



Ambassadors in Sneakers - A Young Leaders' Transatlantic Summer Academy on Human Rights 2017: Tuebingen and Berlin

July 22, 2017: We're All In This Together

by Charles Coney (Chaperone Team USA, Interim County Manager & Program Administrator Macon-Bibb County Georgia)

Following a three-week hiatus, the inaugural transatlantic student exchange "Ambassadors in Sneakers" resumed its focus on human rights. Unknowingly, we experienced one of the universal rights, "Article 13 - 1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. 2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" just by re-assembling the TEAM. For some it was a short bus ride, others a long train ride, and even others many hours aboard planes. Nonetheless, the desire to reacquaint and continue the learnings and dialogue was enough to entice everyone to do "whatever it takes" to come together. TeamUSA had the longest distance as they reciprocated what TeamGERMANY did just last month. For TeamUSA, the nine-hour flight across the Atlantic Ocean began with baggage check-in, security checkpoints, currency exchange, and a late lunch at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta, Georgia. Twelve (12) of the original students from Youth Councils/Commissions across Georgia traveled along with two (2) adult chaperones making a delegation of fourteen (14) Americans with others safely transversing the skies aboard a Delta Boeing 767-400 aircraft. Following customs and baggage claim, they were warmly welcomed at the Stuttgart International Airport by German Student Leaders Emma Luzie Florentine Cohnen from Stuttgart and Aurelia Livia Polte from Heidelberg. This same level of hospitality was happening across the region as many had transitional location points before arriving at the final destination, Tübingen, home of our sponsoring entity, the d.a.i. (Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut German-American Institute).

Leaving no one behind, Program Coordinator Ulrike Krone along with Assistant Program Coordinator Yasmin Nasrudin personally met everyone at the Tübingen bus and train stations to escort them to their new home for the next week, the Tübingen Youth Hostel. To see the exchange, one would never know that there were cultural differences. For example, everyone wants to be welcomed, celebrated, and acknowledged in the family of community. One might say the "southern hospitality" had become a part of this groups as there were so many hugs and embraces quite reminiscent of a southern family reunion. And, yes, it was a family reunion---the reunion of the "Ambassadors in Sneakers" family with its two sets of lineage, the American side and the German side. Although to many Tübingen was a new place, the environment and faces offered the semblance of home and a safe place forged in the context of international cultural exchange.

At the Youth Hostel, we experienced a lunch of cheese spätzle, fresh salads, delightful breads, and of course sparkling water and apfelschorle. New items to some Americans, but quite refreshing and satisfying after long travels. The Irish chef made it a point to greet us with comedy and extra food portions. We remember that food is a common denominator that truly helps to bring similarity to diversity. Following room assignments and general instructions, participants roamed over the Hostel comparing it to previous residences while reconnecting with each other more on a peer-to-peer level. Several questions could be heard, "What have you been doing? Have you made a decision about your future plans? What's happened in your life since we were last together? and, even, Did you know how much I missed you?" Wow...this project has connected its participants in ways that we are only beginning to see. It was only the first day.

German students, Jessica Karrer and Lukas Raue from Tübingen rallied the group for a walking tour of the town. What a charming and picturesque backdrop the cobblestones, winding passages, and rising towers gave to our contemporary setting of smartphones and backpacks. There were local merchants offering fashion, books, and aromatic food and items. Up a winding hill through roads and passages, a wonderland of times passed revealed itself amongst the words of Jessica and Lukas. Cars disappeared to bikes and finally to footsteps...onward to the Castle. We saw a myriad of medieval elements that included watch towers, courtyards, fountains, and even escape routes amongst piercing mountaintop views. What a magnificent place! At the base of the Tübingen Collegiate Church, farmers offered their freshest items while we listened to hourly chimes from the bell tower. The tour from time to time became a history lesson as we were challenged to understand, "What is the difference between these two houses? Notice the window that does not match; some say it was used to hide Jews during the war." Some American students remarked how preserved everything seems to be and how incorporated historical elements were intertwined with everyday society. We saw a marble sign indicating the place where Goethe had been. We read a golden cobblestone where a person had suffered in a time when Human Rights was being challenged.

Following dinner, the group re-assembled in the Conference Room to share individually what if any changes have you made relative to your Human Rights journey from the first two weeks in America. Amazingly, the students were able to chronolog all the experiences, locations, introductions, interactions, and even challenges. One might have suspected that their lives would have been so involved having returned to home that they would not be able to share in such an intensified manner; however, the "Ambassadors in Sneakers" have had several reflections and were applying the historical artifacts and institutional visitations in the context of Universal Human Rights. Even changes in their vocabulary could be noticed in addition to their listening and engaging of each other. Overall, program leaders were pleased to know that transformation was occurring and we were heading down the path of "gaining a fuller perspective of the issues at hand." And, so amidst a moonlit evening on the Neckar River, the Ambassadors rested.





1 - TeamGERMANY participants Emma Cohnen (left) and Livia Polte (right) welcome TeamUSA to Germany at the Stuttgart International Airport (July 22, 2017)



2 - Our home for a week!

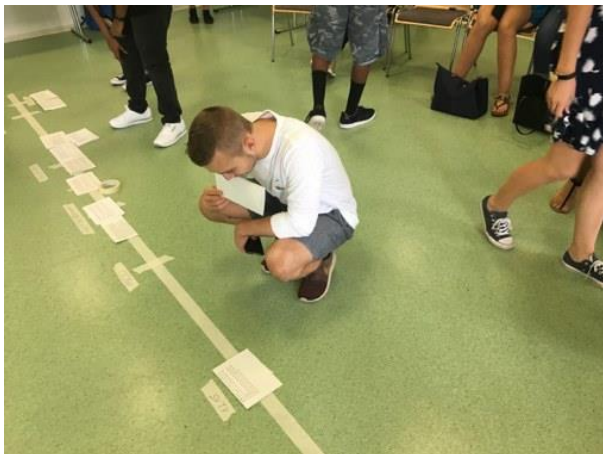


July 23, 2017: Getting Started Again ...

