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January 14th, 2019



News from DAAD Alumni Association USA

Winter 2018/19 Topics

- Scholarship News: Highlight of Our Grant Holders
- Trustee News: Welcome New DAAD AA President and Three New Board Members
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Letter from the President



Writing this, my last Newsletter to you, is bittersweet, as I reflect on wonderful experiences we have had together during the last two years and as I look forward to exciting ventures planned by Erich Haratsch, whom I congratulate on his election as new President of the DAAD Alumni Association USA. Thank you for making it such a rewarding experience for me to have worked with you and with an engaged, publicly minded Board of Trustees. Together we have been able to award twelve scholarships annually to highly qualified undergraduate students applying for RISE (Research Internships in Science and Engineering) and for students in the arts and humanities, who have been able to work on their advanced German language competence in Germany, immersed in German culture. Together we have celebrated cultural transatlantic events of exceptional quality, such as *Sound Understanding* Concerts at Carnegie Hall In New York and the Discussion of the Consequences of the German Election. Together we have also developed a new regional concept for the DAAD AA , scheduling special events –from our popular Stammtisch to lectures, receptions and concerts- in San Francisco, Chicago, Houston, New York and soon in St. Louis. Currently we number close to 20

Trustees on our Board, and we are discussing a possible expansion, so that we can have a strong core of engaged Trustees scheduling great events with you and for you in major regions of the USA. We always love to receive nominations for the Board from you. On the [List of Trustees](#), please note those closest to you. You will be receiving from them and the DAAD AA invitations to social and cultural events related to German culture, politics, and technology that will strengthen regional ties between our larger community of alumni.

In every Newsletter I have come to you asking you to support RISE Scholarships and Scholarships in the arts and sciences. You can make contributions as donations and by becoming a financial supporting member of our organization. Please respond generously. The DAAD AA was started by Alumni who wanted to give back to DAAD, so that American students who want to study and do research in Germany could do so—regardless of their financial ability to pay for this international academic experience that creates equal access and opportunity. **Without contributions from our members, we are unable to award the twelve scholarships we have given to students in the past. Help us meet our goal to keep these twelve scholarships by clicking [here](#).**

Also, if you haven't renewed your membership, you may do so [here](#).

As you read the letter, pour yourself a glass of champagne and celebrate the New Year with us!

Viele Grüße und einen guten Rutsch ins Neue Jahr!

Rosmarie Morewedge

Scholarship News



The DAAD AA sponsors students in two categories: RISE grants for science research in Green Technology and language grants with focus in cultures and arts. Below are few highlights from their time in Germany.

Yehya Elmasry, Northwestern University

My task during my research internship was to develop an advanced scheduling engine for the aforementioned system. Luckily, I lived 2 S-Bahn stops away from my host university. The campus had a warm and cozy feel to it and was not as extravagant as American university campuses, which makes sense considering that public German universities are free of charge! Having said that, my lab was equipped with everything I could have needed to conduct my research.

By the end of the internship, I had implemented an engine that can simultaneously schedule 1000+mobile nodes with positioning transmission frequencies at high as 128Hz. The engine allowed foreign nodes identification at run-time and guaranteed successful reception and processing of 99.986% of the expected transmissions. We also demonstrated the capabilities of the new system in an industrial scenario and showcased the system's ability to handle 1500+ positioning messages per second. The highlight of my internship was concluding the internship by submitting a paper to the International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA) with the research methodology and results and publishing the code as an open-source, public repository.

[...]

All in all, I had a spectacular experience this summer in Germany. I am thankful for the chance that DAAD gave me to conduct world-class research, develop my skill set, expand my professional network and make new friends, immerse myself in Germany-s rich culture, improve my German and explore Germany and other countries in Europe. I would wholeheartedly recommend the RISE program to all my classmates!

