



AiS 2018 - Week 1 in Northern Germany

Day 8 - Fri. May 26

## Travel to Berlin, Herr & Sperr & Escape Room Adventures

After a full week in the beautiful city of Kiel, it was finally time for Team World to leave for Berlin. The process was quite strenuous at some points due to train delays and a lot of heavy luggage. But the communication amongst Team World allowed for everybody to arrive safely in Berlin – with all of their luggage. Upon arriving to the new youth hostel, everybody was given the opportunity to check into their rooms and unpack their luggage.

Shortly after, Team World met in the conference room to listen to the well-known German activist Vincent Herr, who is a member of [Herr & Sperr](#), two friends who are dedicated to creating a more just and egalitarian European society. Vincent spoke to the Team about his work in youth affairs, feminism, and European integration. When speaking on the topic of Youth Affairs, Vincent mentioned his project to get European Youth Free inter-rail passes so that they could [travel throughout Europe for free](#). His reasoning for this push was because he believes “Diversity can only be learned through interaction and personal experience”. In addition to that, he also spoke about his feminist standpoint, stating “I am a White, Straight, Male, and I feel very privileged in my place”. He went on to mention how “Privilege stems from factors we can’t control”, hence his push for women’s equality. Something that stuck out particularly well was his explanation of how “What happens to us, happens to everybody, what doesn’t happen to us, doesn’t happen to anybody”. This statement really opened the eyes of many of the ambassadors simply due to how it applies to many people in real life. His talk with Ambassadors in Sneakers was a big deal, as he is actively involved in fighting for equality; and his standpoint was parallel with Article I of the UN’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights-“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

The last activity to occur on Saturday was a surprise visit to an escape room. The Ambassadors were all split up into 4 groups, ranging from 4-10 people per group. Each of the four groups was put into their own room, where they had to solve through their own obstacles. Each had a separate theme ranging from Egyptian tombs to escaping a cults capture. Not every group was able to win their room, but the experience was extremely fun nonetheless. Shortly after the escape room, Team World noticed a plaque remembering a spot where the Berlin Wall used to stand, and also took a picture in front of a Former U.S checkpoint. The emphasis that the falling of the Berlin Wall holds on human rights is monumental, as it reunited a city, and marked the end of a communist era. It is not out of the norm for the Ambassadors in Sneakers to get a proper mix of fun and education, allowing for very nice memories all around. It was a busy first day in Berlin, but Team World could not be any more excited for the experiences that lie ahead!

Ivan & Richard



2 - Towards Berlin!



1 - Towards Berlin!





3 - Towards Berlin!



4 - Thank you Vincent!



5 - Group picture with Vincent



6 - Checkpoint Charlie



7 – Escape Team



8 – Escape Team



9 – Escape Team



10 – Escape Team

**Day 7 - Fri. May 25**

## **Fun Day - Laboe Beach, Marine Monument & Farewellcome Party**

The purpose of today's schedule for Ambassadors and Sneakers was relaxing at the Baltic Sea in Laboe, and besides the painful, killer sunburns that resulted, many of us found it educational as well as relaxing. Although the water was frigid, cold, everyone enjoyed themselves.

There was a significant memorial, the [Marine-Ehrenmal Laboe](#) where we visited. It contained displays showing respect to all the Navy soldiers who passed away at sea. The memorial also showcased the submarines and vessels that were used by many Germans during these wars. Many of us were astonished by the size of these fleets and fascinated by the complexity of the 1943 submarine that was displayed from WWII. The United States and Germany are different in many ways, but both nations share a tragic history. Many memorials that exist today in Germany do not commemorate German soldiers due to scars left from the past. At the memorial in Laboe, people from various nations who lost their lives were, including all people from all nations involved. This is an example of how modern Germany has been altered by the past. Germany has also made all Nazi propaganda illegal to broadcast unless it is in the form of educational use. America has a contrasting policy for their treatment, as many confederate statues and memorials still remain. US students have agreed that it is important to recognize the people who contributed themselves in wars, but not to specifically glorify veterans who stood for sinister matters. Germany does not glamorize Adolf Hitler, unlike America who plasters Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee everywhere. Clearly this enhancement of Confederate soldiers gives youth the wrong picture of the true reason of the Civil War. Many think it was about "states rights", but in reality it was slavery of African-Americans on the basis of their freedom. Today the Americans gained something influential, and I'm not talking about the red sunburns on our necks.

