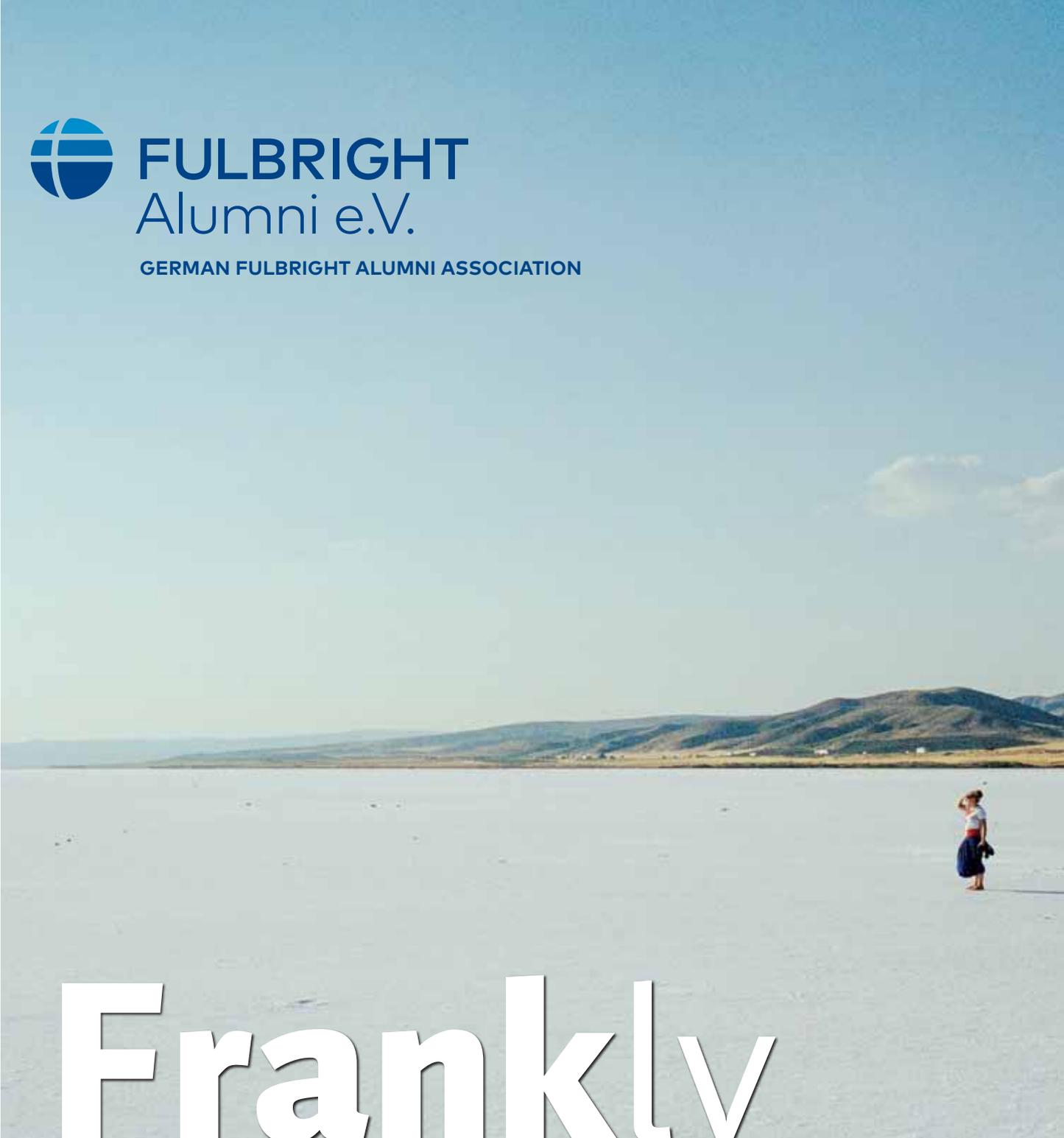




FULBRIGHT
Alumni e.V.

GERMAN FULBRIGHT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

PURSUING OUR SOCIAL CONSCIENCE



Frankly

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. Magazine

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Dear Readers,

Our “Social Conscience” calls on us to take a hard look at the state of the world – and at ourselves. In this challenging time, we have to find compassion and the courage to act, to take responsibility, to use our voices to raise awareness and to create an impact – as so many in our Fulbright community are already doing!

This year’s FRANKly starts off with a look at this very community. Marking the 70th anniversary of the German-American Fulbright Program, Dr. Cathleen Fisher, Charlotte Securius-Carr and Melanie Guther stress the impact the Fulbright Program itself has had and continues to have (p. 10). Caroline Gunderson shares with us her experience of the unspoken bond of the Fulbright community and its potential to affect change (p. 12) and Jeff Peck reminds us of the importance of giving back (p. 13).

Fulbright artists, Felix Gephart, Lisa Stybor, Niklas Washausen and Viktor Hübner (p. 14) start us off on a journey of examples of how the pursuit of our social conscience can look like. They offer visual interpretations of social issues and insights through sharing with us some of their paintings, graffiti and pictures.

Our authors force us to confront difficult questions and realities in many areas and offer suggestions of how we can reflect on our role in society and realign our moral compass. Listening to our “social conscience” should not just be an exercise of making ourselves feel better. It is a necessary step on the path to opening our eyes, to painfully and critically taking a look at the grievances and injustices of the world, and finally to not just listen but to pursue our social conscience. And this is how:

Kate Miller shows us the reality of workplace sexism and inequality, presenting us with a weapon to fight this: the “Gender Equality Toolkit” (p. 20). Aynur Durak and Zeynep Alraqeb follow this up by calling out the double standards between genders but also those generally inherent in society with a clear demand for more diversity (p. 24).

The pressing issue of sustainability is explored by two authors. While both include business and economic thinking as important areas in which a transformation needs to take place, Joerg Geier especially urges us to act more authentically and to transform our own behavior (p. 27). Rózsa Simon joins this call by identifying our relationship with

plastic as a key issue and by compelling us to rethink our approach to waste – and our attitude towards those having to bear the brunt of the consequences of our behavior (p. 30).

Many of the challenges we face today stem from systemic, often historical injustices. Zachary Gallant shares with us a Jewish perspective on the German model of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* and *Aufarbeitung* and confronts us with questions we need to consider – and answer (p. 33). Alana Deluty questions the injustice of Puerto Rico’s status as a U.S. territory as well as the ongoing exploitation and calls for a change (p. 36).

We conclude this exploration of our social conscience – in this edition, not in life! – by looking at examples of action taken to empower people in systemically and economically disadvantaged areas of the world. Claus Vollrath-Rödiger shares with us his experiences of joining the Senior Expert Service and the Open Learning Centre in their efforts of constructing libraries in Malawi with the emphasis on local ownership (p. 38). Kyle Hernandez of Watts of Love shows us their contribution to fighting poverty and creating self-sufficiency by bringing light into the world (p. 41).

I am proud to present to you this year’s FRANKly and our authors’ empowering projects and causes. I hope they inspire thoughts and discussions. Feel free to make contributions to these causes and to engage with the authors through the channels provided in the articles or by reaching out to us.

As Fulbrighters we have great potential – to affect change but also to act as a community. This is also reflected in the many activities and events the association and the regional groups were finally able to carry out again in person! Read up on what we’ve been up to and join us in these activities in the future!

Huge thanks are in order to everyone who joined in this FRANKly – the authors, the artists, and of course our graphic artist Astrid Weingarten, our proofreaders Andreas Schoberth and Sarah Martin and last but not least: you, our readers!

And now it is time to act and to make a change!


Jana Frey

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Greetings from the President



Dear Fulbrighters and Friends,

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the 2022 issue of our own FRANKly magazine. This magazine would not be possible without the contributors and authors who produced some truly amazing content. Thank you all dearly for sharing your thoughts, experiences, and art with us. A special shoutout goes out to our editor, Jana Frey, for her continuous engagement.

We are currently living in challenging times with the ongoing pandemic, injustices and inequalities, the overarching climate crisis, as well as wars like Russia's attack against Ukraine happening close to us. In times like these we are encouraged to listen closely to our social conscience, our sense of responsibility to engage with issues that not only affect us, but everyone. Our wonderful Fulbright community followed their inner call and came together in amazing ways.

Our community stepped up to support Ukrainian refugees by activating and gathering local resources. We are particularly proud of Vera Kostiuik Busch, who received the Special Prize of the Mulert Award 2022 for her project "Mother Tongue – Ukrainian" and her tireless efforts in supporting Ukrainians with her Pro Ukraine e.V. We celebrated her and Dr. John Ashley Null, the winner of this year's Mulert Award for his engagement in the "Emotional Wellness Training Program" for young soccer players at an event in Cologne this year. There, we also took the opportunity to look back at 35+1 years FAeV to celebrate the association's anniversary.

Despite the current challenges, our association achieved remarkable milestones this past year. Starting with a strategy meeting in April, during which we manifested our new slogan "we keep the Fulbright experience going", this year also saw the start of shifting our IT infrastructure to a newer and integrative platform. This enabled us to

collaborate better, and we thank our very competent IT team of Jan Homburg, Marius Brinkmann, and Marc Waserek for their hard work and support.

Formats that proved to vitalize our alumni community were continued, expanded, and reimagined, with our social conscience at the forefront. We are particularly thankful to Daniel Gossen, our mentoring chair, and Thomas Weißschnur, our VP Members, for expanding and strengthening our mentoring program. Together with the Fulbright Commission we launched the podcast "Fulbright PULSE," which was initiated by Mohamed Kari and is now being further produced collaboratively with Alexandra Schaller, our new podcast chair. We also expanded our board and welcomed two inspiring women to the extended board, Zeynep Alraqeb, our new diversity chair, and Rózsa Simon our first ever sustainability chair, who not only submitted an insightful article for this issue, but who supports our association in addressing these topics responsibly.

We have also enjoyed working with many partners to achieve our lofty goals and continue to improve our association. We look forward to continuing the fruitful collaboration we established throughout the last couple of years with Fulbright Germany and congratulate them on their 70th anniversary of the German-American Fulbright Program. Last year's new beginnings of collaborating with other alumni organizations through the German American Alumni network are transcending into actions. We held several workshops and meetings and are collectively planning a Transatlantic Alumni Conference in Erfurt for June 2023.

Reading through the contributions shared in this year's FRANKly will hopefully inspire you to pursue your social conscience and share your talents to keep the Fulbright experience going and make this world a better place.

Yours truly, Andreas Dewald



Caroline Gunderson



Thomas Weißschnur



Amanda Gläser-Bligh



Andreas Dewald



Michael Vetter

Meet the Board

Caroline Gunderson Vice President Events Contact for American Grantees

Caroline is a Fulbright ETA alumna who completed her grant at the UniverSaale Gesamtschule in Jena, Thuringia in 2021-22. She decided to extend her engagement as a foreign language assistant and is currently working at the Gymnasium Dörpsweg in Hamburg. She is a graduate of Southern Methodist University, in Dallas, Texas, with majors in Accounting and German. Her experiences include interning in the financial control sector of PepsiCo and the National Federal Tax Services branch of Deloitte and Touche as well as being involved in SMU's liberal arts-oriented University Honors Program. She is excited to be continuing in her role as the U.S. Grantee Representative and is looking forward to furthering her Fulbright involvement through her newly assumed role as VP Events. Through these efforts, she hopes to help deepen the ties among Fulbrighters and facilitate broader engagement within the Fulbright community as a whole.