by Rushabh Dipesh Patel & Mika Mia Sharif

Sleep deprived, these are the exact words describing all of the ambassadoooooors. The American students were looking quite lifeless in the morning because of jetlag, but they livened up throughout the day. We started the morning with a recap session of the United States portion of the program. We did this with a powerpoint of pictures, a world cafe, and presentations. After reminiscing our time in the United States and our knowledge of human rights, we indulged ourselves in a hearty lunch. We transitioned into a workshop with students from the University of Tübingen who volunteer for Amnesty International. Sandra, Marlene, Vincent, and Pauline started off the workshop with an activity outside. In the activity, we took steps forward if we answered yes to any of the questions they asked. After the activity, they explained to us that if we had said yes to any of these questions, we would be subject to punishment in some countries around the world. Then we came back inside and put together a timeline regarding significant, historical human rights events. We followed the activity with a game of charades, in which we had to act out one of the first 27 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We ended the workshop with a worksheet where we were given real cases and told to find which articles were violated in the cases. This led to a discussion which ended the workshop. All of the Americans were treated to a very substantive German language lesson with Lukas Raue, one of the ambassadoooooors. Then we had dinner and free time. We rallied back together at 8:00 p.m. to meet Anaick Geissel, one of two German Youth Delegates to the United Nations General Assembly. She explained her duties as a Youth Delegate and told us about her experiences and focus for the following year. She and her counterparts decided on education as their main topic to focus on. We had a discussion about which human rights appealed to us and why. We also had discussions about education in Germany and the United States, sustainability, energy, gender equality, refugees, and more. We took away a tremendous amount of knowledge and information from her quite easily because of her great ability to connect with us as youth. She even stayed around longer to converse with us about our concerns, to get feedback, and more. We ended the night with a quick meeting regarding our plans in the coming days, and went back to our rooms to fall into our beds and splurge into a deep sleep.

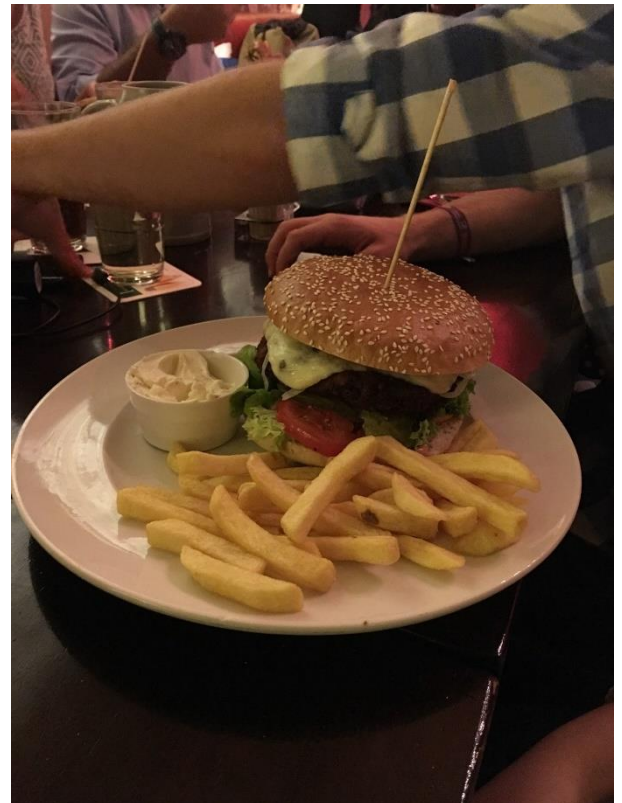




July 24, 2017: World Ethos and Local Engagement

by Florine Mahmud and Spencer-Grace Williams

Day three in Germany, the Ambassadors In Sneakers embarked on a journey that began at the World Ethos Center (Weltethos Institut) with Prof. Villhauer and Dr. Gohl. Dr. Gohl's presentation highlighted how to adopt ethical economics in western culture. A repeated topic was how to become global citizens in an increasingly cosmopolitan modern age. After an early morning at the Weltethos Institut we were treated to a nice lunch at the Prinz-Karl-Mensa. After a bit of self guided touring of Tübingen, we met back at the City Hall with councilman Schmanns who told us a bit of history about the building and gave us a presentation on how their local government worked. We were later joined by Lord Mayor Boris Palmer who engaged in an energetic discussion on politics with us. We then had the privilege of viewing the entire council in their meeting chamber and enjoyed the climate of politics (despite the fact that many of the Americans couldn't understand it). After that interesting and exciting day we had a great dinner at the restaurant Ratskeller. We had typical American burger and enjoyed them a lot.



July 25, 2017: The State Capital of Baden-Württemberg: Stuttgart!

by Mike Sullivan (Chaperone Team USA, City Councilmen of Sugar Hill Georgia)

Stuttgart was an industrial town during WWII. As such it suffered much destruction as a result of allied bombing. Stuttgart is much larger than Tübingen and was much more industrious and closer to what we view a big city to be like. Most of the historic buildings were recreations of previous buildings. Sometimes with historical authenticity, often with historical façade and modern interiors.

When we got there, we had about 30 minutes before the tour, so we took off in all directions. At 11 AM we had a guide give us a walking tour of Stuttgart. The tour started at the old castle, with the tour guide sharing some of its history. We walked through the open air flower market, an indoor market and then an open air fruit and vegetable market. From there we went to city hall and saw the plans for the city with reclaimed land when the trains are moved underground. Probably a highlight was the continuous elevator (it held up to two at a time). From there we went back outdoors and our guide pointed out several more buildings, including the fish bowl and the opera house.

At the end of the tour, we caught lunch and then broke off for a little more exploration. Jannik did a great job of acting as tour guide and taking us to the library and also up to the train tower. The library has a very unique and distinctive CUBE architecture which looks interesting from the outside and marvelous on the inside. The tower at the train station gives a great high viewpoint of the area and has several floors dedicated to informing the public about the project and how/what is being done.

At 4PM, we met at the parliamentary building for the state, lovingly called “The fish bowl” (where the big fish are), where we talked to Landtag Baden-Württemberg, who has been involved in politics for over a decade. He gave us some great insight to things that drive and are under consideration at the state level.

After that, we met 3 Syrian refugees that are currently in Germany, one of them a filmographer. The showed a film that tried to capture the emotions that filled one member’s 10 month journey to get into Germany. All three felt fortunate to be in Germany, but the transition has not been without its problems. Once here, there are additional problems to be overcome. While most Germans have been very supportive, there is still a sense of isolation and feeling of being an outsider that makes it difficult for the displaced Syrians to feel at home



2 - To the TRAIN!



3 - Train platform at Tübingen main train station



4 - Curious Stuttgart Walking Tour



5 - The Markthalle in Stuttgart is famous in the city for its delicious variety of foods.



6 - We were invited by the Sparkassen-Akademie for lunch. Thank you so much!



8 - Inside the Stadtbibliothek



7 - The view from the Bahnhofsturm!



8 - Mr. Lede Abal talking with us about politics on the state level.



9 - Heading back to Tübingen

July 26, 2017: (Dis-)Abilities and Human Rights

by Halli Collins and Pascal Göttl

The day started with breakfast on our own and then a free morning doing what we pleased. Then after plenty of fun and relaxation, we walked to and met up at the German-American Institute in Tuebingen. There, we met Dennis Klein. He started his creative and interesting workshop with a Zombie Apocalypse game and others. We asked questions pertaining to human rights, and eventually, it lead to our topic, Disabilities and Human Rights.

