“Some of the trainees are from countries that are at war with each other, but the trainees are still friends.”

of the trainees are from countries that are at war with each other, but the trainees are still friends. These trainees told me that one of the reasons they are in the U.S. is to break down the barriers and try to understand conflicting cultures; and that their friendship with each other is bringing insight into many problems between the countries.

Everyone deserves to have this experience. I highly encourage everyone to go and visit the trainees in St. Louis. They crave interaction with other Americans because they work with each other and don't have many LC events giving them this opportunity to meet us. If you have any questions please feel free to send me an email.

Tamara_aiesec@hotmail.com

”SURVIVING THE CORPORATE JUNGLE,” & MORE... WORKSHOPS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CAREER CONFERENCE TEACH US LESSONS

By Kelly Fuson, VPPR

SAN LUIS OBISPO—Saturday, February 12th marked the tenth annual International Career Conference at The Embassy Suites. This year’s keynote speaker was David M. Carter, founder of the Sports Business Group. The theme of this year’s event was “A World of Possibilities,” and the mood was definitely optimistic for those soon to graduate.

Seven workshops captivated the interest of the attendees, but unless you wanted to skip lunch, you could only attend three. Here are the highlights from my top choices.

“**Surviving the Corporate Jungle**” Speakers for this workshop included four Cal Poly Alumni who share their experiences about their first “real” job; Andy Strychaz, Contracts Analyst, Northrop Grumman Corporation; Elizabeth Green, F/A-18 Material SIET, Northrop Grumman Integrated Systems; Ryan Black, Import/Export Administrator, Boeing; Andy Amundsen, Marketing Communications Specialist, Apple Computer, Inc.

The most encouraging fact they had to say was that they all obtained their current job by attending ICC.

adjustment phase, which ranged from six to twelve months for all four. Andy Strychaz says his time to move on will be when he feels a plateau in his work performance. Ryan Black said as long as Boeing pays for his graduate school, he’s staying. Elizabeth Green advises to make short, medium, and long term goals; the time to move on is when you’ve met them. All four agreed that when the company stops taking care of you, it’s time to go.

“**Women in International Business**” For international management majors, this workshop was rather disappointing. Speakers included Gretchen Nemechek, Director of International Business Development, InfoGenesis; Brooke Mead, Director of Marketing, Parker Aerospace; Jan Mahon, Autobahn Program Manager, HP Managed Services; and Patty DeDominic, CEO & Founder, PDQ Careers Group of Companies.

I made a point to notice that three of the four women were wearing wedding rings, and two of the four mentioned they had children. Otherwise, they

“Align your passions with your profession... blend your personal life with your professional life.”
-Patty DeDominic, CEO

Therefore, attendance at career conferences does pay off! Something not so motivating, however, was their overall agreement that what is printed on your degree does not matter as much as your personality and communication skills. As the keynote speaker, David Carter, said, “No one wants to work with an asshole.”

More non-motivating news for those of us still taking classes is that ninety-percent of getting the job is simply getting a foot in the door, the company will take care of any necessary training and skill development. Of course these expectations vary depending on the job type, but there was still a majority rule that a smile will get you further than a resume.

The biggest adjustment for all four was their new schedules and having nothing to come home to. Going from afternoon classes to the 8-5 (and no vacation for the first two years) was quite a struggle for Ryan Black. Their loss of friendships encouraged them to go back to school so as to be surrounded by the same age group again.

So once you’re in the door, when do you know when to move on to the next job? First there is the

reiterated the same message that most international business women say, they didn’t feel at a disadvantage when working abroad. In fact, all four felt they had more of an advantage than their male counterparts.

Patty DeDominic was the only woman to experience blatant sex discrimination, but it was on the part of a Jamaican business, where it was legal to discriminate based on sex. All four women advised not to dress provocatively, and to be sensitive, prideful, but not arrogant.