Thomas Weißschnur Vice President Members

Thomas received his diploma in the Performing Arts program at the Freiburg University of Music. He spent an exchange year in Helsinki at Sibelius Academy and continued his studies on a Fulbright scholarship at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, in 2007 before finishing his musical education at the Berlin University of the Arts. He has held several positions in Orchestras like The Macau Orchestra in China or the Düsseldorfer Symphoniker and continues to work as a freelance clarinetist. In addition to music, Thomas studied Business Administration at the University of Hagen and started working as a freelance management consultant with several boutique firms, following his time as a Visiting Associate at the Boston Consulting Group. He joined the extended board in 2021. As VP Members, he is looking forward to the transition of processes into the digital age, bringing back local in-person events and welcoming U.S. Grantees and Returnees into our local alumni communities.

The Board

Amanda Gläser-Bligh Vice President Communications

Since her Fulbright year 2005-06 as a Fulbright Enterprise Scholar at the University of Bremen, Amanda has worked in operations and communications for E.ON and Zalando in Germany. She joined the Fulbright Alumni Association board as VP of Communications this past May, but had been part of the extended board since April 2021, when she started as webmaster and social media editor. Amanda hopes to increase followers and engagement on our own social media channels and welcomes you to follow along on Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. In her spare time, she puts on her Pikachu hat and plays Pokémon Go.

Andreas Dewald President

Prior to going to the U.S. on a Fulbright scholarship in 2017-18, Andreas graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Engineering Management from Hochschule Darmstadt. He spent his Fulbright at Purdue University in Indiana where he pursued a Master's degree in Technology, Leadership, and Innovation. His passion for Fulbright led him to joining the board as VP Members upon his return to Germany in 2019. After he finished his Master's degree in Engineering Management, he started working as a consultant for digitalization and agility master at DB Systel. Andreas, who also goes by "Andi", was elected president last year and wants to strengthen the cooperation with the Fulbright Commission and other Alumni Associations, as well as to start new initiatives to activate our wonderful Fulbright alumni community. He loves sports, especially bouldering and inline hockey, and spending time at his Kleingarten.

Michael Vetter Vice President Finance

Michael spent his Fulbright year 2007-08 at the University of Miami School of Law after finishing his law studies in Germany and graduated with a Master of Laws degree in 2008. He is currently working as an antitrust and state aid lawyer at one of the largest European energy providers. He joined the board this year as VP Finances after being VP Events last year and having been responsible for the regional chapter Düsseldorf Rhein-Ruhr a few years ago. Although it has been more than 10 years since his Fulbright experience, he is still passionate about international understanding and the vision of the German Fulbright Alumni Association – "we keep the Fulbright experience going." Michael loves to bring people together – virtually and in person – to meet and discuss.

The Extended Board



Jana Frey FRANKly Editor

Jana Frey has a Bachelor's degree in History and English from Saarland University and a Master's degree in Global History from Heidelberg University. Jana attended the University of Oregon on a Fulbright travel scholarship in 2014-15. She is currently a project manager for PhD scholarships for candidates from Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa as well as accompanying social measures at the Gerda Henkel Foundation in Düsseldorf, Germany. Jana occasionally works as a freelance editor and translator and is a Judo fighter in her free time. She joined the extended board as the FRANKly editor in 2020 and hopes to create magazine issues full of relevant and creative content that inspire and connect us not just as Fulbrighters but as people.

Johannes Schulz Project Management

Following stints in Latvia and China, Johannes spent his Fulbright year 2008-09 at the University of Iowa and received his Master's of Laws in 2009. He started his career in the energy industry and currently works as senior regulatory advisor on EU electricity trading and decarbonization topics. Johannes has spent time in the Philippines at a local non-profit organization in 2012 as well as in England in 2018. He was the coordinator for the Rhein-Ruhr regional chapter for three years. After returning to Düsseldorf, he became active in the FAeV by helping to organize the Winter Ball 2019. After three years on the board as VP Finances, Johannes decided not to stand for re-election in 2022 in order to give priority to his professional development and family. This, however, did not mean that he would sit quietly on the sidelines. As the chair for project management, Johannes plans on implementing some of the ambitious ideas developed by the board over the past few years.

left: Jana Frey
and Johannes Schulz

right: Elke Handschug-Brosin,
Daniel Hofmann, Alexander Rose,
Christa Orlowski

Elke Handschug-Brosin Family Weekend

Elke founded the Fulbright Family Weekend because she wanted to stay active in the FAeV as a mother of three boys. Her twins were born in 2000, and the tradition of the Fulbright Family Weekend started in 2001. It is meant to target everyone who feels part of the Fulbright Family – not only those who have turned into parents. The event takes place on an annual basis in Königstein near Dresden (Saxon Switzerland). Elke spent three years (1992-95) as a Fulbright Scholar in Michigan and Alaska. She graduated from MSU with a Master's degree in Park and Recreation Resource Management and headed the Visitor Industry Program at the University of Alaska Southeast in Juneau. Her heart has never really left Alaska, thus, she has turned her dedication to this beautiful state into a career, currently as the European representative of Explore Fairbanks Alaska. Elke lives in Radebeul near Dresden with her family.

Daniel Hofmann Outreach

Before embarking on his Fulbright journey, Daniel graduated with a Bachelor's degree in International Retail Management from the Technische Hochschule Ingolstadt in 2017. He spent his Fulbright at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge to pursue his Master of Business Administration and received his degree in 2019. During his time at LSU, he was actively involved in campus life as Vice President of the LSU Men's Soccer Club and International Chair of the MBA Association. Since then, he has returned to his hometown, Fürth, and currently works Executive Assistant to the CHRO at Schaeffler. This is Daniel's second year as the Outreach Chair of the German Fulbright Alumni Association. In his role he aims to continue connecting our association with other German-American alumni associations, institutions and businesses alike, in order to offer our members various ways to meet like-minded and inspiring people. Daniel is passionate about sports, entrepreneurship and specialty coffee.

Zeynep Alraqeb Diversity Alumni

Zeynep is a multilingual economist with experience in macroeconomics, social entrepreneurship and politics. She is currently based in Frankfurt and works at the Federal Bank. During her studies in Germany and the UK, she also studied abroad in Turkey and in the U.S., where she was a Fulbright Diversity Initiative scholar at the University of Kentucky in 2012. This year, she was elected to the extended board of the FAeV, as head of diversity. Currently, she is the recipient of the Carl Duisberg Fellowship where she will further her research on transatlantic relations in New York City, in the fall of 2022.



Christa Orlowski Welcome Meeting

Christa obtained a degree in English and History from Cologne University where she subsequently worked as an assistant lecturer at the Anglo-American History Department before taking up teaching. She spent her Fulbright year as an exchange teacher at a high school near McAllen, Texas in 1995-96. She has lived in Cologne most of her life, except for a summer job as a tour guide in London and three years in the U.S. Christa loves travelling, singing, literature and the theater. Her involvement in different functions with a non-profit exchange organization formerly named "Fulbright Gesellschaft" started in the 1980s and is due to her dedication to the idea of offering students a unique opportunity of experiencing a different culture in an every-day context. Moreover, she is passionate about lessons to be learned from history and is part of several organizations focusing on this topic. To her, sustaining transatlantic bonds is another way of contributing to this endeavor.

Alexander Rose Jürgen Mulert Memorial Award

Alex spent his Fulbright year at Purdue University, Indiana in 2019-20, majoring in Industrial Engineering. He enjoyed being part of several student organizations and the Fulbright community at Purdue and is excited to continue fostering German-American understanding as extended board member for the prestigious Jürgen Mulert Award. After his time at Purdue, Alex joined an electric mobility pioneer in San Francisco for an internship and completed his Master's degree at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. Alex is now working as a management consultant in Germany, focusing on Procurement and Operational Excellence. He is looking forward to many exciting applications for the 2023 Mulert Award with exceptional projects that promote mutual understanding.



Lisa Schmitz, Marc Wasserek,
Marius Brinkmann, Dagmar Schreiber

Marc Wasserek
Data Management

Marc participated in the Fulbright “Leaders in Entrepreneurship” program at Louisiana State University in 2021. He studies Industrial Engineering and co-founded an E-Learning platform. His previous experience on the boards of associations has shown him the importance of handling “know-how”. Passionate about education technology and the transfer of know-how, he decided to join the extended board as the person responsible for data management, the efficiency of which he hopes to improve within the Fulbright Alumni Association. In doing so, he focuses on digitalization and simplification of the process of knowledge transfer.

Marius Brinkmann
Webmaster

As a Fulbright Scholar, Marius completed a Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering at Florida Polytechnic University from 2018-19. After returning to Germany, he completed his second Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering and Information Technology at the Technical University of Munich in August 2021. Since 2022, Marius has been pursuing a PhD at the Technical University of Munich in collaboration with Rohde & Schwarz focusing on radar signal processing and microwave imaging. His hobbies include rock climbing, photography, and baking sourdough pizza. In May 2022, he joined the extended board of the German Fulbright Alumni Association as the new Webmaster, hoping to increase page views and simplify processes. In addition, Marius also supports the automation of the matching process for the mentoring program.

Rózsa Simon
Sustainability

Born and raised in Germany with Hungarian roots, Rózsa has lived on 3 different continents and traveled and explored more than 20 countries. She spent her Fulbright from 2016-19 in New York and graduated from Parsons, The New School in Strategic Design and Management with a Master of Science. After returning to Germany, she started her journey as a female entrepreneur combining an entrepreneurial drive with a sustainability mindset and ethnographic focus in order to create value beyond wealth. As co-founder of Pre-cycle, she worked with plastic offsetting and developed the digital funding infrastructure with plastic credits enabling the financing of impact projects and recycling activities in developing nations. She joined the extended board as Head of Sustainability earlier this year. Her first accomplishment was the coordination of a cleanup event for the 2022 World Clean Up Day, one of the biggest civic movements globally for a more plastic-free world.

Lisa Schmitz
International Coordinator

Lisa graduated from Ruhr-Universität Bochum with a Bachelor’s degree in History and English & American Studies and from Westfälische Hochschule with a Bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Public Relations. She moved to Boston on a Fulbright scholarship in 2014 to obtain an Master’s degree in Global Studies and International Relations with a concentration in Conflict Resolution from Northeastern University. She completed her PhD in Political Science at Leuphana University Lüneburg in 2022. Lisa lives in Berlin, where she currently works at the Bundestag. She was already a member of the German Fulbright Alumni Association’s extended board from 2016-21. She rejoined the board in 2022. In her capacity as the International Coordinator, Lisa is responsible for reaching out to and keeping in contact with other Fulbright Alumni communities around the world and exploring potential collaboration opportunities. Lisa is also a board member of the European Network of American Alumni Associations.

Dagmar Schreiber
Sailing Trip

The coordinator of the biannual FAeV’s sailing trip organizes the trip with operator Clipper – Deutsches Jugendwerk zur See e.V. This involves finding the right ship and determining the route, destination, time, crew, etc. From the invitation to all FAeV members, sending packing lists, and managing last-minute changes, the position entails doing sweet work while looking forward to a relaxing and inspiring week on the Baltic Sea with fellow Fulbrighters every other summer. Dagmar spent her Fulbright year 1991-92 in Washington, D.C., obtaining a Master of Laws degree in International & Comparative Law from George Washington University Law School. She has enjoyed sailing on old wooden ships ever since her first FAeV sailing trip in 1993 and tries very hard to get other Fulbrighters hooked on the same sea adventure.

