



Baden-Württemberg
STIPENDIUM

BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG-STIPENDIUM FOR STUDENTS

PERSONAL REPORT

Name: Dulce Amor Hernández García

E-mail address: dulce_amor97@hotmail.com

Home university: Universidad Autonoma de Coahuila

Host university: Duale Hochschule Baden Wurttemberg Stuttgart

Period of the exchange
from - to: [Click here to insert a date.](#) [Click here to insert a date.](#)

Creation date: 05.01.2019

- I hereby agree to my personal report being published on the websites of the *Baden-Württemberg-STIPENDIUM* (www.bw-stipendium.de) and of the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung (www.bwstiftung.de).

Getting ready for the exchange.

Since I started college, I was determined to make a semester abroad in Germany. I always tried to get the best grades I could, in order to get the opportunity to do the academic exchange. I also learned a little bit of German so I could be prepared for the challenge. One year before my academic exchange, I looked to the requirements to get an idea of what was needed and I worked on that. I formally started all the arrangement six months before my stay. I checked the convening in my home university and gathered all the documents. At the same time, I checked DHBW's web page and learn about the requirements. Since all the process was supposed to be done between both universities, I sent my application to the department in charge of all the process. My home university was always ready to help me, and DHBW had everything so well planned. I barely had problems though all the process.

In the month of June, I received an email informing me about the BWS Scholarship. I was really excited and happy for this opportunity. I sent my documents and waited for the answer. Finally the answered arrived. I got the scholarship. I felt proud I could share the expenses with my parents so I told them about it. I did not want to tell them before in order not to disappoint them later in case I did not get the scholarship. When they knew about it, they were happy for me.

Going to Germany.

Two days before my flight I was calm. I did not believe I was traveling to Germany. I made my baggage, weighted them at the airport, said goodbye to my family and friends and took the plane. I made all the flight connections and arrived to Stuttgart airport. My buddy, Ayana, took me to my apartment and tried to explain me the train system. Finally, I arrived to my room and it was then when I realized I was in Germany, away from home, and alone. It was a sad view. I was tired from the flight and my room was so empty. To end the story I had no internet not signal on my phone. There was no way to call back to Mexico. Fortunately, one of my neighbours woke up for a midnight snack and let me used his cell phone. After calling with my family, I felt better and ready to go to sleep; but I was savagely hungry. Blame on me, I had no food at all. It was 2:00 a.m. but that was my lunchtime in Mexico. I ended going to bed trying to get some rest before the next day appointments.

It took me about two weeks to defeat the jetlag, but like a moth to get used to most of the new situation. At first, I was homesick and missed everything. While the days passed by I felt more comfortable and saw the great things about the city. By the end of my stay, I even thought of Stuttgart like home, and I can tell you now being in Mexico that I hope to visit it again and walk the same streets.

University life.

The next day after I arrived, I attended a course at university in which they told us broadly about the things we had to do and how to do them. They gave us information concerning the courses we chose before, and other cultural activities. That afternoon they took us to buy our transportation ticket for the semester, and later to the registration office. Some buddies (the students who were there to guide us) show us the way back to the university building after eating something. We learned some of the traditions and culture about the German life, which became helpful for the whole semester.

The classes I took were interesting. I found the professors passionate teachers in their subject and willing to help or explain more if necessary. The academic system in my university is different from the one there is in DHBW. In UAdeC I usually have twice or three times a week a course, while in DHBW there was only one class a week per subject. The classes I have in my university are of two hours maximum. Nevertheless, some classes in DHBW were longer than four hours. This was a big challenge for me. I found those days difficult and tired, but the rest of the week was calm and I had enough time for finishing my homework.

There were also other activities programmed by the university. There were some excursions like going to the stock market or the parliament. This was helpful to my academic growth. However, there were other funny activities. We went to restaurants, cooked food by or own, visit the Wasen, went to different Christmas markets, scape rooms, hiking and more.

Living in Stuttgart

One of the things that really impressed me was the traffic culture. The cars stop when pedestrians want to cross the street! I know it may sound funny, but it was so surprising for me. I loved the train system. Even when the trains were delayed sometimes, it was good enough. It was a little bit confusing at first, but after learning how it works, I had no problem.

Before I travelled to Germany, I looked to different youtube channels, blogs, facebook pages and different dairies from Mexican people living in the country. From that, I learned that all stores close on Sunday. I knew about it, but I did not expect it. I finished all my chores and decided to go out on the afternoon. The streets were desolated. No one were out, the stores were closed, and the city was quiet. It was impressive. I found it relaxing just to walk around on Sundays afternoon.

Germany is welled known by its beer. Nevertheless, I was not attracted to that. What I really enjoyed are the chocolates and cakes. They are just delicious. I brought seven kilograms of chocolates for my family and friends. Unfortunately, people cannot survive from candies only. I had a hard time with food. Since I am from a tropical country, I am used to lots of fruits and condiments. In Germany, the way of cooking is very different. I never got used to it. I actually lost some weight. Bye the end of my stay I missed Mexican food so much. Now I have eaten almost everything I wanted, but I wanted I have brought more chocolates.

BWS Network

As I said before, I got the BWS scholarship. There were meetings every month in a coffee shop in Charlottenplatz. When I had the opportunity I attended, and I met other students from different places. I still have contact with some of them, and I hope to see them again in the future.

I always received emails informing me about various activities programmed by the BWS-World. Unfortunately, I did not had time to attend all of them, but I found the schedules interesting.

Personal tips.

1. Visit the Euroshop for basic stuff.
2. If you have to buy something for your room, go to PRIMARK.
3. Never forget your train ticket.
4. Always buy supplies before Sunday arrives.
5. Do not buy too much. It will get rotten on your fridge.
6. Do not forget your grocery bag when going to the supermarket.
7. Look for the scale when you buy fruits or vegetables (sometimes it is hidden).
8. Be fast when packing your supplies. It is race between you and the cashier (the people behind you are a mad audience).
9. Learn to cook food you like (you will miss it).
10. Visiting many cities in a row is tiring, be ready for it (you will miss your bed and start thinking about your apartment as your new home).
11. When you want to travel check Flixbus.
12. Choose hostels for accommodation (Booking is a good webpage).
13. If you are having a train connection, have a two hours gap between trains.

Conclusions

I totally loved this experience. It was a big challenge for me. I left my comfort zone in my country. I had to leave my family and friends, cross the ocean, away from home, with a language I did not spoke perfectly and alone. It was my first time I travel so far by myself. This helped me grow academically and emotionally. I learned a lot from my career and from myself. I have more opportunities now and I got a step closer to know what I would like to do on the years to come. I will never thank enough to all those people who helped all this way. I am just so happy I could live this opportunity.