Along with these topics were many other inspirational workshops including a special with some of San Luis Obispo’s top entrepreneurs such as one of the founder’s of Jamba Juice, Guyaki (Yuerba Maté) and Zack Friedrich who started his own exporting company. It appears as though ICC is the place to go for soon-to-be graduates. A source of information and corporate contacts, ICC will remain a strong project for Cal Poly students. Next year you may look forward to our very own Heidi Peterson as a part of the ICC team, who is in charge of corporate recruitment!

TOP TEN: REASONS TO VISIT SPAIN

- 1. The Spaniards are one of the warmest and most passionate people in the world.**
- 2. You get great variety because all the regions are so unique.**
- 3. What a nightlife!**
- 4. You can enjoy fabulous food and drink at the local tascas.**
- 5. Where else in the world can you run with the bulls?**
- 6. The Spaniards throw fabulous festivals and holiday celebrations all throughout the year.**
- 7. Great weather so you can enjoy their beautiful beaches**
- 8. Incredible Museums and national artists from Goya to Picasso**
- 9. You will be amazed by Gaudi's organic architecture**
- 10. You can dance the sultry steps of flamenco.**

NEW MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Miss Tweetie, PR

I looked around the room and everyone was getting up. I politely declined but they over powered me. Everyone was gathering towards the stage, I tried my best to resist but they were just too strong. "Two lines, two lines everybody!" he shouted. I was shuffled into a line quickly. I could see people bracing themselves for it, the pulsing sound, the rhythmic movements and then... *Tunak tunak Tun Tunak tunak Tun Tunak tunak Tun Da Da Da*. Arms were moving, bodies were shaking, yea we were tunak-ing. I had heard about these famed Aiesec dances, but to be there seeing them in the flesh and having the music riveting my usually rigid body was something else. Hey AIESEC! Welcome to Roks.

Being a new member, I was a bit apprehensive about going. Having only

been to a handful of meetings, I didn't feel I knew enough about Aiesec to be in a room full of them. However, once there, it was completely different. It wasn't a quiz on who knew the most or who had the most traineeships. It was about refocusing on the Aiesec mission and its application to our own individual aspirations.

My favorite part of the conference was the first two sessions when we discussed the Aiesec mission and vision. I had heard the Aiesec "elevator speech" and had read the mission in print but to watch the power point and see the images and the inspiring words brought new perspective. The visuals and the music really gave me a sense of what Aiesec is truly about. All these faces watching these powerful images and having my own emotions being stirred, I couldn't help thinking that *my goodness, this is what it's all about*.

Our generation isn't just pop-culture addicts, there are people who genuinely

care and want to make a difference.

Looking around, I thought these people with me were people who didn't think "I want to make a difference" was a lofty and idealistic life goal. I will admit, I never looked at life seriously enough to consider that somewhere we were subsidizing a cow for more money than a family was living on somewhere in Africa. I never looked at myself as being a possible connection in a network that could really change the world. I never saw myself being capable of making a real difference. But there I was and in that seat, at that white linen covered table I felt I was empowered to do so.

Aside from all the good vibes and sense of affirmation, there was tons of food and I learned dances to songs that are still stuck in my head. Can you say... *Ma-ia-hii Ma-ia-huu Ma-ia-hoo Ma-ia-haha?* It felt really good actually seeing other faces in the organization.

Impact Stories continued from page 1...

saddened that he was not able to make a better life for himself.

This event made me realize the unfortunate fact that a majority of people in this world struggle just to have their basic needs met. Out of desperation for a better life, this man saw no other option than to climb the fence. It seemed that the risks of being shot at or imprisoned for illegally crossing the border were worth the potential improvements in his life.

It was at this moment that I began to feel affected. I had always known how fortunate I was to have grown up in a country capable of providing for its people, but I started to realize what that really meant. I began to realize that I felt a need to help others who were not blessed as I was. Through AIESEC, I feel I have already started to make a difference by becoming educated. I know I am one person in this world of billions, but I am also a member of an

As far as you could see on either side of the road was black, charred earth. Nothing had been left standing. We passed by what had been homes, now reduced to unrecognizable heaps. We finally reached the school and began what would be one of the most moving experiences of my life.