Later that night, we celebrated Yasmin's Welcome and Ulrike's Farewell. Chaperone Yasmin will be going with us to Berlin tomorrow, while chaperone Ulrike has to go back to Tübingen. It was a fun party!

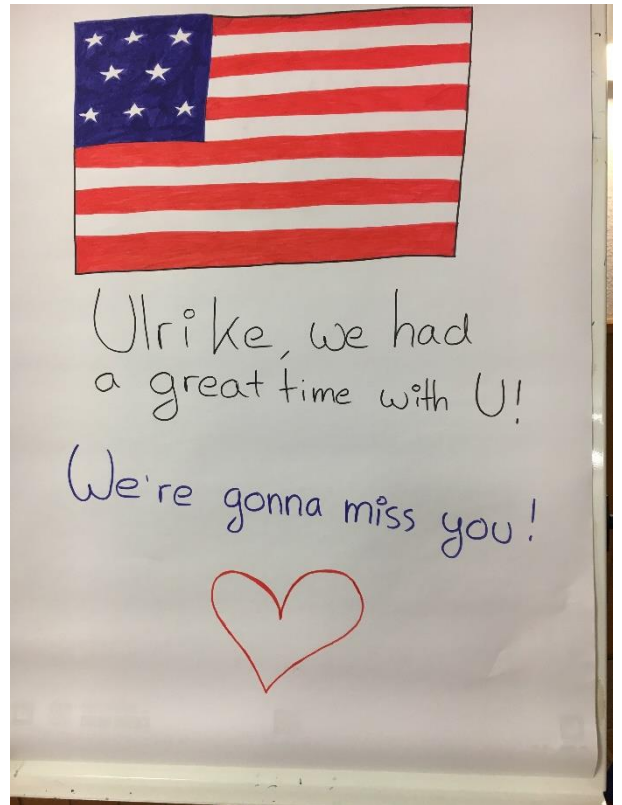




















**Day 6 - Thu. May 24**

## **Flensburg - City Hall, Student Council, Experimenta, Shopping Time**

Everyone has days where they feel as if they can't keep our eyes open from exhaustion. When it feels as if our eyelids are pushing down on our faces. In contrast, sometimes in life we have moments when it seems that we can't calm down enough to contain our excitement or open our eyes wide enough to take in all that we see or experience. Today, on day number six with Ambassadors in Sneakers, we simultaneously achieved both experiences. After busy traveling for the past couple of days, we were anxious for the events held in store for today, but we took advantage of the nap time on the train ride to where we were going. Today we visited [Flensburg, Germany](#), a city that is viewed as a model of coexistence for the [Danish minority](#) that lives there. We visited the City Hall of Flensburg and learned a lot about how modern life takes place through the eyes of a member of their student advisory council.

Following this, we visited the Flensborghus where Mr. Jürgen Kühn, the principal of a Danish high school near this area, explained much of the history from before World War II to now that took place in Germany and shaped the Danish-German culture and people of Flensburg. Many of us were captivated by his stories of what it was like to grow up in this area, and the struggles of being in a minority group. Throughout our trip on human rights, we have had ongoing discussions about the types of discrimination taking place even in our local communities. Listening to Mr. Kühn furthered our inspirations to open our eyes to the prejudices that many possess in the world and how these affect real lives today.

