

My name is Karla Funk and I traveled as an IFYE to Germany. When I first arrived in Germany, we had an orientation for a couple days to meet the other Inbounds in Germany, IFYE alumni, and find out any last details needed before we traveled to our host families. It was a great time to get a little settled in Germany and to meet people and make friends right away. Our last day together we went to the North Sea to the Wadden, and walked in the sea bottom, which seems strange but is really cool! From there I went to the German State of Baden Wurttemberg and stayed with the Hollenbach Family for 3 ½ weeks in Kleinansbach. There were five members in their family: Rainer (Father), Ute (Mother), and their kids: Max (19), Ana (16), and Lina (14). The Hollenbach's had a turkey farm of 25,000 turkeys! I helped build silos, and set up a barn for new turkey chicks. The Hollenbach's also took me to Wurttemberg (a Medieval City) and showed me the city as well as the history of the area. They also took me to the Residence Castle in Wurzburg, and upon request helped me to get involved in a Blaskapelle (a music ensemble). We performed in a parade at the end of which all the bands played together which totaled about 400 people!

After being at the Hollenbach's, I traveled 4 ½ hours north by train to my second family-the Heineman's who lived in Gros Mackenstedt/Stuhr, in the state of Niedersachsen. My second family was a family of four: Kai (Father), Ines (Mother), and their two kids: Talina (4) and Bjarne (1 ½). They took time to help me to research some of my family history in and visit Bremenhaben, got me involved in a music ensemble where I also played at Schutzenfest, went to visit Bremen, a zoo, and taught me to play nine-pin. I thoroughly enjoyed getting to play with the children when we were also at home. At the end of my experience, we spent two days in debriefing in Germany, meeting more IFYE alumni and getting a chance to relax before the long flights home. My last day in Germany was spent in Hamburg at the fish markets, goodbyes, and getting to explore Hamburg on my own.

My time in Germany will never be forgotten, nor the friendships and the families I have gained. I have learned a lot about the German culture and way of life, as well as improved a little on my conversational German skills. I am thoroughly blessed to have gone on this trip and look forward to remaining in contact and seeing my German families again someday.



With my host sisters: Ana Hollenbach and Lina Hollenbach at Wurttemberg (Medieval City)



At a Music Festival to see a German Band Dorfrocker with my host sister Ana Hollenbach! We met and made friends with several other people! In Southern Germany they also dress in traditional clothing, so the men are in their lederhosen here.



Playing with the Kirchengard Blaskapelle Band in at a parade at a Music Festival!



My second host family the Heineman's! Ines and Bjarne, me, Kai and Talina!



Making Rouladen a traditional German dish!



At the Immigration Center Museum in Bremenhaben! We went through the museum and then I even got to research a bit of my family history from Germany!



During the German Orientation, we spent the last day at the Wadden at the North Sea! We waded through the sea bottom and were covered in mud-which is very good for your skin.