The moment we went into a classroom, all of the kids' faces immediately lit up. As they received their gift from "Santa" the pain and tragedy they had been experiencing over the last couple of months was briefly forgotten. The toys were nice but simple; however as each child opened his or her gift you would have thought that they had just received the biggest and best toy they could have ever wanted.

While the whole experience was extremely touching, two events still stand out in my mind. The first one was this little girl who decided not to unwrap her present. One of her classmates asked her why and she responded by saying she

"I had always known how fortunate I was to have grown up in a country capable of providing for its people, but I started to realize what that really meant."

- Kara Honeycutt

organization of people who feel affected by their life experiences and, like me, want to reach out and make a difference.

"Santa" By Tim Ferrell, OGX

I can't remember the first time, but by far the most powerful experience happened to me during my senior year of high school. In October of 2003 massive wildfires swept through San Diego County, burning 400,000 acres, destroying 2,500 homes, and killing 16 people. Harbison Canyon was one of the hardest hit areas. At the time, I was involved with the Interact Club at my high school and every December we held a toy drive with the few toys that were donated to be handed over to a larger organization. However, that year we decided to do something different. We got in contact with the local elementary school in Harbison Canyon and set a goal of raising enough toys so every child at the school could receive one.

The toy drive was a huge success and on the day before we got out of school for Winter Break we all got on a bus with hundreds of toys, candy canes, and a Santa suit. The drive up to the school was an eye-opener and as we got closer the vast destruction of the fire started to sink in.



was saving it for Christmas morning. My heart sank as I realized that she was saving this small present because it might be one of her only gifts on Christmas morning.

The second happened when another young girl opened her present. Inside were two Beanie Babies®, with one being the exact same one that she had lost when her house had burned down. I started to tear up myself as I watched the girl proudly show it to her teacher as tears streamed down both of their faces.

The whole ride back home I had goose bumps. I had done something relatively simple but had been able to have an enormous impact. It motivated me to keep giving back to my community and my world, something I hope to continue to do through AIESEC.

TESTIMONY OF A TRAINEE: AXEL WALTHER

By Axel Walther, TN

I learned about Aiesec's existence when I was looking for a job in Dresden, Germany at the job agency beginning April 2004. Though I tried to find a position locally, I always desired to live and work in an English speaking country. The information provided by a brochure on AIESEC was sufficient to make me pay them a visit at their local office.

I was welcomed in a friendly and informal manner by one of the AIESEC members. After a short outline of my overall objective (find a job in either Canada or the U.S. within 3 months) I was told that my plans were certainly feasible.

Since I graduated in March 2004, I was exempted from various group assignments undergraduates are required to complete in order to be allowed on an internship. I was, however, required to attend a 3 day lasting exchange preparation seminar despite my relatively extensive foreign experience. (5 years, The Netherlands – 1 year Scotland – 3 months USA)

The earliest seminar was a couple of months away from the point that I submitted my application to a Canadian company that were looking for a person with the qualifications that I perfectly matched. (Note: the commencement of that particular internship was a month off.) In order to stay as competitive as possible in the race for the placement in Canada, I suggested AIESEC Dresden that I will follow the exchange preparation seminar once I arrived in Canada.

Furthermore, I referred them to the foreign experience I had already obtained indicating I am not a stranger to cultural issues. In fact, I also mentioned that I had written my dissertation for my B.B.A. in International Hospitality Management on the topic of how to manage a diverse labor force. Neither the suggestions nor the requests were enough to convince them to either let me attend the exchange preparation in Canada or exempt me from it in order to remain interesting to the Canadian recruiters. Consequently, I was not considered a potential candidate.

My application got forwarded to Aiesec San Luis Obispo, CA, USA in late April. There, I was in a pool of applicants competing for an internship at the Ocean Breeze Inn at Pismo Beach, CA. A telephone interview with the recruiter of the Ocean Breeze Inn was conducted barely a week after having established contact with the local Aiesec office.