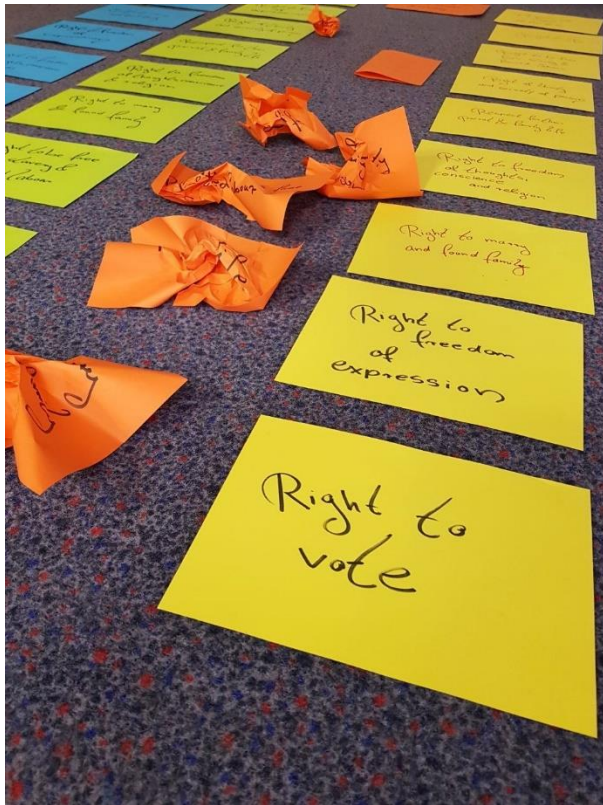
The workshop was very intuitive and interactive. He also created a film and showed us a portion of it that emphasized his points directly. The visual aid helped with learning about the disabilities present worldwide, how individuals with disabilities live, and their status in society along with their rights, or lack thereof.

After the workshop, we all met at Hölderlinturm for a punt boat tour. It was very beautiful and relaxing. The breeze was cool and nice, and being in the company of our fellow Ambassadors and chaperones was enlightening.

After our boat tour and a little free time, we all gathered in our new and improved meeting room. The chairs were very comfortable and the atmosphere was warm. There, we prepared for the youth council fair. Each Ambassador included information about their councils on paper to display the next morning. Although the process was long, we all enjoyed working around each other in the cool, misty night.

Overall, the day was very chill. We had a great time with each other, and learned a lot about human rights and German culture.





July 27, 2017: Fair Trade

by Nico Förschler and Kamissha Miles

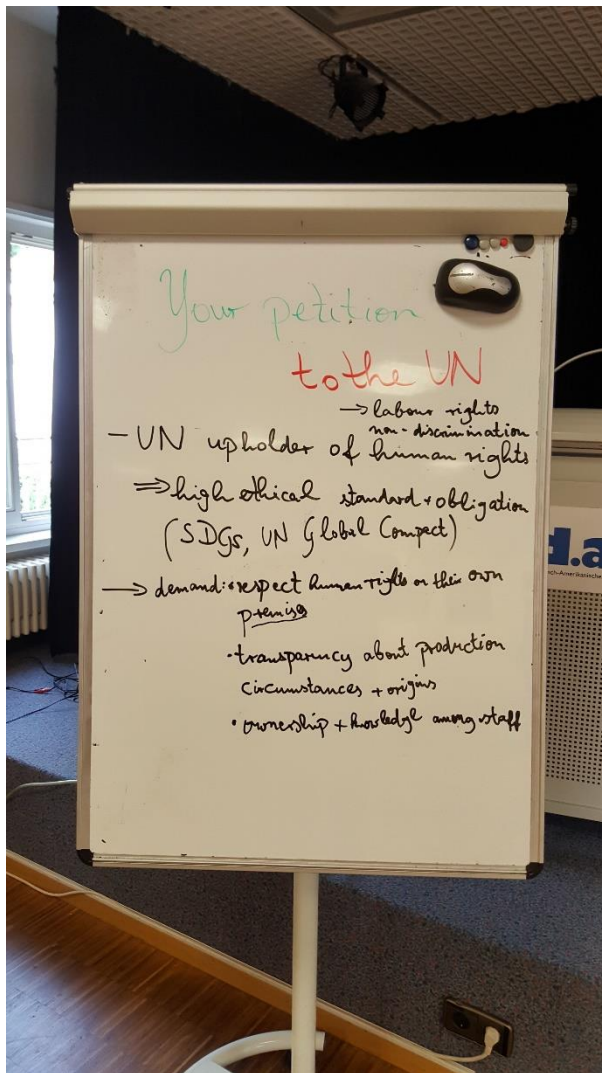
On July 27th, we started the day off with breakfast. Then, we held the youth council fair. Every ambassador had to bring something from their youth council that helps show or explain what their youth council do. We posted the posters, we made the day before, on the wall, windows, curtains, or any place we could of displayed our posters. We were given ten minutes to explore and look at each other's posters. Then, some ambassadors were called to demonstrate their posters. Then, we all talked about the differences and similarities of German and American youth councils. German Ambassador's youth council have elections. Most of the American Ambassadors go through a interview process. After lunch, we had a Fair Trade & Human Rights workshop with Dr. Judith Krauss at the d.a.i.

Dr. Krauss explained to us what the philosophy behind fair trade is and how one can be consciously buy products and goods that are "fair". The world map game was eye-opening, since we often didn't agree on how many people live on the continents or how much electricity they consume. Our intuition for the developed countries led us to misjudgements, surprisingly. Dr. Krauss also helped us to articulate our demands for the letter we are writing to the United Nations regarding fair trade in their own shops.

Afterwards we had a traditional Swabian dinner with Maultaschen (swabian ravioli filled with meat or vegetables) and potato salad at the Jugendcafé. It just recently opened and has been a project by the local youth council. It's a great place for young people to hang out that is not too far away from the main train station.



WORLD GAME							
	♀		♂		kWh		CO ₂
	You	Actual	You	Actual	You	Actual	You
Europe (incl. Russia)	4	3	7	10	6	8	6
North America	3	1	6	8	12	9	7
Latin+Central America	4	3	3	2	2	2	3
Asia	12	18	12	8	8	9	10
Africa	6	5	1	1	1	1	2
Oceania	1	0	1	1	1	1	2



July 28, 2017: Wir fahren nach Berlin!

by Yasmin Nasrudin (Chaperone Team Germany, Assistant Project Coordinator, d.a.i.)