The Extended Board

Jürgen Simon
Archive

More than 35 years after its foundation, the German Fulbright Alumni Association has accumulated documents, publications and notes, which reflect the spirit of the past decades as well as the ongoing activities. To develop the structure for preserving the Association’s documents for future generations of Fulbright alumni, this extended board position was created in 2015. With a Fulbright travel grant plus a direct exchange fellowship from Christian-Albrechts-University at Kiel, Jürgen continued his student life at the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. Years later he returned to Germany with an MBA and a PhD in Business. He worked in various positions in banking and finance, followed by jobs as administrator and instructor for universities of applied sciences.

Daniel Gossen
Mentoring

Daniel is our member responsible for mentoring. He joined the extended board in 2021. He did his Bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering and his Master’s degree in Robotics in Hannover at the LUH. As a Fulbright scholar, he pursued a second Master’s degree in Mechanical Engineering at Purdue University in 2019. Since September 2021, he is working on a PhD in Mechanical Engineering at RWTH Aachen. Besides his commitment within the Fulbright Alumni Association, he dances Popping and Breakdance and also dedicates his time as a volunteer in this scene on different occasions. Through his position in the extended board, he would like to help new members experience the same open-mindedness he was able to enjoy in the U.S.

Alexandra Schaller
Podcast

Alexandra was born in Berlin and has a Bachelor’s degree in Media Management and a Master’s degree in Journalism and International Conflicts. She spent her Fulbright year 2019-20 in Long Beach, California, where she studied Journalism at the California State University Long Beach. She was always very into audio journalism, which is why she also had a radio show at 22WestRadio back in California. When she came back to Germany, she decided to share her experiences and the experiences of others through the Fulbright Podcast called “Fulbright PULSE”. The podcast tells stories of Fulbrighters that had great careers because of the Fulbright experience. Alexandra is currently working as a podcaster for “Ströer News Publishing” in Berlin.

Rózsa Simon, Tristan Cristofolini, Jürgen Simon,
Alexandra Schaller, Zeynep Alraqeb, Daniel Gossen

Tristan Cristofolini
Fulbright Alumni e.V. Office

Tristan Cristofolini is the manager of the Fulbright Alumni e.V. office in Frankfurt am Main. Although he is not a Fulbright Alumn, his devotion to the Fulbright cause is rooted in his interests as a student of American Studies at Goethe-University. As Office Manager, his responsibilities include connecting members with questions to the board, upholding contacts with various partners and clients, and to keep things running smoothly. Tristan started his American Studies Master’s degree in the fall of 2019. He hopes that the Fulbright idea of connecting people of different cultures through scholarly exchange will persist in its current form and that the FAeV will continue to thrive, even during difficult political times.

Not featured
Jan Homburg – IT
Paul Künzle – Grant Management



70 YEARS OF FULBRIGHT

Enduring Values in Changing Times

by Dr. Cathleen Fisher, Charlotte Securius-Carr and Melanie Guther



This year, the German-American Fulbright Commission has joined with alumni:ae, partners, and friends to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the German-American Fulbright Program. It marks seven decades of the program’s individual, societal and global impact, and its firm and enduring commitment to respect for diversity of people and perspectives, the power of ideas and education, and the transformative influence of cultural exchanges.

Founded in 1952 and supporting German-American exchanges since 1953, the German-American Fulbright Commission administers one of the largest and most varied of the Fulbright programs worldwide. Through its individual grants, summer institutes, and group programs, the Commission has sponsored over 40,000 Germans and Americans, enriching educational and scholarly exchanges, fostering cross-cultural understanding, and building lasting connections.

In considering how to celebrate this anniversary, it was important for us to not simply reflect on what has been achieved, but to look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of a complex and changing world. Working with regional Fulbright partners and alumni:ae at the German-American Institutes in Cologne, Leipzig, and Nuremberg, we hosted discussions, presentations, and informal exchanges on issues such as academic mobility in times of crisis, the sustainability of academic exchanges, the state of transatlantic relations, and the contribution of Fulbright alumni:ae to global problem solving. Together, these partnered events offered an opportunity for our alumni:ae to share their thoughts and expertise with a larger audience and to celebrate the continued impact and relevance of the Fulbright experience.

The importance of international cultural and intellectual exchange has only grown since the founding of the German-American Fulbright Program (Fulbright Germany) 70 years ago. Interest in and the opportunities for international scientific mobility have increased enormously over the last several decades, as has the number of students and researchers going abroad and coming to Germany. The

spread of tertiary education opportunities, internationalization of higher education institutions, and emergence of excellent universities across the globe both drive and facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing with partners around the world.

Fulbright Germany, along with its grantees and alumni:ae, has played an important role in sustaining dialogue between Germany and the United States. Beyond its classic individual student and scholar grants, group programs have expanded exchanges to many other fields and professions. The program for German and American higher education experts, for example, has helped build successful university partnerships across the Atlantic, while other Fulbright programs have facilitated transatlantic collaboration in journalism, museum administration, and digitalization. We are proud that, in the seven decades of the Fulbright program in Germany, we have been able to contribute broadly to advance the boundaries of knowledge and promote new partnerships across a wide range of fields, and to make a multitude of vital and unique exchanges possible.

And yet, much remains to be done. Transatlantic exchanges, and international exchanges as a whole, remain inaccessible to many. Myriad barriers to participation mean that international educational exchanges fail to reflect the full diversity of our societies. The big task, including for Fulbright exchanges, is to make grant opportunities more accessible and inclusive. In Fulbright Germany’s scholarship programs, our aim is to advance inclusive excellence, so that our programs reflect as much as possible the diversity of and broad dispersion of talent in our two societies. To that end, we have introduced additional programs and formats to reach institutions, disciplines, and young talent that have been underrepresented in the transatlantic dialogue. For in the end, it is our grantees and alumni:ae, with their diverse backgrounds, talents and ambitions, who will carry the Fulbright spirit of cross-cultural understanding to their communities and professional networks across our respective societies, and thus insure the relevance of the Fulbright program into the future.

Our alumni:ae also have a critical role to play in strengthening international understanding and cooperation in the face of strong countervailing domestic and global forces. Fulbright Germany believes that global challenges and conflicts, such as the ones we are currently experiencing, cannot be overcome alone but must be resolved through joint efforts informed by an understanding of the complex historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors that shape individual and national perspectives and approaches to global conflicts and challenges. As stated in the Fulbright Germany’s Values Statement, we believe that the face-to-face encounters, enabled through Fulbright programs, not only help to open minds to different views of the world, but also to recognition of our common humanity and shared challenges. An appreciation of difference and commonality, and of the meaning and value or partnerships between nations, is also essential to future cooperation between Germany and the United States. To be partners means to support each other, to share expertise, and to master difficult situations together.

On the other hand, while the need for international learning and dialogue has perhaps never been greater, the international educational and professional exchange programs are at a crossroads. Both two immediate crises – the global Coronavirus pandemic and Russian attack on and war in Ukraine – as well as the ongoing and existential climate crisis raise fundamental questions for international educational mobility: What impact will rising geopolitical tensions or lingering public health concerns have on academic and scientific exchanges, including between the Global North and Global South? Can we continue to champion face-to-face encounters between Germans and Americans while also limiting the impact on the

environment and living conditions in other regions of the world? Further, how can the Fulbright program advance knowledge sharing in the face of populism and science denial within our societies? Last but not least, how can we continue to implement the values of our program when the resources for academic and cultural exchange become scarcer?

Some may point to the potential of digital formats to address some of these challenges and to sustain international exchange even in the absence of face-to-face exchanges. We disagree. Propelled by the pandemic, the German-American Fulbright program has used, and will continue to use, digital tools to enable easily accessible online transatlantic dialogues with minimal carbon footprint. However, in keeping with its mission, the German-American Fulbright Commission remains committed to face-to-face exchanges. Digital formats can help us to further improve the support of our grantees and alumni:ae, to enrich their exchange experience, and to stay connected. But we want to bring people together.

We will do so while developing new and mutually compatible models of exchange based on the principles of inclusive excellence and sustainable international mobility. We look forward to working closely with our board and funders, the German and global Fulbright community, and other partners to promote our enduring goals and values through adaptive change in an uncertain and turbulent world.



Dr. Cathleen Fisher
Executive Director



Charlotte Securius-Carr
Academic Counsel



Melanie Guther
Student Assistant

Our Fulbright Community

by Caroline Gunderson

I knew from very early on as an undergrad that I wanted to apply for a Fulbright scholarship. I was convinced of the value inherent in such a transatlantic exchange and was captivated by the prospect of having that experience be a part of my own education.

That I would be confronted with the edges of my comfort zone, learn to grow beyond those edges, and gain an understanding of another culture – or at least of the multiplicity of cultures in general – that I would meet new people, build lasting friendships, and maybe, just maybe, develop a language proficiency beyond that of a bewildered tourist or five-year-old kindergartner were all things I had hoped for and anticipated. They are all things my year as an English Teaching Assistant did in fact bring me (though one might couch that claim with an “arguably” vis a vis “meine Deutschkenntnisse”). I would be surprised to hear from an ETA, or a grantee in general, who did not finish their Fulbright with some similar combination of growth, immersion, and broadened horizons. What I did not expect, however, or at least expect to be so deeply meaningful, was the community among Fulbrighters in which I would come to find such a sense of belonging.

I was fortunate to have two other grantees with me – Ellen and Zoe – during my ETA year in Jena, Thuringia. Over the course of the year, I grew tremendously close to them both and today count them among two of my favorite people. Yet, far beyond that concentrated, local community, I found myself impacted and inspired by the seemingly countless eager, bright, outgoing, and thoughtful people I met throughout the broader Fulbright network and through the Alumni Association.

When I talk about Fulbright with friends or acquaintances, I realize how impossible it is to adequately describe this often-unspoken bond and commonality that the affiliation encompasses. Though I can't speak for everyone, I'm confident I'm not alone in experiencing that always-meaningful sense of never being alone. An ocean away from where I grew up and where I call home, I've never once felt isolated. I think that speaks volumes not so much for any amount of resilience or sense of adventure that I may or may not personally have but rather for the community and environment in which I find myself venturing.

To be surrounded by people with such tremendous passion and intelligence and drive, people with the broadest spectrum of interests and expertise, is to be inspired by them. In the case of Fulbrighters, it is also to be unfailingly supported by them. The diversity of our interests and the intersectionality of our passions create a network capable of more than any one of us could likely imagine on our own. Beyond being merely something of sentimental value, that network and our common understanding of its strength present somewhat of an obligation to utilize it, to ensure that its potential is realized to the fullest extent possible.

The things about which we're passionate reflect a part of our own personal conscience – what we believe important and worthwhile. My time as a Fulbrighter has taught me nothing if not, regardless of academic background or profession, we all have causes at the core of our social consciences. The idea of pursuing those causes alone has the tendency to be daunting. The tangible act of pursuing them as a part of the Fulbright community has the potential to be world changing. It is that capacity to affect widespread change through the pursuit of our own social consciences and the inspiration of that pursuit in others that I've come to cherish most about my Fulbright experience. It is in our community that I've come to recognize most the value of that experience.