Anna Rich, Appalachian State University

As an aspiring chemist I experienced great personal growth. There is a lot about chemistry that cannot be taught in a classroom setting. The school labs do their best but there is nothing quite like working in a real laboratory. Working at the BfR taught me a lot about how scientific labs function. I learned about quality management, communicating as a scientist, and overall learning about the instruments. Quality management is a key aspect in most laboratory settings, most research labs usually don't have it so regulated, but since the BfR has national reference laboratories, it must meet the requirements of the

ISO standard 17025. It is important that the experiments taking place are properly documented and the results are accurate. A way to ensure no falsification of data is writing down things at multiple places. For example, taking a mass requires the mass to be written down at least three different places. Every run done on any instrument is written down in a special book along with the lab notebook. Because of the duplicate, or even triplicate documentation of every measurement, the possibility of falsifying data is greatly diminished. This gives the lab credibility and integrity.

[...]

Independence is a thing everybody thinks they have until they live alone. It is easy to be independent while surrounded by friends in a comfortable place. This summer I learned how to be independent in a foreign place by myself. At first, I was uncomfortable and overwhelmed. Berlin is a huge city and I didn't know where to begin. I wouldn't do any sightseeing because it would have been more fun if I had someone to go with. So I wanted to wait until I made friends. But friends take time, and I didn't want to lose any opportunity to make the most of the summer. So I slowly started to go out and do things on my own. Go to dinner alone, see a museum alone, explore the city alone. And even though I was alone, I had a great time. I realized that being independent allowed me to see and experience so much more out of life.

I also had to learn how to be independent in the day to day life as well. Figuring out how to use the public transportation system and how to go grocery shopping in an unfamiliar place. And even though I took the train in the wrong direction many times, and I sometimes bought the wrong item at the store, I can say that through these mistakes, I thrived.

[...]

My confidence grew this summer. Something about living a new city alone can do that. It was the little victories that gave me those boosts; first time getting home from work without getting lost, first time fully ordering my meal in German, first time successfully completing my own experiment. There were a lot of defeats as well, but my confidence grew when I stopped focusing on the defeats and started celebrating the little things.

Anna Ahlers, North Carolina State University

Excited? Yes. Terrified? Of course. Stepping onto the plane in Raleigh that was the first step of my journey to my new home for the summer was the biggest leap of faith in myself that I've ever taken. Prior to this summer I had never lived outside of Raleigh for any amount of time – I grew up here, went to high school here, and am now in college here. I've always wanted to get away from home but I had no idea how fast and how much my internship with DAAD RISE would impact me over the course of three short months.

My work this summer took place at the Technische Hochschule Nürnberg under expert guidance. The office was primarily PhD students and the masters students that worked for them. There were four other international students in the office that were there through different programs – three from China and one from Hong Kong. Getting to know both the German students and other international students throughout the summer was eye opening and humbling. My memories of all of our lunches and coffee breaks spent teaching each other our languages and cultures are some of my favorite memories.

My project was to design a teaching model of a small refrigeration cycle that utilized a newly developed oil free compressor. My three months in Germany were not long enough to actually build the physical model, but I created the entire plan for building it. [...]

Although my work was where I spent most of my time this summer, I loved my day to day life and getting to know Nuremberg and German culture. I loved my morning 4 mile commute on my bike every morning and evening. Fortunately I was there for beer garden season, so almost every afternoon after work was spent in the park or by the lake with co-workers and friends. Nuremberg was the perfect city to spend my summer – large enough that there's always something to do but small enough that I knew my way around and felt like a local within a week or two of moving there. I got in contact with the international office at the university and was able to make good friends with both the international students and German students that were studying over the summer.

Natalie Lam, University of California, San Diego

I am so thankful for the scholarship that allowed me to pursue a lifelong dream of living and working abroad. My summer work in Germany opened my eyes to international opportunities in the future and forced me out of my comfort zone to pursue new steps in my career and educational goals. I will never forget the lessons that I learned both in and out of the workplace and I am confident that this experience is one that will enhance my career and life outlook for years to come.

This past summer, I was fortunate enough to receive the DAAD scholarship for the second time to fund my internship at the Innovation Lab in Heidelberg. [...]

In the Innovation Lab, I learned to create biodegradable elastomers for a light emitting electrochemical cell, which helped make the overall device more sustainable because the elastomeric portion constitutes most of the device. Besides the technical aspects of the internship, I learned a lot about determination and collaboration from my supervisor. Whenever an experiment failed and I felt like giving up, my adviser was always able to come up with a new approach on the spot for the experiment. I thought I knew what collaboration meant, but the people really worked together, even on projects that aren't within their own research groups. There were tea time discussions dedicated for people to present their current research findings to other research groups and to get advice for any problems encountered. This made me realize that research did not have to be completely independent. It also reminded me that the ultimate goal is to share knowledge and expand on current knowledge, rather than focusing on who can publish the paper first.