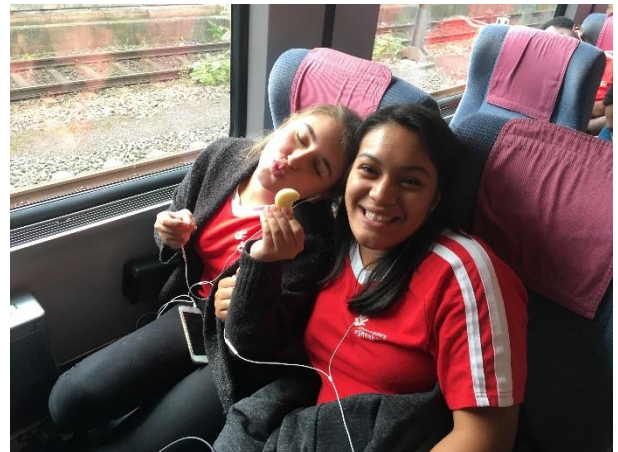
The first week of the German portion flew by very quickly! After almost a week in this beautiful tranquil town, which happens to be a town that I have been spending lots and lots of time in the last six years, we are now heading to a different part of Germany: our *Hauptstadt* Berlin! As the environmentally conscious people that we Germans are, we chose the train as our transportation. We've hoped to offer the Americans the opportunity to travel with the ICE from Stuttgart to Berlin, but it we travelled with the InterCity (IC) instead. Yet, it was almost as comfortable and almost as fast as the express train. Since this was a travel day, nothing else really happened in terms of talks, workshops. But, the train ride through Germany offered the Americans the chance to see the changing landscapes and just enjoy seven hours of relaxed travel. It was so relaxing that I fell asleep and took a two-hour nap and was probably documenting in my dreams... After waking up, I used my

time to read Wolfgang Gründinger's recent book before meeting him on Saturday for a dialog on youth participation, and just took the time to be with myself. Sometimes you need that, right?

We arrived at 6:12 pm in Berlin, happy and excited to embark the last portion of our program in 2017. Our hostel, the Jugendgästehaus, is just five minutes away from the main train station. A quick walk and we moved into our new home. Nothing else really happened, except exploring the property and area surrounding it. *Hier weht ein anderer Wind...*



10 - Project coordinator Ulrike Krone reading about current issues in Germany and beyond.



11 - I wasn't the only sleepy person on this train ride!



12 - Just arrived!

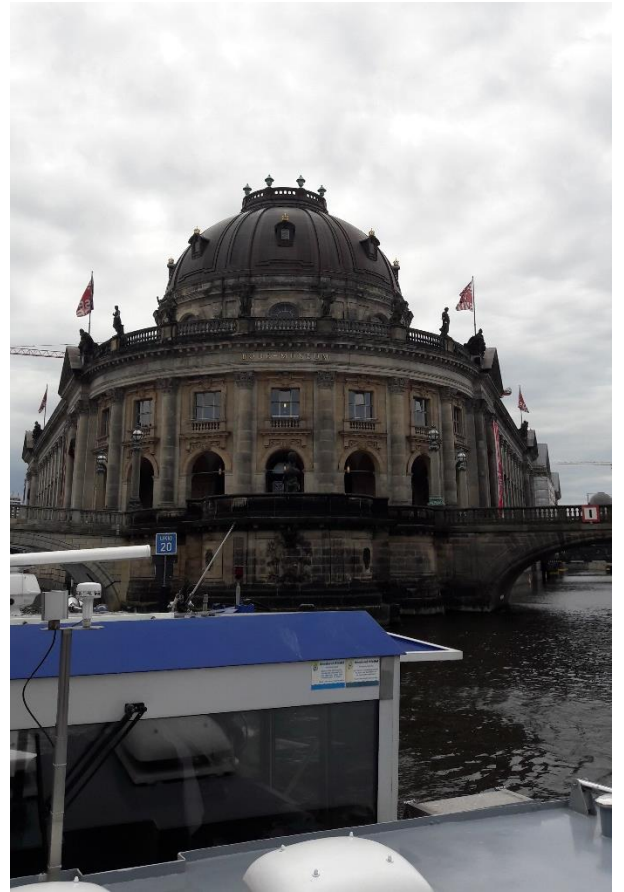




July 29, 2017: Orientation

by Eleanor Anderson and Thomas Kemper

At 9:30 in the morning, the Ambassadors in Sneakers departed the youth hostel, heading to the Spree River. Once we arrived, we were all excited to see that the boat also served coffee and food. The Spree River is 400 kilometers long, and it is a beautiful sight. We passed many well-known areas of Berlin, including a building that holds 1000 offices for members of the Parliament and the Parliament Library. Along the river, there are monuments of white crosses that denote where people died whilst crossing the border illegally during the time of the split between East and West Berlin. We also passed the Berlin Cathedral, which began being built in 1894. Sadly, it was destroyed during the Second World War, but it was opened in 1993 to the public after having to be rebuilt. The Ambassadors in Sneakers also passed the largest synagogue in Germany, hosting about 3000 people, and it was opened in 1866. However, in 1943, it was bombed, so it was recreated. The cruise also took us near the first city train lines; today, however, it has about 1160 trains. We saw the Reichstag Building, which was redone in 1995-1999; apparently, the building is open from 8 AM to midnight! The cruise ship also took us near one of the longest inner city tunnels throughout Europe. At the end of the wonderful boat ride, the AiS were allowed to have an hour and a half of free time. Some groups went shopping, while others went to order alcohol-free beverages and bruschetta. The next event on our daily agenda was a visit with Wolfgang Gründinger, author of "Alte Säcke Politik." He told us to be loud, be present, and to claim our voices. He believes that everyone should be required to vote, regardless of age. He showed many statistics, saying that 71% of the elderly voted for compulsory military service, while only 63% of youth voted for a compulsory military service. Therefore, he believes that the elderly should listen to the young people. Gründinger also informed us that there are three areas in which we can change the world: politics, market, and values. After dinner, the Ambassadors in Sneakers went on a tour that concluded with an video installation, where we learned about German history over the last 130 years, including the Reichstag and German parliament.