Left to right: Caroline, Zoe (Merz, Researcher), and Ellen (McPherson, ETA) at the Griesbachsches Gartenhaus in Jena; photo: Caroline Gunderson

Caroline is the Vice President for Events as well as the Extended Board Member for U.S. Grantees (p. 5).

“Giving Back” as Social Action

by Jeff Peck

As President of the Association of Friends and Sponsors of the German-American Fulbright Program e.V. (VFF) and three-time Fulbrighter myself, I am committed to the future stability of the institution that changed my life and that of many others. In fact, in this position I work to increase financial and human resources that are essential to maintain and grow the programs that Fulbright offers, especially as government budgets are cut.

Simultaneously, the attention that is finally being paid to underrepresented groups in Fulbright means that more and different kinds of people should be applying than ever before. Unfortunately, this inclusivity, as necessary and desirable as it is, may burden the system whose very task it is to create a more diverse environment. Aside from the sheer numbers, in my opinion it is ethically and morally responsible to make it possible for all people to be Fulbrighters, no matter what gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

While one would hope that the Fulbright experience – living and learning in another culture – would inspire “intercultural” awareness, more needs to be done to bring a “social conscience” into the mix. Fortunately, the self-reflexivity and self-awareness that comes with experiencing oneself as a “foreigner” provides a strong basis for triggering this kind of personal evolution.

But this is not always the case, and therefore, as someone dedicated to these goals, I found that encouraging beneficiaries to “give back” to such programs, such as Fulbright, or for that matter to other similar institutions from which one has benefited academically, professionally or personally, is the right thing to do. Those on both sides of the equation – so to speak, the “givers” and the “receivers,” benefit substantially. A little can go a long way.

It is important to remember that the Fulbright experience only begins with the time abroad and continues long after, (some might say it even starts during the application and orientation process), hopefully for one's entire lifetime. As a member of what we like to call the “one Fulbright Community” (the German-American Fulbright Commission, the German Fulbright Alumni Association e.V. and the VFF), a “Fulbright family” of sorts, the experience can become a part of one's own lifecycle extending and enriching in perpetuity. “Giving back” can actually be the essential structure of connecting and belonging to this one Fulbright Community. In short, being a Fulbrighter becomes the gift that keeps on giving!

For these reasons, I am now more than ever encouraging people to find an appropriate moment – often far after their actual stay abroad and later in their lifecycle – to give back to the institutions that have been instrumental in their lives. The most obvious way is financial, i.e. making a contribution of whatever amount that can be used to support other students, particularly in those groups who have been denied, hindered, or even not been aware of these possibilities. I think here of the VFF and Alumni Association that support short term programs in the United States for Germans with so-called “migration background” to meet other minorities for academic and personal exchange.

But money is not the only way. Contributing time and effort is another helping hand, such as is obvious with the German Fulbright Alumni Association that sponsors this publication. One should spread the word at workplaces, colleges, universities, schools and other institutions that promote learning of every kind. Encouraging friends, family or colleagues to apply is also an important way to be involved. Of course, the notion of “giving back” is imbedded more naturally in a voluntaristic culture like the United States. But it is a significant gesture also to educate German friends and colleagues that this practice contributes to a stronger and better civic community. Moreover, it helps foster a more interconnected and interdependent society that experiences the benefit of working together at multiple levels to enhance chances for others, particularly those less privileged.

I hope that these few thoughts on this topic, presented in this publication in particular, might stimulate a different kind of thinking about how one Fulbrighter can make a difference.

Find out more about the “Verein der Freunde und Förderer des deutsch-amerikanischen Fulbright Programms e.V.” and become a member at: <https://www.fulbright-vff.de/>



Prof. Dr. Jeff Peck aside from his current position mentioned above, was co-author of, “Moving from Individual Experience to Institutional Change. European Fulbright Diversity Initiative (EFDI). A Task Force Report,” 2019.



BEWARE, SAUSTELLE

The mural "Beware, Saustelle" was created together with the graffiti artists D-Joe, Mon, Natrix and Cors, with Felix Gephart taking on the part of the fleeing pigs and humans as well as parts of the lavish background ambience. It measures 13.1x 72.2 feet. The scenario is a continuation of the final sequence of George Orwell's fable "Animal Farm," where man and pig have joined forces to subjugate the once revolutionary-minded livestock of a farm. In the picture many a biped is brought down by some unexpected visitors.



RUMOR 19

"Rumor 19" is a mural in Berlin Spandau measuring 13.1 x 29.5 feet. It was painted in 2020 and refers to the A. Paul Weber lithograph "The Rumor". Both images take satirical aim at the susceptibility of the masses to hysterical enthusiasm, blind conformism and unthinking obedience to authority.



FULBRIGHT PORTRAIT

One of the fascinating aspects about Senator Fulbright's personality was that he dared to have his very own, indeed quite controversial, opinions across party lines. The latter is unusual for career-oriented contemporaries in quiet times – given the specific historical context of the narrow corridors of opinion during the McCarthy Era, it was outstanding. While his opposition to grant voting rights to black Americans casts a shadow on his lifetime achievement, his efforts and accomplishments shall not be forgotten. Fulbright's warnings against the blatant arrogance and hubris of Great Powers and his strong commitment to the idea of international mutual understanding were important milestones. The portrait was spray-painted without a grid or similar tools and measures 2 x 1,55 meters.



Felix Gephart graduated with a Master's degree in Illustration as Visual Essay from the New York School of Visual Arts in 2008 on a Fulbright Scholarship. Afterwards, he worked on murals on literary themes, illustrations for newspapers, magazines and books. He continued to exhibit in New York, Berlin and Cologne.

Among his mostly large-format works on paper are brush drawings for George Orwell's highly topical surveillance dystopia "1984," ink paintings for Dalton Trumbo's anti-war classic "Johnny got his gun," and rapidograph drawings that provide deep insights into the soul of Bret Easton Ellis' "American Psycho." Scenes of legendary gang feuds and the New York draft riots during the Civil War for his book "Wicked New York" emerge from dark, nebulous haze and gain contour through sharp-edged black and white shapes with spray-paint and acrylic.

Felix Gephart draws and spray-paints in Berlin and Wuppertal, and teaches artist anatomy.

Find more info on Felix and his work here: <https://www.felixgephart.de>

photo: Frederick Schulz

LISA STYBOR



STILLNESS AT THE EVENING _ July 11, 2020 at 9pm_ Augustus-
burg 2020 colour pencils on paper_ with white frame 100x70cm



EAGLE IB _ Chin. ink on paper 30x40cm_2006

TO GIVE SOMETHING BACK:

This is important for me, and as an artist I can do this in many ways.

One way is to take historical responsibility, to try to work artistically on difficult subjects, themes which shall not be forgotten, like Germany during the time of National Socialism. The 2021 project "Dialogues against forgetting" (exhibited at Fulbright Open Art Space, Berlin, in June 2022 and in the library of the Friedensau University, Möckern, in October 2022) is an example. But it has to be art, not an 'explanation' or illustration, which is not easy. I created a book on this and chose to combine historical photos and my own landscape drawings.

Another way is to give the majority of the (potential) profits away to companies that dedicate their work to the rights of the earth, like the environment. An example is the exhibition about Haida Gwaii, the island of the First Nations of the Westcoast of Northern America, in November 2022 at the Deutsche Umwelthilfe in Berlin.



Lisa Stybor finished her Design/Fine Arts Diploma in Aachen in 1986 and continued with a Fulbright Scholarship in Norman, Okla-

homa. She wanted to study the situation of the Native American people and their place in society. Lisa received a second Fulbright scholarship and finished her Master of Fine Arts in Painting in 1988. With the wide-open skies and tornados of Oklahoma, she found her main issue as an artist: space. Back in Europe, she became a landscape painter and teacher at the University in Dessau. The history of the indigenous people in the U.S. had left an extreme impression on her and this became her second theme – the pain and suffering people endure, especially that which is caused by other humans. She also spent several months in Canada to experience Haida Gwaii and the culture of the Haida. She is currently working on a book about this time titled "Song of Haida Gwaii".

photo: Susanne Trzecinski

NIKLAS WASHAUSEN



LIGHTWAVE

2020
Polaroid photography



TILL RICHTER MUSEUM

2022
Polaroid photography

Thumb and index finger become a mechanical roller.

Alkaline paste is transferred manually by moving the fingers back and forth onto the negative's surface, starting a time-displaced activation of the developing processes. The paste penetrates all layers and in turn activates the color developers, which then appear on the upper layer, forming the image in reaction with pigments.

Consciously re-utilizing a supposedly malfunctioning Polaroid camera, frozen concepts depicting analogous glitch landscapes emerge. An interplay between order and chaos – calm and noise visualizes the allegory of binary thinking.

My works focus on the distorted, unfinished, imperfect element that in a closed system is highlighted as different; not normative. Process and composition open up the complexity of otherness, but also reveal curiosity and sensitivity.

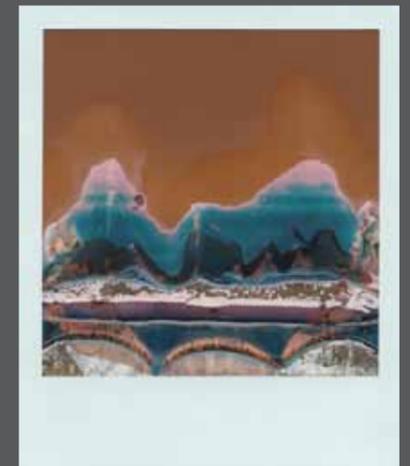
TRANSIT

2022,
Polaroid photography



ORIENT

2022
Polaroid photography



Niklas Washausen studied English, Art and Design as well as German as a Foreign Language to become a teacher at the University of Greifswald. He now works at the Department of British and North American Studies of the same University as a research assistant. He completed his (digital) semester abroad with the Fulbright Travel Grant at Widener University, Pennsylvania in 2021.



THE AMERICANS I MET

Over the last centuries, prominent Americans left strong messages to the international community that serve the American narrative. This image is not untarnished; over the past decades, wars and numerous conflicts paint a different story. Nonetheless, the influence and attraction of this nation have withstood the waves of time to this day. The 2016 election was a turning point and displayed profound challenges inside U.S. society and its political system for the world to see. Intrigued and motivated to gain perspective on the reality experienced by Americans, Viktor Hübner began a two-year photojournalistic study: *The Americans I Met* is a photographic and oral history project that collects portraits of and conversations with people that photographer Viktor Hübner encountered during a series of cross-country hitchhiking trips in the United States. With only his camera, audio recorder, and a few provisions, he covered 41 states and over 16,000 miles from 2017 to 2019. Throughout Viktor's travels, he embraced chance encounters and relied daily on the hospitality of people he met. As a result, the foreign traveler became an eye-witness to many Americans' practical and spiritual lives and the bearer of many confidences. This book focuses on the people Viktor met on his travels, their words, their experiences, and, by extension, the Trump Era in which they lived.