Next we traveled to the [Phänomena Science Center](#). Here the conversation on Germany's past continued as we visited each exhibit and forgot about the lethargic feeling that plagued each of us. At the science center we were able to test out different exhibits ourselves through hands on displays. We each enjoyed discovering all of this on our own and participating in activities where many could participate in. For example there was a metal seat with bike pedals that four people could pedal to generate electricity. The deeper meaning behind this part of our day was the discussion on the importance of knowledge and education as an essential human right. Following this, we were given free time to explore Flensburg and get snacks or go shopping. Our small group and I loved walking around taking pictures and trying many different desserts. We finished off the day by having dinner together back at City Hall, where we had started.

The experiences of today taught us of the power of education and knowledge and how one's past can be used to shape one's future in a positive or negative light. One of my fellow "ambassadors" mentioned that today helped to teach him of how discrimination is an international problem and how communication has reminded him of how human rights are something that all deserve but not all receive. Sometimes we have tired days, or good days or bad days, but we all have much in common. Overall, no matter how much our drowsiness may degrade our alertness, it does not away from the diverse experiences we learned today. Thank you, Dr. Dau-Eckert for putting such a great day together for us! We had a great time in Flensburg!

Courtney & Zilan



*6 - Our group at Nordertor*







*7 - Empty bottles can be picked up by those in need to be returned at the store and receive deposit money. An idea by Schülerrat Flensburg*



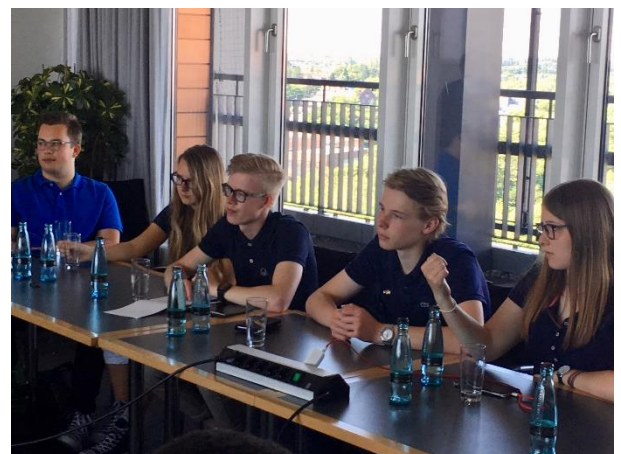
*13 - Talk at City Hall*



*14 - Talk at City Hall*



*15-Talk at City Hall*



*16 - Talk at City Hall*





17 - Talk at City Hall



18 - Talk at City Hall



19 - Thank you for a very warm welcome and a great dialogue at city hall!



8 - Learning more about the Danish minority and border relations.



9 - Smörgåsar



10 - Welcome by Achim Englert, the CEO of Phänomenta

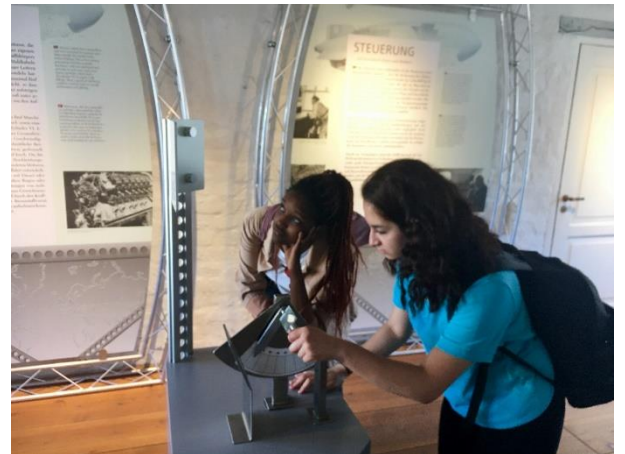




12 - So many questions!



11 - You are never too old to play with water!



13 - So how does this work?

**Day 5 - Wed. May 23**

## **Hamburg - BallinStadt Museum, U.S. Consulate, Joachim Herz Foundation**

Our morning began with a German breakfast prepared by our generous youth hostel. They were also kind enough to prepare a lunch bag for the Ambassadors in Sneakers. Our departure for Hamburg followed soon after. While on the train ride our Ambassadors decided to fight off the effects of their jet lag, some observed the natural beauty of Germany, while others even depend their bonds with debate and talk. The bonds that are forming here are sure to last a life time. We arrived at Hamburg station and made our way to [BallinStadt Emigrant Museum](#).