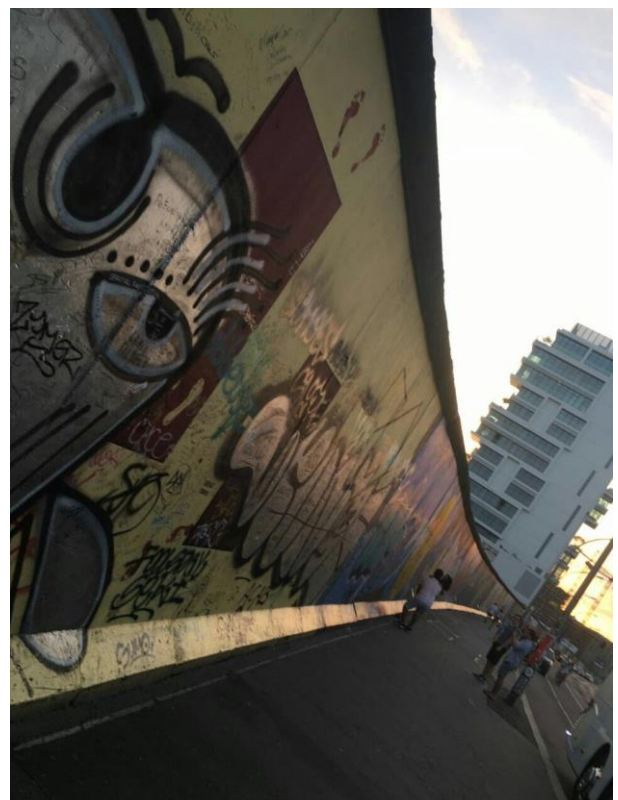


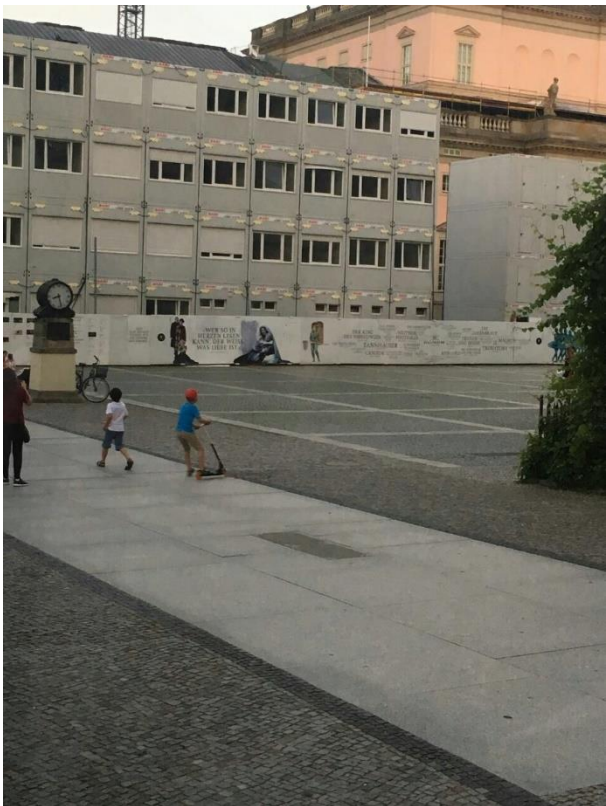
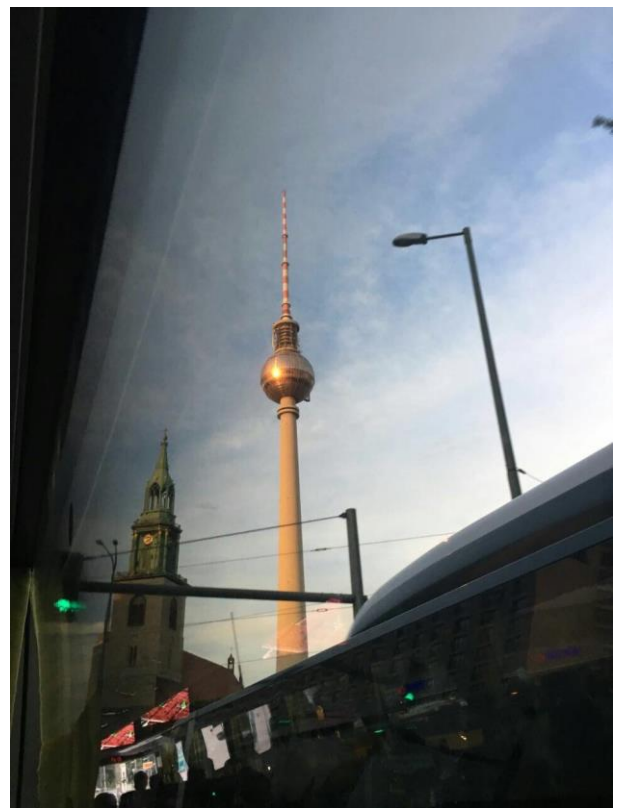
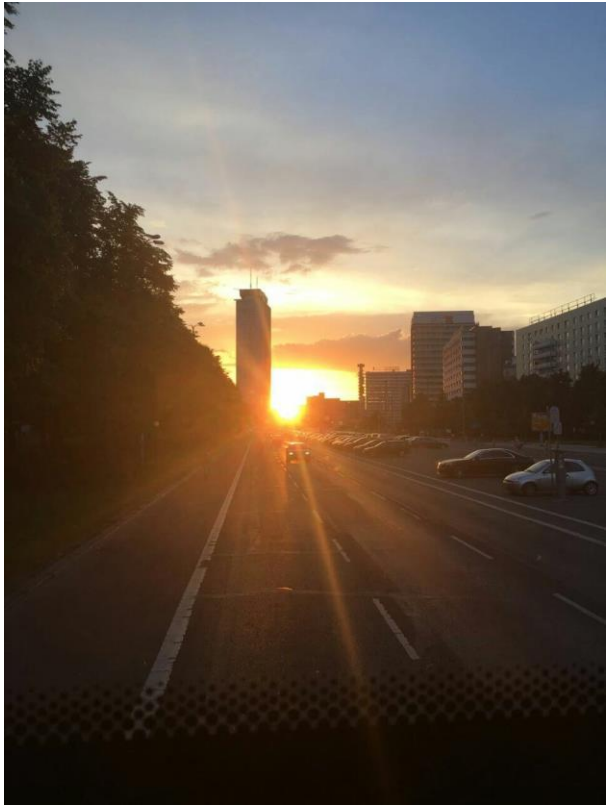
July 30, 2017: Berlin

by Emma Cohnen and Grant Washington

Unfortunately Emma was sick the morning of this day. Although towards the end of the day she met up with us at the flea market. Here she was able to click back up with the group, and continue the documentation.