Book Info: <https://www.andrefrereditions.com/en/photo-books/the-americans-i-met-by-viktor-hubner/>
Released November 2022, ISBN: 978-2-492696-07-7, 248 pages, Format 22,5 x 28 cm, Hard cover, 71 colour pictures, English/French, Price €49



Viktor Hübner's artistic practice unites a natural curiosity for other human beings and their fate. He explores themes of community, ideology, class, and socio-political tensions using photography, audio-interviews, and written accounts. He is motivated by his belief in the importance of documenting the present narrative. Our history gives us a perspective of time; it allows us to understand who we are and where we are going. It lends awareness to the complexity of society, culture, citizenship, and issues.

Hübner received a Bachelor's degree in Visual Communication at the University of Applied Sciences Mainz in 2016, and a Master's in photography at the Rhode Island School of Design in 2019. Combining his passion of history and the arts, he records small layers of contemporary history through his words and lens. Hübner is the recipient of a Rosanne Somerson Scholarship, a RISD Fellowship, and a Fulbright Scholarship, among other awards. Hübner is currently based in Tromsø, Norway.

Democracy by Design

A New Gender Equality Project Offers Tools to Increase Inclusivity and Participation

by Kate Miller

“The students in our classes are part of a new generation of language learners,” the teacher told me as we climbed the stairs to her first-period English class. “When I was in school, the foreign language we learned was Russian. Now students learn English.”

It was the first day of my Fulbright Teaching Assistantship, and I was only beginning to understand the changes that the fall of the Berlin Wall had brought to this school in the former East German state of Brandenburg. Almost immediately after the German Democratic Republic (DDR) collapsed in 1989, the educational landscape had shifted underfoot as the newly reunified German government replaced Soviet-era textbooks, lesson plans, uniforms, student organizations, oaths of allegiance, and flags.

I joined the staff of the school at the start of the 2006-07 schoolyear, nearly 17 years after the fall of the wall. In that time, a generational shift had emerged not only between teachers and students, but also between the teachers themselves. Younger teachers, who had only vague recollections of life in East Germany, chatted with me enthusiastically, in American-accented English, about the *Friends* broadcasts they had watched throughout their teenage years. The textbooks they used in their classrooms were slightly updated versions of the ones they had read as students. Older teachers, on the other hand, told me they had developed their English vocabulary while struggling to read the liner notes of the contraband Bruce Springsteen albums that their friends had smuggled behind the Iron Curtain. The textbooks they’d studied as children were

Kate Miller (center) and other members of the EQT project team celebrate news that the EQT poster has won the Main Award in the Equality and Woman’s Promotion (print) category at the Malofej International Infographics Awards; photo: IKEM



Kate Miller (second from left) examines prototypes of the card game and poster; photo: Ellery Studio



now displayed in museum exhibits alongside other artifacts from Germany’s past.

It would be easy to view this rapid succession of political systems as a phenomenon unique to German history. But the past few years have exposed the vulnerability of democratic systems, including our own, to threats that are both external (as in Russia’s invasion of Ukraine) and internal (as in the refusal by political candidates to accept the results of democratic elections). The strength of democratic values – among these, that government must be representative of the people; that elections should be free and fair; that there should be a balance of power across government – depends on how strongly government officials and everyday citizens commit to upholding these values, in theory as well as in practice.

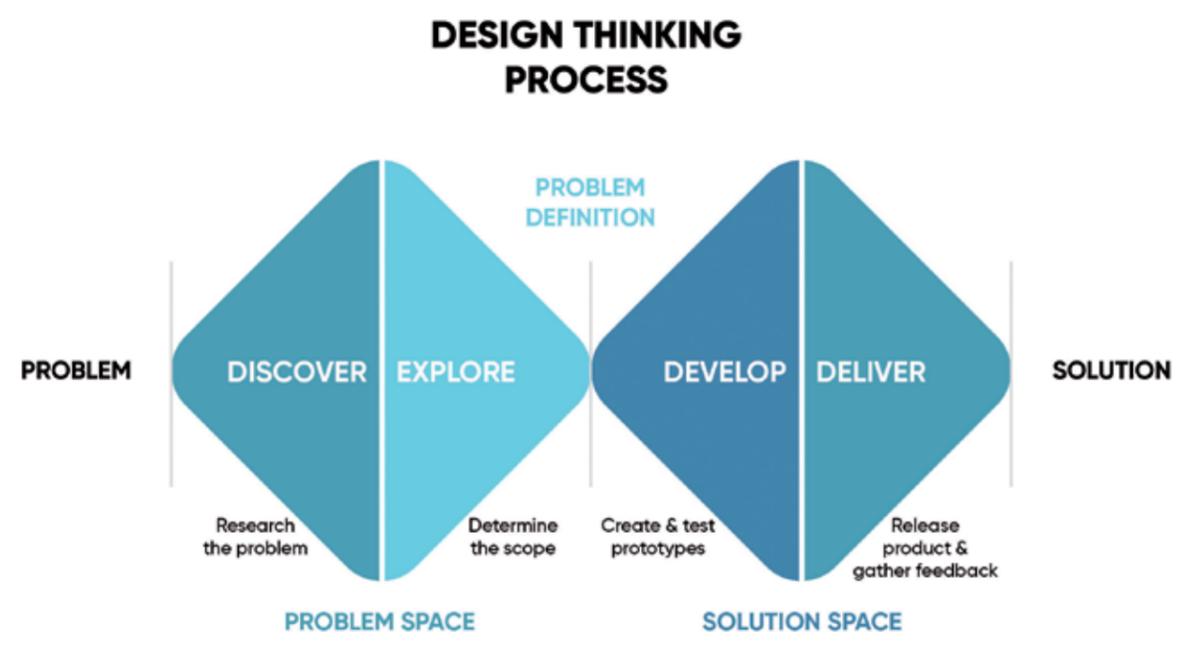
Evidence shows that we continue to fall short of these values in key areas, including in the workplace. More companies than ever are publicly committing to promote gender equality in their organizations, but women continue to make less money than men on average, even when they have the same qualifications, tasks, education and professional experience. Workplace sexual harassment is much more likely to target women than men.¹ And while women outperform men on leadership skills tests, they remain underrepresented in top management positions.²

In 2018, I became part of a team working to address the stubborn persistence of gender inequality in the workplace. The product of our work, called EQT: The Gender Equality Toolkit for Working Women and Friends, is scheduled to be released this winter. The goal of our project is to provide tools to increase inclusivity and collaboration, and we structured our creative process to apply these principles in practice.

The toolkit was the unexpected product of a renewable energy conference that was attended by several of my colleagues – all women – from the Institute for Climate Protection, Energy and Mobility (IKEM). When they returned, they described the sexist scenarios they had experienced at the conference, which included groping at the conference bar, repeated interruptions while delivering speeches, and requests for women at the conference to take notes and clear plates for men. A common thread emerged: None of my colleagues were satisfied with the way they had responded at the time. Together, we began brainstorming ways for IKEM to shine a light on experiences of sexism at work and initiate productive conversations on the topic.

To discuss the direction that the new project could take, we met with a design team at Ellery Studio for Creative Strategy, a Berlin-based design studio that has collaborated with IKEM on past projects, including *The Infographic Energy Transition Coloring Book*. We pitched some ideas to the team, led by two Fulbright alumni: Eugen Litwinow, Ellery Studio’s managing director, and Bernd Riedel, head of creative strategy and design. Over the course of several meetings, we developed a general outline for a toolkit that would target workplace sexism from multiple directions: A handbook would supply facts and historical background on gender inequality; a vibrant, hand-drawn poster would use infographics to present a history of feminism; and a card game would prompt players to respond to a range of workplace scenarios in real time.

Our team developed the toolkit using a procedure called design thinking, an iterative approach that integrates end-users directly into the development process. The design thinking model provides a loose structure for a creative process that includes several steps: discovering the context for the problem through research, defining the prob-



The Double Diamond model. Source: Adapted from British Design Council.

Source: IKEM

1. Amy Blackstone, Heather McLaughlin, and Christopher Uggen, *State of the Union Report 2018: Workplace Sexual Harassment* (Stanford: Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality, 2018): p. 38, https://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Pathways_SOTU_2018_harassment.pdf.
 2. Jack Zenge and Joseph Folkman, “Research: Women Score Higher Than Men in Most Leadership Skills,” *Harvard Business Review*, June 25, 2019, <https://hbr.org/2019/06/research-women-score-higher-than-men-in-most-leadershipskills>.



The EQT toolkit includes a handbook, poster and card game; photo: Ellery Studio



A section of the EQT handbook debunks common myths on the gender pay gap; photo: Ellery Studio



Fulbright alumni Bernd Riedel (front row, left), Kate Miller (third row, second from left), and Eugen Litwinow (third row, second from right) attend the launch of the EQT fundraising campaign with other project team members and supporters; photo: IKEM

lem, developing and testing prototypes, and delivering the product. Even after the product is delivered, design teams continue to gather input so that they can refine the product – a feedback loop that, with each iteration, incrementally improves the result.

In keeping with the principles of design thinking, we obtained user feedback at each step of the production process. The discovery phase of our project, for example, included not only desk research on gender inequality, but also interviews with women from a range of fields – including tattoo artists, waiters, engineers and Army veterinarians – about their experiences of sexism in the workplace. We integrated these stories, along with our own, into the ‘situation’ cards in the EQT card game.

In the interviews, we found that nearly all of the women described their own reluctance to initiate conversations about gender inequality at work, either because the subject seemed too complex to untangle in casual conversation or because they were wary of voicing a perspective that was likely to meet with deeply entrenched opposition. In response to these findings, we established an approachable tone for the toolkit with comics-style illustrations and upbeat, solution-oriented text. To allay concerns that the topic was too overwhelming for casual conversation, the card game offered a manageable solution: The goal of the game is not to find one sweeping solution to gender inequality, but to address such inequality as it manifests itself in daily life – as a series of individual interactions between women and colleagues, employers, casual acquaintances, and others.

By placing end-users at the center of the production process, we were able to create the conditions for non-hierarchical communication and decision-making. The result is a richer, more nuanced product than we could otherwise

have achieved, and it reflects the experiences and perspectives of everyone who contributed to its production.

In recent years, growing attention has been paid to potential applications of design thinking outside the creative industry, in particular as a model for consensus-building among diverse stakeholders in business³ and in governance.⁴ Amid the instability and unrest affecting democracies around the world, approaches that encourage participation and inclusivity are more important than ever. Our own democratic system is facing challenges that seemed inconceivable to me during my year as a Fulbright teaching assistant. This has magnified the importance of what we, as citizens, do to put our democratic values into practice. In the workplace and in everyday life, our goal must be to create an environment in which each of us can find our voice – and trust that it will be heard.

The EQT project was supported in part by a grant from the Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF). For more information or to purchase a toolkit, visit: <http://shop.ellerystudio.com>.



Kate Miller holds a Bachelor's degree in German from Haverford College and an Master's degree in sociology from the University of California, Davis. She served as a Fulbright teaching assistant at a high school in Brandenburg, Germany, for the 2006-07 schoolyear. She now works as a development coordinator at the Institute for Climate Protection, Energy and Mobility (IKEM) in Berlin.