On an area of 2,500 square meters, we could experience migration history and followed the footsteps of people striving to fulfill their hopes and dreams on their journey to a new homeland. As Deutsches Haus der Migration (German House of Migration), BallinStadt is part of a worldwide network of more than 80 academic institutions and organizations. The museum looks at reasons for emigration from a variety of different angles. While escaping a regime and seeking refuge in another

country is one reason, many others – such as work, love, family, and the pursuit of happiness – exist as well. The American students received a booklet translating the displays into English this was greatly appreciative because allows the Americans to fully understand the meaning of the Museum and talking in depth with their German partners. The museum also offered a game that put us into a scenario, allowing us to act as immigrants and make decisions for our character.

After a light lunch the ambassador made way to the Consulate. The US general consulate in Hamburg is a lovely building that reminded the Americans of home. The [Consul General Richard Yoneoka](#) welcomed us warmly. He was very energetic and tested us on our transatlantic knowledge and opinions and on our willingness to speak. Mr. Yoneoka is the first US consul to incorporate a council of youth advisors to gain knowledge about young Germans' perspectives and to assist with interactions with the youth. Even after critical questions he managed to represent the opinion of the USA. His youth advisors introduced themselves to us and shared their hopes and ambitions for a better future. During our visit we also thanked Mr. Yoneoka and the US Consulate for their generous support of our program in northern Germany. After we dismissed the formal session, we retired to the main hallway for talks, cookies and drinks with the Youth Council and the General Consul himself. After exchanging contact information with our new friends we set off for our next adventure.

The Ambassadors were led to a wonderful restaurant and we were allowed to meet and eat great food with Joachim Herz Stiftung representative Dr. Yulia Kozyrakis. We thanked her and the foundation for their incredibly generous support of the Ambassadors in Sneakers exchange, and talked a lot about our Hamburg impressions.

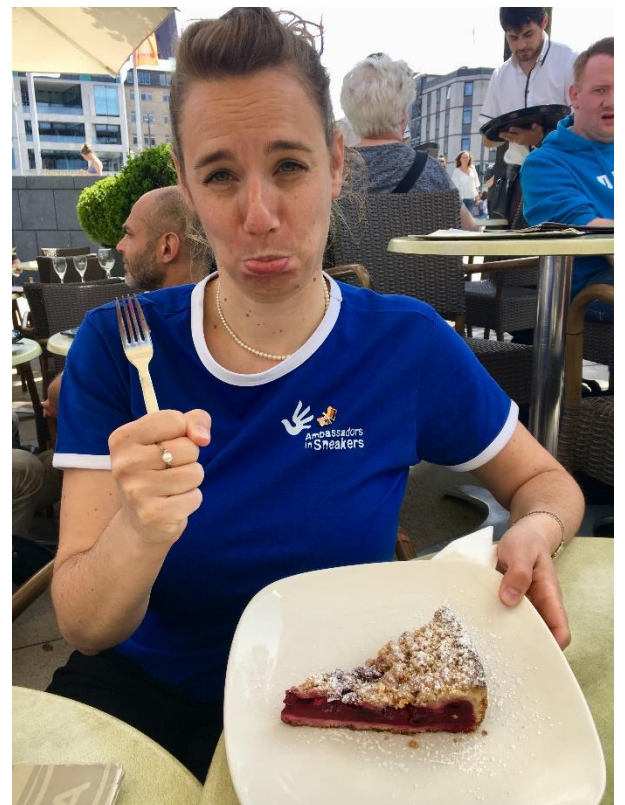


14 - Emigration Museum Hamburg



15 - Lady Lila Liberty @ Emigration Museum Hamburg









U.S. Consulate General Hamburg

1 hr · 🌐



Today at the U.S. Consulate General Hamburg, a unique diplomatic gathering took place. Consul General Yoneoka and members of his Youth Advisory Council welcomed the "Ambassadors in Sneakers": German and American participants of the "Young Leaders' Transatlantic Summer Academy on Human Rights." The exchange program, organized by the GAI Tuebingen **Rent an American**, brings together youth councils from Germany and the United States for two-week educational programs in Kiel/Berlin and Atlanta/Birmingham/New York City. Please find further information on the program here: <https://www.dai-tuebingen.de/en/intercultural-projects/ambassadors-in-sneakers.html>