As we woke up this morning excited for what the day holds, we started off by participating in a walking tour through Berlin. The tour was titled, "Rebellious Berlin". Here we learned about the Holocaust, the famous Berlin Wall, and World War 2. We experienced the Georg Elser Memorial, who nearly assassinated. From here, we go to the flea market in Mauerpark. This is a place where artists and vendors come to sell their work, clothing, and food. The atmosphere was amazing! It was packed with people on the look out for the next best thing in clothing and searching the large range of food choices, while listening to live music. As some people stayed at the flea market the full amount of time allotted, others went to experience the German History Museum. There was an exhibition about the German history, and also a showing which explained this very clearly. Now, before dinner a group of volunteer ambassadors met up at the hostel in order to start on creating and designing the letter for the UN explain their position on fair trade. The whole discussion came about when we all went to the UN headquarters in New York. We went to the souvenir shop and realized they didn't sell any fair trade products and the staff didn't know at all what fair trade was. We thought that the UN should be more aware of the standards they hold, perhaps be more of a role model. Finally we did a video bus tour around Berlin. Here they drove us around Berlin while explaining the different historic sites as we rode past them. As they explained it to us, we were able to see a visible representation on the screen which was provided and included on the bus tour. For example there was a visual on Potsdamer Platz on the screen and showed effects after World War 2. Also how it developed afterwards and how it is today, while looking out of the window for modern representation. In conclusion, it was a very informative day, and we experienced a nice orientation.



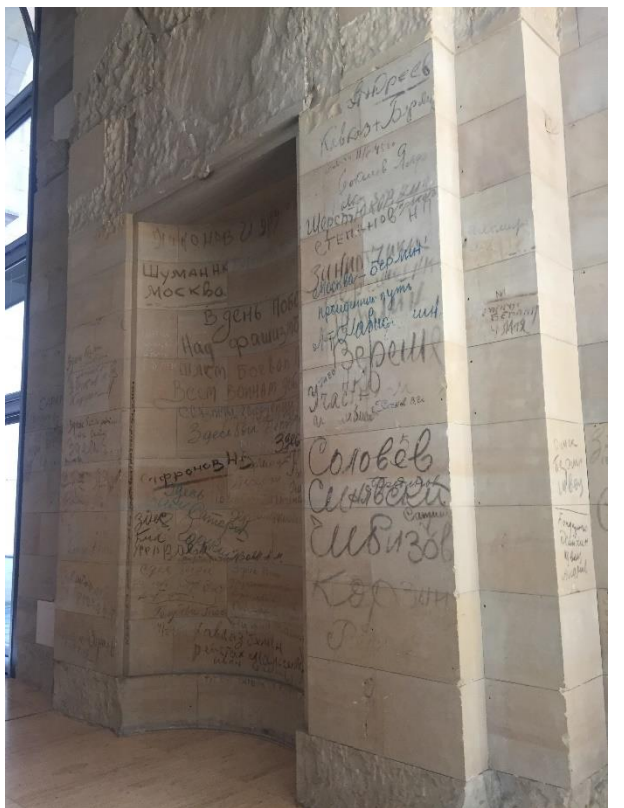
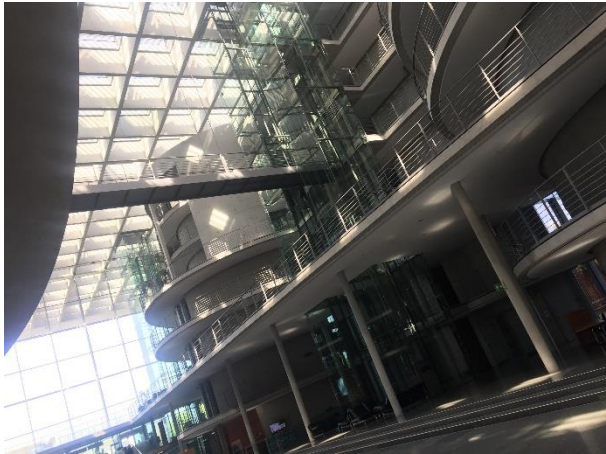




July 31, 2017: Transatlantic Relations I

by Elira Halili and Kaan Cubukcu

The Ambassadors in Sneakers started their day off with breakfast dressed in our best "business causal" outfits. This ranged from a polo and chinos to full suits complete with pocket squares and ties. We then traveled en masse to the Paul-Löbe-Haus, where the national parliament is based in Berlin. There we made acquaintances with Inga, Sina, Johannes, Jacob who would be our guides through the building and the Reichstagsgebäude, to explain to us their work, which ranged from foreign affairs, trade and commerce and inner government workings. We explored the Bundestag extensively, see rooms and areas that were not available for normal visitor tours and seeing sights that few had seen before. After a quick lunch at the Musikhochschule Hanns Eisler, we traveled to the foreign office (Auswärtiges Amt) to meet with Mr. Brendebach who works at the North American Desk (Amerikareferat). He talked to us about the Marshall Plan, the European Recovery Program, and how foreign events and issues affected the German government in regards to international dealings and exchanges. He answered our many questions about issues regarding the international community like TTIP and the recent U.S. presidential elections. We then had time to shop for snacks to gear up for our gathering with the Youth Transatlantic Initiative. With that group we talked about digital rights, which include topics like online security, privacy, policy and government interference on what is government interference on what is now considered a utility. We had another discussion on politics and how they were similar and different in the United States and in Germany, also on how the view on politics on state level was a lot different in both places. We also talked about the history of Berlin, focusing on the Berlin air lift and the Tempelhof Airport. Why they built it and why they closed it. After a long day together we had some time to chill out and went to Kreuzberg to eat some sweets and to explore that part of Berlin. After having a good, relaxing time we headed back to the Hostel to finish out the day. At the end of this day we can say for sure we have a better understanding of the German government as a whole and have a clear insight on the inner workings of parliament as well as understanding the significance of the Bundestag as not only a building, but a culturally significant icon. We have a good understanding of digital rights thanks to the YTI and why it will be a very hot topic in the coming years.



August 1, 2017: Transatlantic Relations II & Germany History

by Grant Alexander

From the moment I woke up to the sound of blaring sirens and joyful children outside of my room, I knew today would be eventful and impactful. Today's itinerary was packed with important destinations, so I suited up and prepared mentally for the day ahead.

The first place we went was the Embassy of the United States of America. We spoke to Charge' d'Affaires, Kent Logsdon and his interns. This meeting was immensely informative, and aside from the uncompromising, strict security clearance and the blazing hot sun, it was memorable and important in fully understanding the transatlantic relationship between the United States and Germany.

We left and had lunch, compliments of the youth hostel. Afterward, we traveled to the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and its museum below it. This was perhaps the most powerful part of the entire trip. As I traveled through, the initially, simple architecture of the memorial, my mind was bombarded with emotions as I was mentally transported into the perspective of a *spectator* of the holocaust. No, I did not relate to the victims. The walls and pillars that at first seemed insignificant and small quickly rose in height and magnitude the further I walked into the memorial. To me, the pillars represented the victims and the death of millions, whereas my peers (who were instructed to avoid each other to experience the memorial solo) represented my family and friends who were in view and existed, but at the turn of a corner, vanished, seemingly forever. Although there was an exit in every cardinal direction, the paths were narrow and obstructed by the masses of death. This was my mindset throughout nearly the entire experience; however, unlikely heroes shined a light in the darkness that the memorial that created my mind. Children. The children going through the memorial were laughing and playing hide and seek. They were cheerful despite the surrounding people, living and perished, solemnly standing. This made me realize that this monument of history is not a scar of shame, but rather it represents a checkpoint in history that we learn from and celebrate the lives of those who perished. Following this, we descended into the museum and supplemented our experience with more historical context.