3. Daria Habicher, Greta Erschbamer, and Harald Pechlaner et al., "Transformation and Design Thinking: Perspectives on Sustainable Change, Company Resilience and Democratic Leadership in SMEs," *Leadership, Education, Personality: An Interdisciplinary Journal* no. 3 (2022): p. 145–156, <https://doi.org/10.1365/s42681-022-00028-x>.
4. Michael Soward, *Democratic Design* (Oxford: Oxford Academic, 2022), p. 31–35, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198867227.003.0002>.

Social Conscience against Social Contradiction

by Zeynep Alraqeb and Aynur Durak

It's already 11 pm.
 Ok, let's wrap this up, says Zeynep.
 That's enough. I am tired.
 Aynur smiles.
 We need to finish tonight, she says, looking at Zeynep on the screen.
 Can't we just cancel it? asks Zeynep.
 Cancel? But we put in so much work already. We did the content for social media, we contacted different institutions and started announcements for the event. Not this conversation again.
 Again?
 Yes, you always want to quit right before the end of the project, thinking it's not worth it. But once we finish you look back and you're glad you pulled through.*

PREFACE

Water is pouring from the tap. You fill your bottle. Close the tap. It is getting dark outside and you switch on the lights in the kitchen and the living room. You turn on the kettle for some tea while checking your phone: four new notifications, three on WhatsApp, one on TikTok. You remember the tote bag with groceries at the entrance. You get them and start preparing dinner.

Growing up in developed countries, day-to-day life is smooth: water, heating (though that is a big question in 2022), education, jobs, entertainment, health, transport, and travel. All of that is easily accessible for many of us, though, some still struggle. In general, however, life is comfortable here. Maybe too comfortable and often taken for granted, which can be seen in the diminishing interest in politics, society, or lack of responsibility by the younger generation. We think.

Over the past two decades, incredible young people have caught attention globally for their activism and work, like Greta Thunberg, Amanda Gorman, Luisa Neubauer, or Aminata Touré. But how and why did these young women develop a social, political or environmental conscience?

How come these women keep to their work despite serious challenges and intense media attention waiting for them to make a "wrong" move?

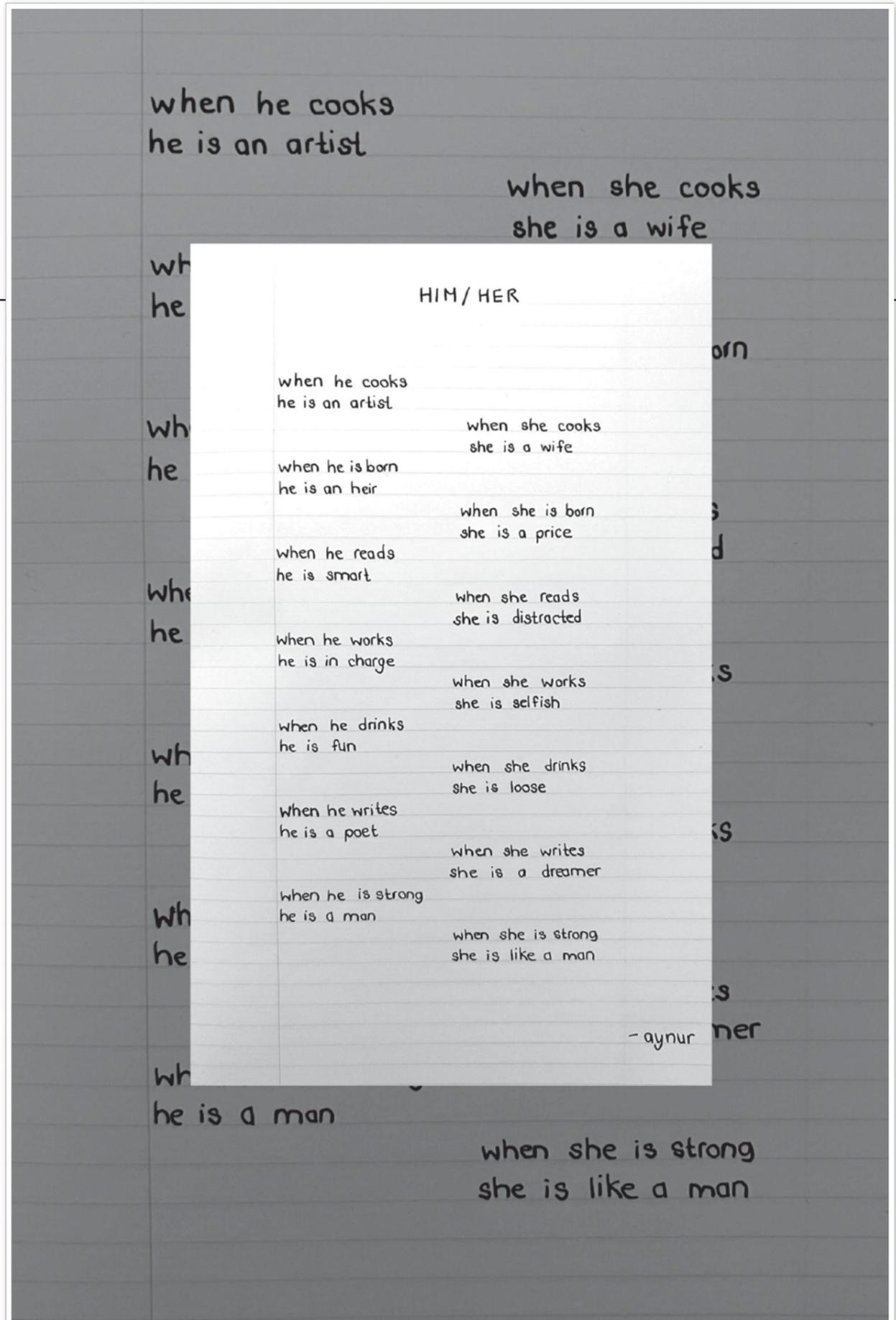
It's 2008. A 23-year old woman stands for election to the city council, but fails to get elected. She doesn't give up on her aim to "build a society where every child can become anything and every person can live and grow in dignity." Four years later, she again stood for election and this time she was successful. In the years following, she rose to become the world's youngest prime minister. Her name: Sanna Marin.

But what drove Marin's determination to have a more equal society in a country that is world-leading in equality both economically and socially? What made her not give up pursuing a political mandate? Her answer in 2020: "I'm in politics because I thought that the older generation wasn't doing enough about the big issues of the future. I needed to act. I couldn't just think, 'It's somebody else's job'." **

Fast forward to 2022: A video circulates over all media platforms showing the young Finnish prime minister dancing with her friends apparently at a private event. The debate that followed showed and stressed that even in acclaimed equal societies, it doesn't mean there's nothing left to accomplish when it comes to equality. Maybe not materially, but morally.

The debates and comments on social media after the leaked private video showed there is still an immense gap between several groups, for instance between men and women. Otherwise, how is it possible that one politician is being judged by countless of her colleagues for doing the same as her male companions?

On a daily basis, women exhaustingly fight to break out of double standards and stereotypes created within societies. Double standards means the preferring or rejection of people on the basis of their gender, ethnicity, sexuality or other uncontrollable distinctions in which none are relevant or



Poem by Aynur. Handwritten by Zeynep. Design by Aynur & Zeynep.

* Note: The conversation at the beginning has been adapted.
 ** "A new era for Finland", in World Finance, Aug 2022, <https://www.worldfinance.com/featured/a-new-era-for-finland>.



Zeynep Alraqeb at the Fulbright Diversity Conference in Berlin (2018); photo: Fulbright Germany



Fulbright Germany Thanksgiving 2019; photo: Ralph K. Penno

justifiable factors for this discrimination. In other words: your actions are being valued differently because of something you have almost no control over.

Double standards are seen in dozens of areas: the workplace, in politics and even at school. If a student with a migration background is acting poorly, mostly it is blamed on her cultural background while the mistakes of a native student are caused only by the playfulness of the child. Until recently, this multifaceted double standard that treats and judges actions of people according to their gender or ethnicity is common in our current society. Why does nobody talk about it, if it's such a substantial issue?

If a lion is born in the zoo, is being fed the same meat every day and taken care of by the same people repeatedly, do you think he would recognize that the cage is not his original habitat? He may assume that something feels off due to his natural instincts. But if he never saw the savanna, never felt its wind on his skin nor spent his time hunting for a gazelle or a zebra, do you believe he would understand that there is something "wrong" with his life?

For centuries, people have lived and breathed with double standards. It is not until someone, somewhere tells us to break out of the circle, tells us that there is something not okay with our situation that we recognize these issues. Sanna Marin's debate showed us clearly the unequal treatment – not financially but socially. Now, for our future

generations we need to change and stop enduring unfair treatment and judgment.

Unfortunately, reality is not as simple as acknowledging that a lion does not belong in a cage. In our society there are still people who don't understand or who simply don't know that the way they are treated is unfair. And those who know or at least have a feel for unrightful treatment, often don't realize how to defend themselves.

That is why we have been socially and politically active for the past couple of years. Not only because it is our responsibility but also our duty as citizens in the 21st century to create a society in which diversity is lived and not only talked about. Because diversity is not having a bunch of people who look different, diversity is giving everyone the same rights as well as the same justice and judgment. It might be tiring but it is worth it.

Until we break out of this cage of double standards we will not give up.



Aynur Durak, raised in Berlin, Germany, is a multilingual student of intercultural communications with a focus on diversity and equality in the workplace. As a Fulbright alumna, who participated in the Fulbright Diversity Initiative at Trinity University in San Antonio (TX) in 2019,

she is the author of several publications, such as her debut poetry book: *the universe in me*. Currently, she is working as a Content Creator at Fulbright Germany while furthering her education in journalism and communication, to provide a larger range of topics such as race and racism in Western media.

Purchase *the universe in me* on Amazon. ISBN: 978-3000713323. 208 pages.



Zeynep Alraqeb is the Extended Board member for Diversity Alumni (see p. 7).

Transforming the World Requires Transforming Ourselves

A Pledge for more Authenticity

by Joerg Geier

Our planet is on fire – literally and metaphorically. Natural disasters range from climate change, biodiversity loss, species and plant extinction to the degradation of natural ecosystems. Economic development, meant to lift millions if not billions of people out of poverty, leads to an increase in anthropogenic pressure. According to the Global Footprint Network,¹ humans use as many ecological resources as if we lived on 1.75 earths. Consequently, measures need to be taken to reduce the overall footprint on our planet.

A lot has been written over the last years, and sometimes even decades, on topics such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Corporate Governance, Sustainable Development, Triple Bottom Line, Sustainable Finance, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), Impact Investing, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or the European Green Deal.²

What all of these terms and measures have in common, is the notion that economic activity and global development need to be more holistic in nature in order to protect natural resources and pay attention to social (including health) considerations – above and beyond a single focus on economic prosperity. Some of these terms focus on macroeconomic, others on microeconomic (including finance and accounting) considerations. One could also say that the perspective changes from the big picture (e.g., on a national or supranational level) to a more microscopic consideration (e.g., on an organizational level) in order to incentivize transactions – and action – that keep in mind people and planet, in addition to profit.

Let's take a look at *Corporate Social Responsibility* (the term *Corporate Governance* is often used synonymously): As noted in HEC's Executive Factsheet,³ the economists Howard

R. Bowen⁴ and William C. Frederick⁵, looked into the social responsibilities of companies and their leadership in the 50s and 60s, respectively. However, it took almost 50 years for CSR to become mainstream: According to KPMG⁶, it took a while for CSR reporting rates to increase: at the turn of the century a third of the world's 250 largest companies by revenue published a CSR report; this number rose to approx. 90% around 2010.