A final decision on the chosen candidate was postponed several times. In order to determine my eligibility, the National staff AIESEC required a copy of my former J-1 VISA, which was attached to my passport that had expired and, consequently was destroyed and replaced by the German authorities. The only possibility to generate a copy of the necessary paper was to contact my former J-1 provider, WEUSA (Work Experience USA) It was a lengthy and dear process. Though the person in charge was cooperative, it all seemed rather unprofessional (\$20

fee for a copy of a single paper to send via mail only in order to get a copy of the J-1 visa. Moreover, neither a confirmation of the arrived letter including the \$20 nor a copy of my J-1 visa ever arrived. Several attempts to reach the contact person by email remained unanswered over a period of about 2 months. Meanwhile, an employee of National Staff AIESEC in New York contacted WEUSA since I provided them WEUSA's address plus phone number.

After the National Staff AIESEC had determined my eligibility (18 months; the maximum stay a J-1 visa yields) further paperwork was required. Amongst, the "Certificate of Eligibility" (the profound basis for the J-1 visa) orientation information was included.

The first appointment available at the U.S. embassy in Berlin was an entire month off, that far away that the dates on the "Certificate of Eligibility" needed to be revised. The revision of the dates on the "Certificate of Eligibility" paper happened timely but the dates were incorrect which would have caused an extremely unpleasant delay if submitted unchanged at the U.S. embassy. As a result, National Staff AIESEC had to issue and send off a third "Certificate of Eligibility" document.

The day of my arrival was of such overwhelming nature that these moments will be lasting for a life time. Based on the experience of my arrivals in foreign countries prior I never expected it to be so warm, polite, and kind. An entire group of AIESEC'ers came to welcome me -- I was simply touched.

It was certainly a pleasant feeling to hear that secured housing was taken care of long time before the actual arrival. "Privileged" I would call the time I spent two members of AIESEC if I was ask to wrap it up in one word. Needless to say, there were plenty of social activities arranged by members – I have never had such a tight schedule.

It truly was a time of learning experienced combined with tons of fun and cultural exchange. According to the contract signed by the internship provider and myself a car would have been provided from the day of commencement of the placement. Since the care was not issued until a month after I started placement, member of AIESEC compensated cheerfully and secured transportation at all times necessary.

Overall, the experience wit AIESEC, the members of San Luis Obispo, in particular enriches my life to an unexpected extent. I, hereby, would like to extend my most sincere and best wishes to all AIESEC members that have made my life such a comfortable, pleasant, vitalizing, and energizing one here in the U.S. Based on my unexpected positive experience with AIESEC, I do highly recommend it to anybody that asks me about the programs.

Axel has been with AIESEC San Luis Obispo since the summer of 2004. He has been a wonderful addition to our small town and we look forward to the rest of his traineeship.

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calpoly.edu/~kfusion/AIESEC

Ways to Get Involved with Aiesec!

Would you like to help Aiesec SLO plan their upcoming events? Would you like more information on our current goals, strategies or operations? Do you have a lead into a company, which might be interested in taking an international intern through Aiesec?

Please fill out the following form and return it by mail to Aiesec Alumni Network c/o Professor Michael Geringer at Cal Poly State University, Orfalea College of Business, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

We are always excited to reconnect with Alumni and find new ways to forge partnerships which will further our common mission.

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

I would like to:

- attend Local Chapter events and/or assist in their planning.
- speak at information sessions about my experience abroad.
- place advertisements in the quarterly newsletter.
- be contacted about making a tax-deductible donation to Aiesec San Luis Obispo.
- be contacted about offering an internship or lead for an international Aiesec'er.

Aiesec's Mission lives on...

The mission statement has not changed much over the years. And, our current members are still just as passionate about living this mission through our exchanges.

"By developing individuals, we contribute to the development of our communities and their people with an overriding commitment to international understanding and cooperation."

AIESEC ALUMNI NETWORK
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