Finally, we took the train to visit Holocaust Survivor, Saskia von Brockdorff. Her mother was part of the Red Orchestra during the Nazi Regime during WWII. She explained her life story along with the impact of her mother's legacy on herself as well as the global society today. This experience made everything come full circle. It is one thing to read about the holocaust, WWII, a divided Germany, and history altogether, but until you meet someone who was there, and they share their experience, it remains as just text and numbers on a screen or in a book. This meeting made it real for me.

We concluded our day by having dinner with Ms. von Brockdorff, and after we returned to the hostel for much needed rest and mental rejuvenation.



August 2, 2017: German History II

by Jannik Liebl and Taylor Morain

Today was a relatively relaxed day which was really nice as we have been pretty busy since our arrival in Berlin. We started our day by visiting the Allied Museum which was once a movie theatre for the American soldiers who were stationed in Berlin during the time of the Wall. The museum provided a vivid description of the overall German perspective of the Allies and the separation of the country at this time.

The Americans were overall surprised by some of this information, as we learned about the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain in school, but not of our significance in helping the people of Berlin so steadfastly. We found that our German-American friendship was much more vital to both of our countries than we originally presumed. The Americans, by providing food, supplies, and hope to West Berlin, through the airlift effectively prevented the spread of Communism. Our stories are quite literally intertwined as we maintain a mutually beneficial relationship.

After we explored the Allied museum, we had the option to split into different groups so that we could explore the area, shop, or participate in a scavenger hunt for the majority of the afternoon. Following our free time, we met back at the hostel for a Review Session where we were to pick out random words taped to a board in the middle of the room. We were then assigned to groups in which we shared our words so that we could collaborate on an idea that would be beneficial for all of the cities represented in the group. At first, this task was quite exasperating because the words did not make much sense when put together, for example, our group had the words, "bicycle, baby, and blanket." However, it was still an engaging project, and once we started thinking outside of the box, we formulated an idea that we could present to the group the following day. Once each group finished up their project, we were dismissed for the night so that we could relax and prepare for the following day.



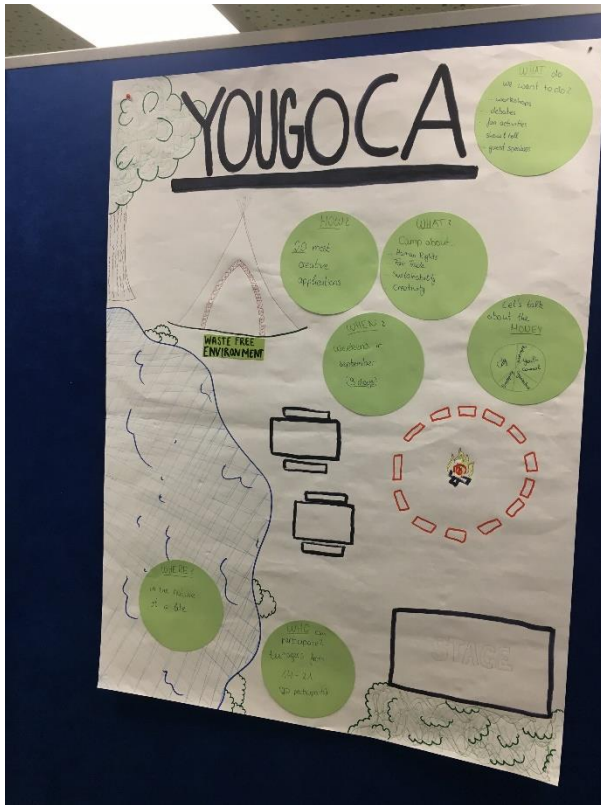
August 3, 2017: German History III

by Karen Avelandanez and Leo Kempe

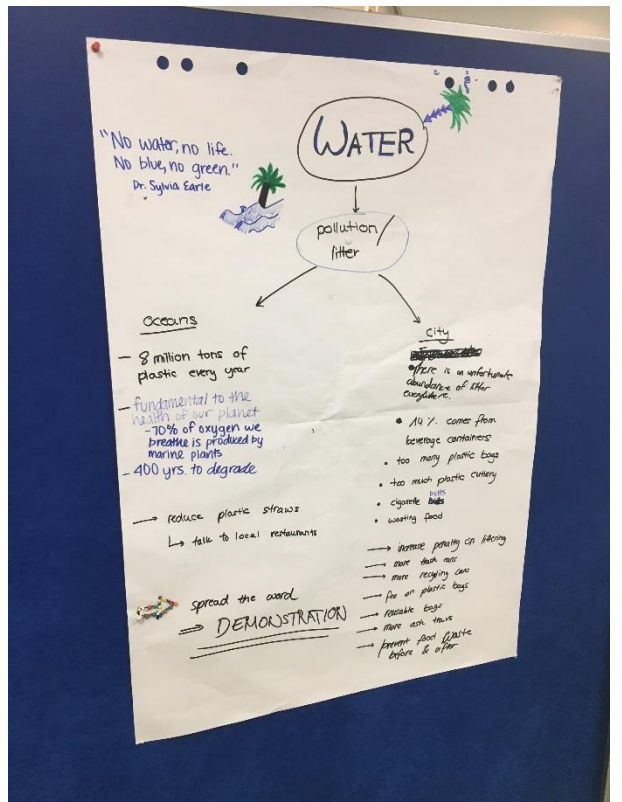
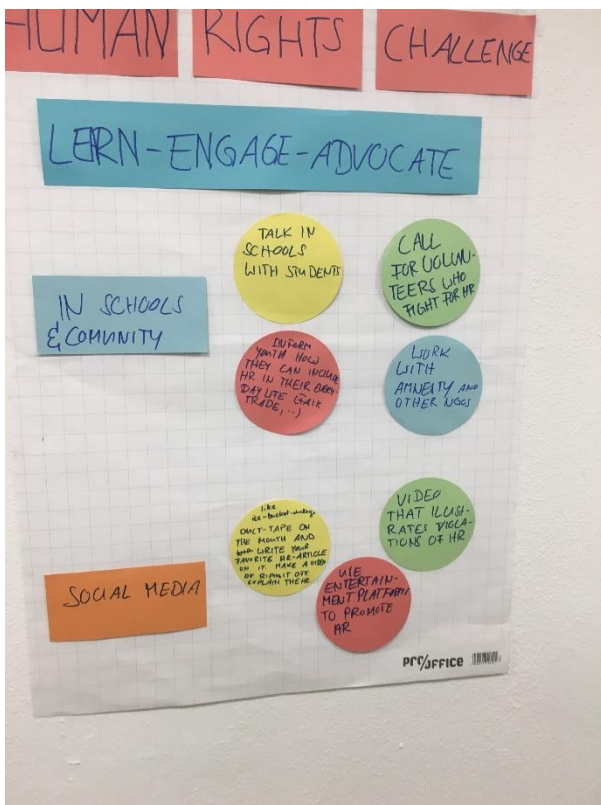
On day 13 of our trip, we started off by going to tour the Berlin Wall Memorial. Here we watched a film about its history and we then went on a walking tour. From an American perspective, here I feel as though we learned a lot about things that aren't taught in our textbooks. It was amazing to learn more about the people killed at the Berlin Wall and see the actual death strip. Leo really enjoyed the authenticity of the places we visited and he taught seeing the watch towers was a unique experience. After the tour, we broke up into small groups and we all had the opportunity to eat lunch wherever we would like. Leo's group decided to go to "Zum Schusterjungen" which is a very old typical Berlin/German restaurant. He loves the old decor and he says they have some delicious Schnitzel with cauliflower and mixed vegetables. I joined Elira and Eleanor's group for lunch. Since we all wanted different types of food, we went to the main station and got a variety of foods. We