The Brundtland Commission's report to the UN *Our Common Future*⁷ (WCED – World Commission on Environment and Development 1987), popularized the term *sustainable development*; it was preceded by a range of publications on topics such as development, economic growth (including its limits). The Brundtland Report expressed the belief that social equity, economic growth and environmental maintenance are simultaneously possible, thus highlighting the three fundamental components of sustainable development: the environment, the economy and society, which later became known as the triple bottom line.⁸ Moreover, the report emphasized the rights of future generations.

Along similar lines, different historic events created the basis for what is now known as *impact investing*. In 2006, the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI)⁹ was released with 63 signatories and \$6.5 trillion in assets. Impact investors focus on advancing environmental or social considerations alongside the optimization of investment returns.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹⁰ with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹¹ was adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York in September 2015. Various UN declarations and summits paved the way for developed and developing countries to

1. Global Footprint Network, <https://www.footprintnetwork.org/>.
 2. European Green Deal, https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en.
 3. HEC's Executive Factsheet, <https://www.hec.edu/en/faculty-research/centers/society-organizations-institute/think/so-institute-executive-factsheets/what-corporate-social-responsibility-csr>.
 4. Bowen, H. R. (1953). *Social responsibilities of the businessman*. New York, Harper & Brothers.
 5. Frederick, W. C. (1960). The growing concern over business responsibility. *California Management Review*, 2(4), pages 54-61.
 6. The KPMG Survey of Corporate Responsibility Reporting 2017.
 7. Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: *Our Common Future*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>.
 8. Jacobus A. (2007). Sustainable development – historical roots of the concept. *Environmental Sciences* Vol. 3, 2006 – Issue 2, p. 83-96.
 9. United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI), <https://www.unpri.org/>.
 10. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.
 11. 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

follow universally recognized principles tackling poverty while improving education as well as human and planetary health,¹² reducing inequality, and spurring economic growth.

So far so good. All of these measures – embedded into regulatory frameworks – are important milestones toward a more equitable, socially and environmentally just transformation of our planet.

However, we simply don't have enough time!

In 2015, the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme and Stockholm Resilience Centre published a dashboard of 24 indicators which depict the dramatic acceleration in human enterprise and the impacts on the Earth system over the last two centuries. Changes in human production and consumption, indicated by gross domestic product, direct foreign investment, energy consumption and telecommunications, are reflected in changes in the earth's natural systems: climate (greenhouse gas levels, global temperature), ocean acidification, terrestrial biosphere degradation and fish capture.¹³

Having been part of the sustainability movement myself for over 15 years, I can safely say that there is certainly enough talk and also some action – but it may not be the right kind of action.

“It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected. [...] To seek only a technical remedy to each environmental problem which comes up is to separate what is in reality interconnected and to mask the true and deepest problems of the global system.”¹⁴
– Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (2015)

There is a conundrum when leaving things up to fate and in the hands of technocrats, politicians or economists: the focus is likely to be short-term, as incentives are often equally short-term oriented. Stock markets put pressure on listed companies to boost quarterly

profits, often at the cost of long-term research and development expenditures. Venture capital investors demand entrepreneurs to grow exponentially, which requires business models that put profits before impact-oriented considerations. So-called patient capital is not commonplace. Politicians with an average tenure of four years may be punished for long-term oriented decisions (e.g., to address global problems such as climate change) if they have negative short-term effects (such as higher energy prices). How to balance short- and long-term interests may be a tough decision to make, especially if they want to be reelected. Most economists naturally focus on the maximization of economic growth rather than the wellbeing of our societies and individuals at large (mostly, because adequate systems have not been set up yet to measure indicators other than GDP).

The other side of the coin are both consumers and producers who are less conscious than they may claim to be. Consumers may not always have all the information they require to make ethical purchasing decisions at their fingertips. But they can still choose to inform themselves to buy more sustainable goods – or simply consume less. Not least due to the current sustainability trend, greenwashing is omnipresent. Producers apply misguided marketing or PR campaigns or change the packaging of an existing product while continuing to use unsustainable ingredients. It is a way for companies to appear like they care while also increasing their profit margins.

From my perspective, we are facing both a systemic and a spiritual crisis that is deeply rooted.

Our western mindsets in particular tend to look for quick fixes when addressing global problems that have been in the making for decades if not centuries. However, Planet Earth – which has been in the making for millennia – doesn't care if the systems of our own creation have to report quarterly earnings, plan exits after ten years with double-digit financial returns, optimize macroeconomic growth (or decline) figures, or care more about the next election cycle than the mandate that put them in power in the first place.

We need a broad-based debate on how to create equitable and sustainable societies able to live within the boundaries of our planet. Such a debate needs to incorporate not only specialists or bureaucrats, but also philosophers, anthropologists, artists, political scientists and others.

What is required is behavior change on a massive scale. We cannot propagate *green growth* or *conscious consumption* without taking a look at the whole picture, especially when the future of our children is at stake. Innovations, often driven by technology, notably when they address environmental concerns, may result in efficiency gains. While these can have a positive impact on the cost of products or services, they are also very likely to influence user behavior: increases in overall consumption partially cancel out the original savings. This effect is called “rebound.”¹⁵ As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, it is indeed possible to change our behavior, even in the short term. It may be painful but it is necessary if we want to achieve visible results in line with goals set by international agreements such as the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹⁶

The more I have dealt with sustainability issues, the more I have come to realize that the basis for transformation is not to look without but within ourselves. Lasting transformation starts by asking ourselves questions which may not always be easy: *What am I compensating for? Who do I want to impress? What is it that I am hiding?*

There are reasons why mental health and wellbeing are trends that are here to stay.¹⁷ More stress and noise in our environments have led to people of all ages – especially urban dwellers – to seek refuge in meditation retreats, monasteries or other refuges of silence.¹⁸ Anxieties about uncontrollable events may further take us on a journey inside ourselves. But will this trend also have an effect on our behavior? This remains to be seen; though there is hope given that more and more individuals, especially in the young generation, take the moral high ground: they choose to travel by train rather than by plane; they focus on second-hand products rather than the latest gadget or

piece of clothing; they are happy to share consumer goods or their living environments.

Being more authentic about our decisions and intentions will go a long way.

“Changing is not just changing the things outside of us. First of all we need the right view that transcends all notions including of being and non-being, creator and creature, mind and spirit. That kind of insight is crucial for transformation and healing.”¹⁹
– Thich Nhat Hanh

For questions, please feel free to contact the author directly via jgeier@fulbrightmail.org.



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impact investing. He works as a consultant and has previously focused on leadership development and capacity building. See also <http://joerggeier.com> for additional information.

photo: Gesine Born

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14. Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (2015), chapter 4, paragraph 138/chapter 3, paragraph 111, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

15. German Environment Agency's definition of rebound effects, <https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en/topics/waste-resources/economic-legal-dimensions-of-resource-conservation/rebound-effects>.

16. United Nation 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

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Waste Doesn't Exist – Only Material in the Wrong Place

by Rózsa Simon

Over the past couple of years, I have pondered about the true definition of waste. In my eyes, waste is simply a valuable resource in the wrong place. There is only production and consumption of material; there is only creation and utilization. The term waste is therefore more or less invented by us humans. There is no natural waste because all non-man-made materials can be recycled or used as useful nutrients. Humanity's toxic affair with plastic is contributing to serious consequences when it comes to earth's biodiversity, food chain and the climate crisis. To solve the chokehold plastic has on our environment we must work towards solutions on all levels, including regulations, ramping up recycling and incentivizing the reduction of virgin plastic production. To do this, we must be willing to take serious action and participate in international compromises. Businesses are an essential part of this change and transformation. Free market capitalism was one of humanity's greatest inventions. But this success has been costly. If we allow it to remain unchecked, capitalism will destroy the planet and destabilize society as wealth rushes to the top and the health of the earth topples down.

Of the 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic waste we have produced globally since the 1950s, more than six billion tonnes are in landfills or the environment. Plastic waste remains a significantly untapped raw material, with just about 9% of all plastic waste ever produced having been recycled. If current production, utilization, and waste management tendencies continue, almost 12 billion tonnes of plastic waste will end up in landfills or in the environment by 2050. Seeing real severe consequences of our plastic waste build up is a sobering experience. During my stay in India at the beginning of 2022, I stood in front of one of the world's largest garbage mounds. It is estimated that more than 14 million tonnes of waste are already stored here. The gigantic

garbage dump is 65 meters high – almost as high as the Victory Column in Berlin – and has the width equal to 40 soccer fields. Birds are circling over the mountain; cows, dogs and rats roam through the foul-smelling area. This mountain of trash endangers the local population through its emissions of flammable methane gas and the contamination of groundwater. The extremely high level of air pollution in New Delhi, paired with the hottest summers in over 120 years – a recorded 203-day heatwave with temperatures touching as high as 46°C took place this year – made a stay at the Ghazipur landfill for longer than 45 minutes impossible for me.

Next to the landfill, many people have settled in a slum. They make a living from collecting the materials that can still be used from the massive pile of rubbish. Having conversations with locals, I learned that many had come here from rural areas so they could earn more money than they do working on fields in their home villages. These so-called scavengers, who make a living picking plastic, were once considered “untouchable” and were forced to live outside the village boundary. Though India's constitution bans caste-based discrimination, they are still marginalized, despite government efforts to end it. Discrimination based on the work they do still runs rampant. For my visit to Ghazipur's landfill, I was accompanied by a local, male friend who acted as translator and mediator. Most of the waste pickers – men, women and children – hesitated to speak to me, but at the same time I noticed a stark sense of hope despite the bleakness of the stories they shared. One person told me, the only way he can get tea at restaurants is to find a sympathetic vendor willing to serve him under the condition that he stands on the road and promises not to enter the premises. If he rides a bus, people turn away as soon as he climbs aboard. He believes it is perhaps his destiny, but

Ghazipur Mountain - New Delhi; photo: Chandan Atreya



In Bangalore at one of the leading waste management companies in India; photo: Rózsa Simon



he deeply hopes for change in the future for his daughter.

The work at Ghazipur is incredibly dehumanizing and dangerous. Most scavengers don't have appropriate equipment and hardly wear any protective gear. I saw waste pickers wearing flimsy jackets and thin cloth masks that were self-made. I was the only one with an FFP2 mask. Without any protective clothing, they risk their health and life daily on the country's tallest mountain of rubbish. Scavengers play an extremely important role in the waste management sector of India. Their overall impact is positive, economically and environmentally. But it's ironic that these human beings of the Ghazipur slums, a colony of scavengers, whose work makes the lives of others better, are themselves forced to live under the worst of conditions – not even having access to basic needs like toilets, water, and clean surroundings.

Talking to and exchanging views with these marginalized social groups allowed me to see global plastic pollution from a more societal perspective. The problem of global plastic pollution cannot be seen solely as an ecological problem with severe environmental consequences, but as one of tremendous social injustice.