It's because of the collaborative mindset that I'm looking to apply to some Master's programs in Germany for the following school year. Without the support of the DAAD, I would have never have the experience of going to Germany and to take part in a research project, nor would I have considered the possibility of leaving my country to pursue graduate education. For that, I am beyond grateful.

Sarah Gould, University of Arkansas

I spent my DAAD RISE-funded summer internship at the Technische Universität Bergakademie Freiberg conducting research on the preparation parameters of organoclays. Organoclays have been proven to be an effective filter media to remove persistent contaminants, such as pesticides and pharmaceuticals, from water. The main reason they are currently not implemented into industrial and municipal water treatment systems is that they are too expensive to prepare. Although I am an engineering student, I chose to conduct research with a scientific approach to learn about a sector of water treatment that I would not have received an education through my coursework, the science behind filter media. [...]

The greatest academic highlight of my summer was to end my research with a significant finding worthy of interest to the research community. Because I was working outside of my general academic comfort zone, it was a pleasantly surprising achievement. My research indicated that the exposure process of organoclays may indeed affect its intercalation efficiencies, which can help lead to improvements in the preparation of organoclays and a decreased cost overall. Another significant academic highlight would be the conference in Heidelberg. Meeting so many other high-achieving students from around the world, listening to all the other types of research conducted by fellow interns was inspirational it gave me such great hope for our future and the good that my generation can do.

Trustee News



Dr. Erich Haratsch is the newly elected President of the DAAD AA as of this month.

Please help us welcome Erich Haratsch (far right on the picture) as President of the DAADAA.

Erich Haratsch, a true internationalist and Managing Technologist at Seagate Technology, is a leader in technology and international education. He commands over 10+ years of experience in senior management, having led global cross-functional and cross-site teams to develop hardware architecture and firmware algorithms for SSD and HDD controllers. Educated in Germany at the Technical University of Muenchen, he received his Dr. Ing. (Ph.D) in Electrical Engineering and his Dipl.-Ing. (Masters & Bachelor) in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology. He has been a member of the DAADAA Board since 2016. He has received more than 150 granted U.S. patents, has published more than 45 papers in international peer-reviewed journals and conferences, and has held engineering internships in Japan, Singapore and Germany. In the next Newsletter he will share with all of our members his ideas on regional member activation, seeking to engage members in new ways in the both the broader and regional DAADAA community.

I am delighted to introduce to you three new Trustees on the Board: Dr. Stephani Richards-Wilson, Dr. Lydia Tesfa, and Dr. Karen Solveig Weidmann

Dr. Stephani Richards-Wilson graduated with her bachelor's and master's degrees from Marquette University and holds two doctorates. Her first is in Leadership Studies with an emphasis in Business Education from the University of San Diego. Her dissertation dealt with the benefits of a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree and her research has been published in peer-reviewed



publications both in the US and abroad. Her second doctorate is in German literature from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and her dissertation focused on Nazi resister, Willi Graf of the White Rose. Her research interests include Nazi resisters, the German-American experience, women and leadership, and business education. She was awarded two DAAD fellowships which gave her the opportunity to complete her dissertation research in Germany. She is a graduate of DAAD's Germany Today Program from 2008 and is looking forward to serving on the DAAD AA Board of Trustees.

Dr. Richards-Wilson is currently a faculty member and Director of the Graduate Business Programs at Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wisconsin where she has worked since 2016. Prior to starting at Alverno College, she served as an Assistant Dean at Marquette University and as the MBA Program Director at the University of San Diego. Dr. Richards-Wilson has worked, studied, and conducted research in Germany and teaches a variety of courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Prior to her academic career, she worked as an International Marketing Specialist at Nalge Nunc International in New York, manufacturer of plastic labware and NALGENE water bottles.