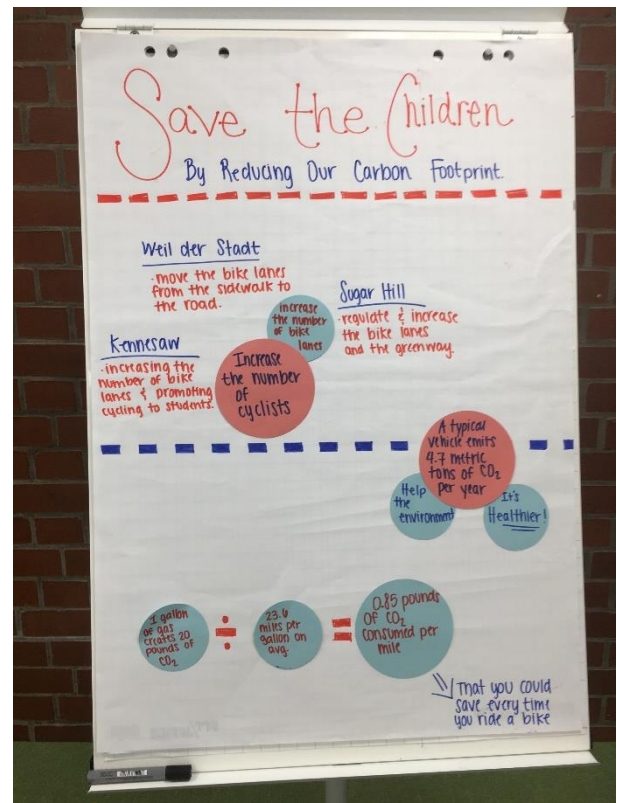
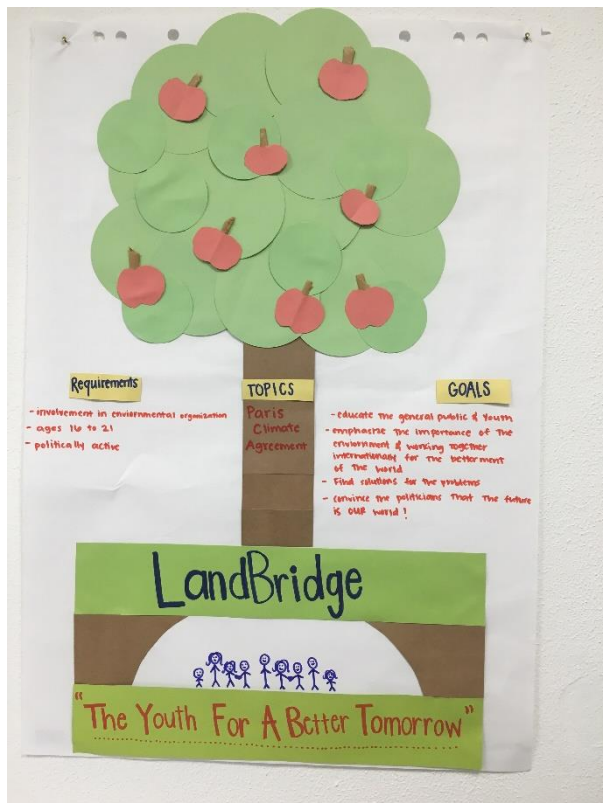
then proceeded to find a place next to the Spree River so that we could sit down and enjoy our lunch. After our lunches , we were all to meet back at the hostel conference room to meet lit special guest , Ulla Peitz. Ulla Peitz was a contemporary witness of the Nazi Regime and she helped to smuggle many people across the Berlin Wall , including Ulrike's parents. She told us the personal story of Ulrike's parents and how they did not want to bring a child into a world where they could not live freely . She explained to us in detail the dangerous experiences in border crossing process and it was very interesting to learn from someone who experienced it all. After her talk , we had to do presentations on our group community projects. For this assignment , we were given 4 random words that we had to use together to come up with one project . This was super cool because we all got to make up a project that we could actually put to work. From our day , something that I think will stay with me forever was getting to know the stories of those killed at the Berlin Wall and seeing those people as humans , not just numbers. It was also very interesting to hear Ulla talk and she's her knowledge with us. One of my favorite quotes from her was "do it ,even if it's illegal but it feels right ". Leo believes that he will be taking away all the stories that Ulla told us and he really enjoyed our project presentations because it was interesting for him to see what we could come up with .





August 4,





2017: Action!

by Livia Polte and Omar Roberts

And finally the last day arrived. We were all so sad that the program was going to be end within 24 hours! Besides that we decided to participate in a graffiti workshop with Benni and Lukas at the Archiv der Jugendkulturen e.V. on our last day together. We learned more about the history of graffiti and street art, but also about the meanings behind them. Doing our own graffiti was a lot of fun! Benni, Lukas and Marc showed us how to use the spray cans, so we could create our very own graffiti designs on regarding the topic of human rights. Here you can see what we came up with! Heading back to the hostel, we thanked our very loved chaperones for their work and their current optimism! We were so glad to have you guys! In the evening, we became all very sentimental while speaking about our trip and our experiences we made during the whole program. At the end we wrote some nice comments and thoughts on papers for each person to remember these good old days! Obviously at the very end we finished the evening with our well known grouuuup huuuuggg!!!