**Day 4 - Tue. May 22**

## **State Commission for Political Education, Landtag, Aminata Touré, Fortress Europe, BBQ and T-Shirt Surprise**

Our morning began with a traditional German breakfast, afterwards we returned to the city of Kiel for the third day. This is where we all caught the bus to the Landeszentrale für politische Bildung. Here the volunteer worker informed us about the history of her position and her work ethic. She did this with a friendly game of “Kahoot” whom everyone, both Germans and Americans, were all acquainted with. This was a lead way into the next part of our day which took place right across the street.

“Equality is not opposite of justice. Some people need support for taking part in society.” This was a quote that was said to the AiS team by none other than Ms. Animata Toure. Animata Toure is the first African American female as well as the youngest individual to serve in the capacity of the state Parliament of Schleswig-Holstein. We discussed her matriculation and the battles that she overcame to assume the position that she has obtained. Ms. Toure gave us a tour through her eyes on how her past has influenced her. The open dialogue that was initiated between her and the AiS team was extremely beneficial to everyone that participated.

Next, the team participated in a simulation game entitled Fortress Europe with two political science students from Europaunion Schleswig-Holstein. In this simulation, each member of team AiS was a European country and we all taking part of the of the European council. We were discussing how to solve the refugees crises in Europe and had to create a conclusion.

To end our eventful day, the group had a barbecue in which we all had a role in. Everyone had a job that ranged from cooking, to setting the tables, playing music, and entertaining our guest. This was a great end to the day where everyone left with full minds, hearts, and tummies.



*17 - Instructions for our way to Landtag Schleswig-Holstein*



*16 - Meeting the State Commission for Political Education*





19 - Meeting the State Commission for Political Education



18 - Meeting the State Commission for Political Education



21 - Today Aminata Touré, MdL (die Grünen) met with us at the parliament of Schleswig-Holstein. Thank you for answering all of our questions!!



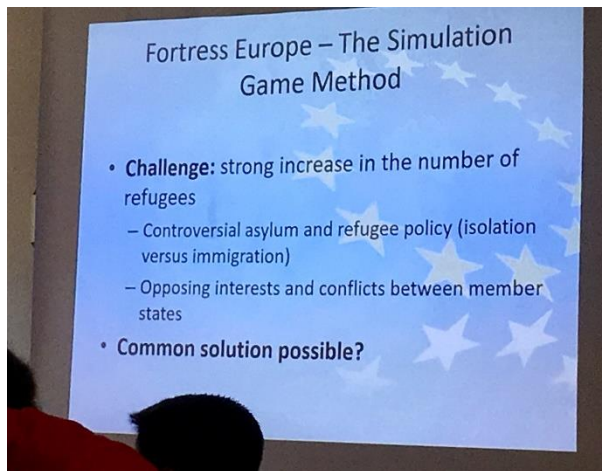
20 - Meeting Aminata Touré



22 - Meeting Aminata Touré



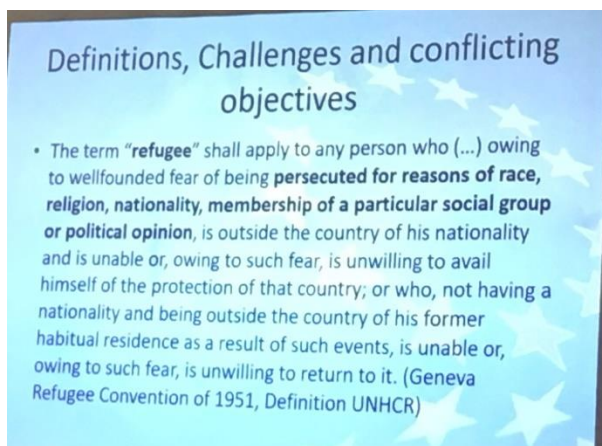




24 - "Fortress Europe" - Background Info



23 - "Fortress Europe" - Background Info



25 - "Fortress Europe" - Background Info



26 - Preparing for "Fortress Europe"