Dr. Lydia Tesfa received her PhD in Immunology from the Charite, Humbolt University in Berlin Germany, and has expertise in cytometry and immunology. She actively consults PhD students, post-docs, research associates and other investigators with experimental design, data interpretation and manuscript revision pertaining to flow cytometry. Her contributions have resulted in numerous co-authorships and acknowledgments in multiple scientific peer-reviewed journals.

Dr. Lydia Tesfa is also a DAAD Alumna, and has had the pleasure of serving as a Selection Committee Member for the DAAD for Graduate Study Scholarships and Study Grants since 2013. As a Research Ambassador for DAAD, she believes one of the great advantages of her role has been to share her learning experiences and accumulated knowledge with the younger generation in the scientific community. By joining the Board of the DAAD Alumni Association, she hopes to be actively involved in the advancement of education for young minority women, who are often underrepresented in higher education.

Dr. Lydia Tesfa is currently a Research Associate Professor at the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, as well the Assistant Operations Director in the Flow Cytometry core laboratory at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.



Dr. Karen Weidmann is a German legal scholar and government official with great dedication towards international cooperation. Being born in Pakistan, she soon focused her law studies on international affairs. She holds both German State Exams in law and has concluded her legal doctorate with highest distinction. With the generous support of the DAAD she also studied international relations and acquired a Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures from the Graduate Institute in Geneva. Currently she is a post-doctoral Global Fellow at New York University

School of Law. Her fields of expertise are international legal theory as well as the human rights responsibilities of businesses, a subject which she is teaching at the University of Bonn since 2016. She also taught for many years at the Transatlantic Summer Academy of the University of Bonn, a program bringing together students from USA, Canada and (Eastern) Europe to enhance the understanding of the European integration process.

This rewarding experience nurtures her wish to support transatlantic scholarships, which enable personal growth and intercultural understanding and are of particular importance in current times. As a DAAD AA trustee, she hopes to strengthen the organizations' fundraising efforts as well as engage actively in the intellectual life of the alumni community.

Outreach Initiatives

Call for Nominations For DAAD AA USA Award in International Exchange and Education

Your Award Committee, consisting of Erika Berroth, Juergen Ostertag, and Rosmarie Morewedge, invites you to nominate deserving candidates for this award.

Every year your DAAD AA takes pleasure in honoring an outstanding educational leader in international education at the *Sound Understanding Concert* in April with its award of excellence in International Education.

We are turning to you, our alumni, for nominations, because we believe that you know the best mentors and educators who have inspired you to go abroad for research and study at German universities and research institutes. Please write to us, telling us why your nominee deserves this award. Be sure to give the full name, affiliation, email and telephone number for this person (it can be an academic one, but need not be so); if possible, attach a resume/c.v. for this special person. Please let us know whether you would like to be listed as the nominator, or whether you would prefer to make your nomination anonymously.

All nominations should be submitted by **January 31st**, so that the Awards Committee can choose the winner among them. The call for nominees will also be sent to the website of the AATG and GSA for wider distribution.

Please email your nomination to:

Erika Berrothe, Southwestern University berrothe@southwestern.edu
 Juergen Ostertag, jostertag@pryorcashman.com
 Rosmarie Morewedge, rmorewed@binghamton.edu

Communities and Regions

If you have suggestions for promoting DAAD programs in your community, state, or region and would like to work through your school, university, organization, or company we would be delighted to hear from you. Outreach and local engagement activities might include some of the following:

- disseminating information on the DAAD within your organization or community
- visiting local college campuses to share information and provide a presentation on DAAD programs to students (including potential DAAD applicants) and meet with interested faculty, study abroad advisors, or administrators
- inviting DAAD alumni/ae (student, faculty, or professional) to visit your organization or company for a presentation or discussion or making your own presentation
- supporting and collaborating on local DAAD events (receptions for DAAD awardees; fundraisers; faculty lectures or presentations) or contributions to the DAAD AA Newsletter
- encouraging local contacts to join the DAAD Alumni Association (DAAD alumni/ae status is not required for membership)

The DAAD AA has also been reaching out to German Consuls to strengthen our grassroots engagement. If you have worked with an Honorary German Consul in your state or a German Consul for your region, we would be delighted to hear from you, or you might like to share your experience with a DAAD AA board member in your region. Please contact the following board members for more information: Mark Rectanus (mwr@iastate.edu) or Erich Haratsch, DAAD AA President (erich.haratsch@gmail.com).

