



Six months are already over and the time runs so fast. It feels like I just got on the plane, but six months have already passed and it has been a great experience so far.

I had a pretty nice Christmas without any homesickness. I was in close contact with my family and kept myself busy. We had a nice family dinner with a lot of good food. Besides that we watched some Christmas classics like „Braveheart“ and of course we went to the movie theaters to watch the new Star Wars movie.

During the second week, I went on a skiing trip to Utah with my neighbors. An exchange student from Norway is living with them and I am very good friends with her. We drove up there, so we had a two days drive. The first state we came through after Oklahoma was Kansas. We drove about five hours through Kansas and it looked the whole time exactly the same. Endless flat and dry fields and every once in a while a small town. After Kansas, we came through Colorado. It was cold and it started snowing, so a few roads were closed, but we made it to Denver, where we spend the night.

The second day of driving was beautiful. After Denver, we came through the mountains pretty quickly and everything was covered with snow from thereon. We crossed the border to Wyoming rather quickly and it was just beautiful. Endless flat

white areas and the mountains on the horizon. We passed small towns every 100 miles. It was a calm and peaceful drive.

Once we came closer to Utah, the mountains became more and more and it started snowing. We stayed in a nice little house in the park city area.

The second day we drove to Salt Lake City, the biggest city in Utah. I was surprised by how big Salt Lake City is, so I did some research and 80% of Utah's population lives in the Salt Lake City area. We visited a huge Temple of the Mormon religion, which is the main religion in Utah. It was impressive.

For the next 3 days, we went skiing and snowboarding. The weather was perfect for skiing and the snow, too. After an exhausting skiing day, we all ate dinner together and jumped in the hot-tub behind the house. The ski resorts we skied in were fancy and the prices were crazy but I had a great time and a lot of fun.

On the way back we had to take a different route due to a road that was closed because of a snowstorm. On the new route, we came through beautiful national parks and saw many cute towns, big mountains, and frozen lakes. It was magical.

Starting school again after the two weeks was hard, but I got used to the everyday school life quickly. During January, we did a lot of fitness training to prepare for the soccer season. It was exhausting but necessary. I went to a rodeo in Guthrie with my host parents. It was an exciting experience. It was amazing how many different competitions they had. I'm glad I'm not a cowboy, it looks dangerous.



At the beginning of February, I did some volunteer work in Stillwater, where they offered free dental care. I was one of over 2.000 volunteers. I helped to sterilize the surgical instruments. It was fun and I met many old friends of my host mom, who works in the dental field.

At the end of February, the soccer season started. We had a very good start and beat our two rival schools Edmond North and Edmond Santa Fe. We have a strong team and might have a chance to go to the playoffs.

One of the classes I take is English III. At the end of December, we had to write an essay about subcultures. I wrote about the subculture of exchange students and the importance of studying abroad.

Studying in a foreign country

A subculture is a cultural group in society, they often have beliefs or interests that are different from those of society. Subcultures are groups that are created with a common goal, reality, passion or experience. The subculture of exchange students is global. I am now an exchange student for four months. I have friendships with several other exchange students from countries all over the world, and I have observed and experienced many things that affect me as a person, and the way I see other exchange students. The first person who ever studied abroad was Emo of Friesland, he traveled from the north of the Netherlands to the Oxford University to study there. That was in 1190 and started international exchange in Europe for the next 800 years. Nowadays exchange programs are accessible for most people and many programs are getting supported with scholarships to make possible for even more people to study abroad. Exchange students is a subculture that is all over the world, and it is important to explore because of its impact on a school, it benefits individuals by giving them a cultural experience, and its impact on society.



An exchange year is a once in a lifetime experience and it has a lifelong impact on exchange students. During the year exchange students don't focus too much on studying because the grades have only a very small or no impact on the graduation in their home country. In my case, I can't get a worse grade than a C. For many other exchange students I know the year doesn't count so their grades don't matter at all. Consequently, exchange students focus on their personal development and growth. During my stay here, I have thought about things regarding my future or my opinion about several issues about which I have never thought about. I have almost no homework so I can spend a lot more time with friends or my host parents which I enjoy.



An exchange year prepares teenagers for their future life. It makes young people more aware of their responsibilities and opportunities in an interdependent and changing world. I don't know what I want to study or work in my future but during my stay here I realized my options and things that I want to do in my life. As an exchange student, you are out of your comfort zone in the big world far away from home. You see the world and your country from a different perspective. The fact that you are one whole year away from home, living in a foreign country, with a foreign family has such a big impact on young people - it makes them more sociable, confident, adaptive, independent, flexible and tolerant. These abilities are helpful in every part of your life and make you a better person.

Exchange students are very highly seen in our society. "When you finish your study abroad program and return home, you will return with a new perspective on culture, language skills, a great education, and a willingness to learn... all of these are very attractive to future employers." (10 Benefits) The abilities exchange students gain during their exchange year are useful in every kind of employment. From my personal experience, people see exchange students as very brave and they often are amazed by their decision to live in a foreign country for one year. Almost every person I met during my stay here in the U.S. is very interested in me and sees me as a chance to learn about Germany.

International exchanges are important in our society. Exchange students are ambassadors of their home country and culture. I give the people here an idea of Germany and so are all the exchange students from around the world representing their home country. Also, the exchange students are experiencing the culture of their host country and they bring those experiences back home. In our current world, we have many international conflicts that can only be solved if different countries with different cultures work together. A better understanding of the cultures helps countries to communicate with each other and to find good solutions, which are beneficial for everybody. "Exchanges encourage leadership aspirations among participants. It creates leaders who understand the significance and importance of widespread engagement and understanding and instinctively incorporate the international into their everyday life and work." (The Role) We need

those leaders right now. There are issues like climate change that can only be solved if the world works together. People with an international perspective like that have a huge value in our society.

An exchange year has a big impact on participants. They gain life-lasting abilities which help them and our society. The abilities exchange students gain during their year have a big value in the current world. Exchange students are highly seen and gain abilities that are very attractive to future employers. International Exchange has a big importance in our society and leads to a better understanding of foreign cultures and better communication between different countries. I motivate everybody who is thinking about studying abroad to do it. It is a great opportunity.

March 16, 2020

I just got horrible news! I have to leave Oklahoma and return to Germany at some time during the next 2 weeks because of the coronavirus. I am still not believing this and am shocked, I just want to say thank you to all of the people who made this such an amazing year!

I made so many new friends, found a second family. I had a lot of amazing experiences I couldn't even think about before I came here!