27 - Preparing for "Fortress Europe"



28 - Preparing for "Fortress Europe"





30 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



29 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



31 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



32 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



34 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



33 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



47 & 48 - Debating "Fortress Europe"



*36 - European leaders (aka AiS 2018) with their suggestions on how to deal with the so called "refugee crisis".*



*35 - BBQ*

### **Day 3 - Mon. May 21**

#### **Kiel Walking Tour, Meeting Junger Rat Kiel, and Bowling Time**

Strolling through the city in our book bags and sneakers, the City of Kiel was not the only thing that was glowing in the sunshine. All of the Ambassador students were excited to explore the harbor city and got to learn much insightful information about the city. For example, did you know that Kiel is one of the oldest cities in Germany (about 700 years) yet it doesn't have such old architecture because it was also the most bombed city in World War 2? Neither did we until we heard the enriching history of Kiel through an exciting tour.

Our hearts melted at a local church and we stuffed our faces at the L'Osteria Italian restaurant. Later, we separated and explored the cities on our own where many of us walked around the city and stopped for some delicious ice cream and relaxed by the lakes.

Later, we met up and met the Youth Council of Kiel in a Botanical Garden where we discussed the policies and procedures of the council and discussed our own precedes in comparison. The Youth Council of Kiel did many great projects, for example the special Olympics for people with disabilities. Furthermore the so called 'Junger Rat' did some great awareness training with teenagers, in order to learn more about the political system and the possibilities to engage in their hometown. The conversation was enlightening because it allowed the students to compare council policies. From there groups split up and began to talk in greater detail with the council students and grabbed dinner in the area and met for a fun game of bowling where students who just met a few hours ago became so close through a competitive game!

(Naomi & Nida)





39 - Kiel Walking Tour



52 - Kiel Walking Tour



38 - "Seewind" - statue by Brigitte und Martin Matschinsky-Denningshoff



37 - "Seewind"



40 - AiS 2018 in front of the "Seewind" statue in Kiel





45 - Participants waiting for Lunch



44 - Chaperones at Lunch



42 - Chaperones at Lunch



43 - Meeting Junger Rat Kiel



41 - All of us with Junger Rat Kiel





Day 2 - Sun. May 20

## Learning more about our peers and their communities and youth councils

“Germans are like coconuts tough on the outside sweet on the inside, Americans are like peaches sweet on the outside with a tough center.” That’s what we learned today, but despite all of our differences we actually aren’t that different at all.

Our day started with breakfast, more importantly bread or “*brot*”. That was by far a big hit with Team USA, we honestly spent about an hour, collectively talking about bread. After our delicious “*brot*”, we had icebreaker games. We were slightly nervous, especially because we didn’t really know each other all too well, but that quickly faded as time went on. The best part of the day, had to be walking to the park, we got to absorb a little of the city and get a little sunshine. The most interesting part of the day was learning about the different youth councils and how they operate. We got a little insight on the many differences and similarities in how our councils are run. It was very interesting and we can’t wait for the rest of the week!

(Edna & Fűrozan)



47 - Germans & Americans - Who is who??



46 - Chaperone Felix



48 - Our chaperones Charles and Altemese



51 - Learning more about our partners.