Events



Upcoming events

DAAD AA Spring Event: **Colloquium—Retrospective on the New German Cinema on March 27th**, 6 PM at the Goethe Institut, NY on the “Creation of an American Public for the New German Cinema : A Retrospective with Ingrid Scheib-Rothbart. As head of the Film Department of the Goethe Institut, Scheib-Rothbart played a foundational role in bringing the New German Cinema and

Filmemacher to US audiences. Professor Eric Rentschler of Harvard University, Ms. Katinka Dittrich van Wehring (former Director of the Goethe House, NY) and other film experts from MOMA, the Film Forum NYC, The Film Society of Lincoln Center will participate in this Colloquium. The picture shows Ingrid Scheib- Rothbart being honored by the DAAD AA for her life contribution to the transmission of post-War German culture to the USA.

Past events

DAAD and AvH Alumni Treffen, Atlanta, October 5-7, 2018.

As part of the Deutschlandjahr USA 2018/19 (wunderbar together) a great Alumni Treffen took place in Atlanta, on “Knowledge, Trust, and the Future of Democracy: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Role of Scholarship and Science in Society,” Participants were welcomed by Prof. Dr. Margret Wintermantel, President, DAAD Bonn and Dr. Katrin Amian, Head of NA Division of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Bonn. Master of Ceremonies was Dr. Benedikt Brisch, the new Director of the DAAD, North America. Many presentations focused on topics relevant to international higher education, communication, outreach, interdisciplinary studies, and on the need to help students finance higher education through scholarships.

Topics raised were:

- How Can the Future of Value-based International Science Cooperation Be Shaped?”
- Transdisciplinary Work of Securing Cyber as a Domain –in the Era of Digital Democracy
- Advocating for Pervasive Internationalization in Higher Education: How did we get into this Mess? How do we get out of it?
- A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Perceptions by Public Relations Practitioners in the USA and Germany
- Philosophy and Interdisciplinary Communication
- Substance and Setting: Publishing Disciplinary Materials for Political Purposes
- Outreach and Communication: A Path Towards (Re)Building trust?
- Science and Science Communication—in the Fake News Era
- Communicating the Value of Liberal education
- History and Historical Learning: Lessons from Transatlantic Experience
- Imagining the Future
- Alumni Networks and Organizations
- The Role of Scientist and Scholars in Society—What can we do together.

I was pleased to be able to represent you and our DAAD Alumni Association of the USA. In my presentation I focused on the history, mission and activities of our association, which was established as a community movement of alumni who wanted to give back to the DAAD for the excellent international education they had received in Germany. Gradually the desire emerged among alumni to stay connected socially and culturally, but also to want to contribute to the discourse of higher education in the USA, guided by exemplary practices of the DAAD they had experienced in Germany. With the massification of higher education in the USA, the increase in its cost, austerity financing of public education that set in in the 1980's, the huge debt students in the USA (1 ½ Trillion Dollars) took on to finance their higher education and the corresponding decline in study abroad that became a luxury that most students could no longer afford, alumni believed that global standards and practices of excellence in the internationalization of education needed to be studied and discussed. Providing equal access and opportunity to all qualified students, regardless of their ability to pay for their education, was what the DAAD and its alumni came to practice and advocate. Alumni wanted to democratize higher education in the USA, retaining it as the engine of equality and upward mobility, which it still is in Germany, where higher education is relatively free. The reports you have read in our Newsletters from students who have studied/researched in Germany show that their lives are transformed, that they become more self confident as individuals, that they are emerging with new identities, that in addition to a personal and national self, they are acquiring a global self, a global identity as they become members of global communities.

We share these ideals of higher international education and practice them in the DAAD AA. That is why I have cherished representing you and DAAD AA. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to do so as Trustee and President of this great Association. I look forward to greeting you personally at the *Sound Understanding Concert* on April 11th in Carnegie Hall in New York!
Best wishes,

Rosmarie Morewedge

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DAAD NY

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