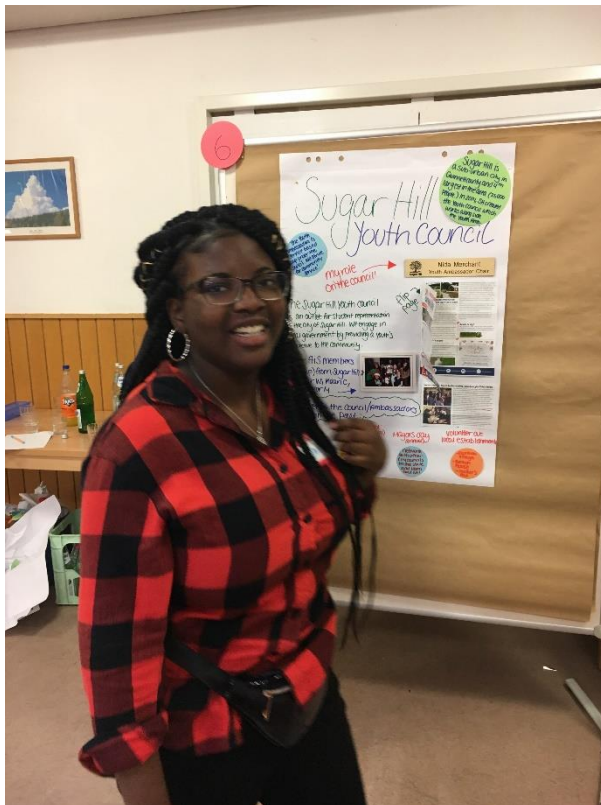
50 - Talking about our hopes and worries for the remaining time.



49 - Youth Council Fair







Day 1 - Sat. May 19

## Arrival in Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein

May we introduce ourselves? We are the "Ambassadors in Sneakers 2018". Team USA consists of 12 young Georgians, two young Alabamans, and two chaperones, while Team Germany is made out of four Schleswig-Holsteinians and eight Baden-Wuerttembergians with two chaperones. Today, we finally all met each other in person in Kiel, the capital of Schleswig-Holstein.

While Team USA was working their way through immigration and customs in Hamburg, Team Germany got ready to provide a warm welcome to their transatlantic peers at Kiel train station a few hours later. We spoke about what it takes to be good hosts, set up our group meeting room and made welcome signs.

Walking back together to the hostel, for the first time as a full transatlantic team, we already connected and knew right away, there is so much to learn from one another. At the hostel dinner was inhaled (after a loooong day, everyone was really hungry!!!), rooms keys were handed out, and after a short round of introductions and ice breakers everyone was more than happy to go to sleep early. We are excited about the days to follow. Keep in touch!





53 - Team USA on their way from Heathrow to Hamburg



52 - Parts of Team Baden-Württemberg on the train from Hamburg to Kiel.



74 - Ambassadors in SNEAKERS! Guess, who is the chaperone and who is the participant!

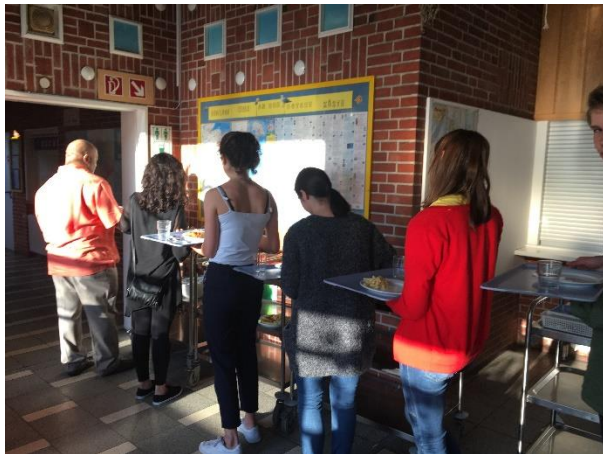


73 - Team Germany is complete! We are ready for Team USA!



75 - Finally we are all together! Welcome, Team USA! And THANK YOU Kreissparkasse Tübingen for giving us those great luggage belts! Gut!!! :-)





76 - Ready for dinner?



77 - Kiel Youth Hostel cooked a really nice dinner for us.



78 - With your roommates, find something you all have in common!