An even more sickening paradox is the fact that the average Indian individual generates about 14kg¹ of plastic waste annually while an average European generates 114kg – and an average U.S. American approximately 221kg.² It is quite common for high-income nations to export their plastic waste to more vulnerable, less-wealthy regions. High-income nations profit from our consumption, while the low-income nations suffer the consequences. Environmental justice cannot be solved in the absence of social justice. Waste is piling up fastest in countries least able

to deal with it and the mismanagement of waste is affecting human health and local environments while adding to the climate crisis. Current efforts to manage and decrease plastic pollution are inadequate to address the full scope of problems it entails. But it doesn't have to be this way. Our resources need to be used and reused continuously so they don't end up in landfills. This as well as financial support and community empowerment for those fighting the plastic crises on the ground are the key to solve and get rid of our plastic waste.

I learned about challenges, hurdles and the many inter-related factors of the global plastic system. Plastic waste is expensive to manage and the estimated global cost of municipal solid waste management is set to increase from \$38 billion in 2019 to \$61 billion in 2040.³ The waste management industry will likely continue to need capital to grow local recycling capacity and develop more efficient ways to recycle plastic. The plastic problem has become so pressing that unless action is taken to manage our waste, global plastic production is projected to double over the next 10 to 15 years.⁴ It simply makes no economic sense to throw away a potentially valuable material. It can be expected that the next several years will become pivotal in mitigating plastic pollution. Companies will be at the heart of the transformation away from a plastic-dependent economy. Public authorities may set the course for this transition, but the private sector will fuel the engine to keep it moving. The private-sector companies, which are contributing to the ever-growing problem of generating plastic waste in the form of products and packaging daily, have to rethink how they can fully adopt the 3R approach: **reducing** waste, **reusing** and **recycling** resources and products. My call-to-action to each of us is to be more aware about our own behavior and how it influences other parts of the world. We must be emo-

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3. Dr. Patrick Schröder et al, "A future without plastic? How great a problem is plastics pollution, how can it be reduced, and is a future without plastics possible or desirable?", in: Chatham House, 26 Aug 2022, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/08/future-without-plastic>.
4. Plastic pollution on course to double by 2030, in: UN News. Global perspective Human stories, 21 Oct 2021, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1103692>.



Ghazipur Mountain –
New Delhi; photo:
Chandan Atreya

tionally engaged in the lives of our fellow humans across the world and of future generations. I urge all of us to play our part and to help tackle the mounting toll plastic is taking on the environment and society.

As a female entrepreneur and co-founder of Precycle, I worked with plastic offsetting and developed the digital funding infrastructure with plastic credits – acting as an environmental, economic and social mechanism – to bridge the gap between high- and low-income nations and to compensate for our plastic footprint. I see the idea of shaping businesses with purpose, through empathy and collaboration to create value beyond wealth as my personal responsibility. Business’ business should no longer be just business. It should predominantly serve our society and the planet.

We need to move away from a perspective in which environmental and social capital are essentially free, to a mindset in which the need to operate within environmental limits is our highest standard and guiding principle to protect nature and people’s quality of life. We need to find a way to act in a more sustainable and equitable way not only with regards to resources but also to business models. This change demands a transition, which will be massively disruptive. But like all such transitions, it will be a source of opportunity and will offer us a chance to evolve.

What does “to serve society” mean? You can do it in many ways. We have to act locally on the ground; mostly in developing nations. We have to open up the dialog while empowering local waste collectors. We have to act with the ideal of serving a person completely instead of serving a million an inch deep. Business support doesn’t just end at the waste collectors and workers, but involves their families and communities. We cannot just go into these communities and pretend we think we have all the answers. But we have to walk in asking how we can be allies

and how we can be supportive in finding solutions with whatever they are going through – the end goal being full agency and dignity.

Everyone must breathe to live, but life’s purpose is not breathing. We have to embrace the idea that profit and purpose go hand in hand. I am strongly convinced that a conscious approach to business is based on the adoption of a higher purpose that transcends profits. It involves the implementation of social accounting frameworks pursuing social welfare rather than financial profit alone. Of course companies have to be profitable in order to succeed, but their purpose should not only be to make money but to build prosperity for society and planet. Businesses that adopt this approach not only create long-term wealth and shared values for society, but they also outperform conventional firms on financial measures of performance. The moonshot challenge of our time is to combine social inclusion and sustainable thinking, and to overcome a version of capitalism that merely focuses on maximizing profits. Only then will we be able to reimagine capitalism with the potential and driving force to balance environmental realities, to pursue social justice, and to meet the demands of truly democratic institutions.

This new kind of capitalism will only be possible, however, if we speak up: speak up against injustice in this world, speak up for inclusion, sustainability, for the freedom of movement and the freedom of opinion!

Rózsa Simon is the first person to have been elected the Extended Board member for Sustainability (see p. 8).

No Perfect Model: the Façade of Vergangenheitsbewältigung

by Zachary Gallant

While covering the Baltimore Uprisings as a journalist in 2015, I wrote an op-ed titled *The Art of the National Apology*, extolling the virtues of Germany’s working through its Nazi past as a model for the U.S. in the context of our nation’s historic crimes of slavery and the land theft and genocide against the Native Americans, and as a model for most European colonial states, or even the countries of the Balkans in which I undertook my own Fulbright research on post-conflict redevelopment. In this article I referred to *Aufarbeitung* as a process, ongoing, eternal, that ensures Germany continuously looks at its past and within its society to ensure that such atrocities as the Holocaust (hereafter Shoah) never again occur, explicitly contrasting it to *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, or “overcoming the past”. The problem with *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* is that it can be seen as a single act to be accomplished, as though the Nazi past in Germany could ever truly be overcome. I wasn’t alone in viewing *Aufarbeitung* as the ideal model for the reckoning with a nation’s past. A number of rabbis and civil rights activists I know took the same view, and some have even published bestselling books on the theme of “learning from the Germans”. Certainly in Germany, this national working through of the Shoah is recommended as a model for dealing with the nation’s colonial history in Africa in the context of #BlackLivesMatter.

But shortly after that article appeared, I became accidentally active in Germany’s “commemoration theater”, as Professor Y. Michal Bodemann has called it. I had been engaged in refugee aid and accompaniment, not as a Jew but simply as a fellow human, when far-right Germans began spouting anti-Arab and anti-Muslim propaganda in the name of “protecting the Jews”. When I heard moderate Germans parroting these hateful phrases, I found it necessary to speak up as a Jew. The leader of a major Jewish community in Germany once explained “you have a

higher likelihood of winning the lottery than of meeting a Jew in Germany.” If German xenophobes were instrumentalizing Jews against Muslim refugees, then it became a Jewish responsibility to be louder in support of those whose fate mirrored that of our own ancestors from less than a century earlier.

If I had better understood the German context, perhaps I would have done this differently. As Dr. Max Czollek has asked, “What does Jewishness mean beyond the issues of the Shoah, anti-Semitism, and Israel that are thrust at you from the outside?”¹ We’ll have to leave aside for now the inability of modern Germans to view Jews as anything other than members of a religious community, removing our identity as “Volk” or ethnicity and thereby removing the very “genos” from the genocide against the Jews, an inability that itself developed through the political correctness of *Aufarbeitung*, because that’s a whole article in itself. In Germany, to overgeneralize, Jews are not permitted a voice on issues aside from the three mentioned by Czollek, and once one has been “outed” as a Jew, it is very difficult to be heard again on any other issues. And so, instead of my work in the field of migration and refugee accompaniment being at the center of my public persona, it was my Jewishness that was made central, from outside. I was invited to engage with groups and movements engaged in interreligious dialogue and with Remembrance Culture, and though my main theme was migration and asylum, it was quite obvious that the primary points of interest were the Shoah and Judaism as a religion. A Jew who is openly a Jew in Germany quickly becomes a token, a representative of a nearly-extinguished race, and is pigeonholed in the public sphere to Czollek’s trifecta.

Yet even in these spaces, Jews are limited. As Anette Kahane, former chairwoman of the antiracist Amadeu

1. Max Czollek, Michel Friedman and Max Czollek über jüdisches Leben in Deutschland: “Das ist Gedächtnistheater!” (Interview: Mareike Fallet, Claudia Keller), in: *Chrismon* Januar 2022, <https://chrismon.evangelisch.de/artikel/2020/51011/michel-friedman-und-max-czollek-ueber-juedisches-leben-in-deutschland>.

2. Anette Kahane, *Jüdische Existenz*, in: Institut für Demokratie und Zivilgesellschaft (Hrsg.), *Antisemitismus*, p. 122.

Antonio Foundation, criticized in 2020, “the fact that for a long time and to this day Jews hardly feature in Shoah and anti-Semitism research, and on the contrary are even told that they have no business in the field, is an affront”². Jews are permitted to speak about our role as victim, either of modern antisemitism or in the Holocaust, but are not permitted a role in the process of working through Germany’s Nazi past. A Jew is not granted the agency of personhood in German discourse.

This is just one of many critiques of German *Aufarbeitung* developed over years of engagement and research. One could write a book, and in fact my wife and I did exactly that. In February 2022, our book “Brauner Boden”, whose subtitle translates to “A Jewish Perspective on German *Aufarbeitung* of the Nazi period”, was published by Westend Academics in Frankfurt. While focusing in large part on the role that profits from Nazi crimes play in modern German civil society, the book is also highly critical of Remembrance Culture and the layers of hypocrisy upon which it is built, with chapters on “*Aufarbeitung* without Jews”. The critiques in this book are limited to 118 pages, but our English edition, planned for publication in 2023, is far more all-encompassing.

Before I go further into these critiques, it is important to clarify: *Aufarbeitung* has much to recommend it. As the father of a Turkish colleague once stated, “we [Turks] can only live so safely in Germany because of the Jews.” Don’t read anything political or antisemitic into this. What he meant, his daughter explained, was that because the Shoah led to *Aufarbeitung* which led to antiracism being taught in schools and in civil society, Germany doesn’t do the same to groups like the Turks today. The situation of “the Other” in countries who have not undertaken this kind of *Aufarbeitung* of their own crimes against humanity is far more precarious than it is for “non-Germans” in Germany. And so as we critique *Aufarbeitung*, it’s important to remember that it is also keeping Jews and other minorities from being killed or harassed by their German neighbors.

But this fact alone is not enough to view Germany as a success and a model for the United States or other countries. Germany’s process of working through its historical crimes is further along than anyone else’s, but “further along” doesn’t mean better. I would argue instead that the English-speaking world is miles ahead in terms of the role the voices of the oppressed groups are permitted to have in the debate on overcoming their oppression.

Zachary Gallant
Katharina F. Gallant

Brauner Boden

Ein jüdischer Blick
auf die deutsche Aufarbeitung
der NS-Zeit



Picture in your mind the following scene: a White antiracism activist in Oklahoma City, whose own great-grandfather was the city’s mayor at a time of the Boomer settler movement, tells a member of the Wichita tribe that “working through the city’s racist past is something only White Oklahomans can do. I don’t really understand what role Wichita or Apache people can play in this. It’s our responsibility to deal with our own historic crimes.” Or a White proponent of reparations asking what role #BlackLivesMatter could play in the debate, declaring reparations to be a symbol of White American society trying to make good on the historic crimes upon which their privilege is built, and thereby it necessarily being a conversation that must happen among White Americans. Can you imagine the uproar that such statements would bring? It would be such an unbelievably tone-deaf perspective as to be unimaginable, and whoever said it would inevitably be “cancelled”. Yet this is precisely the perspective that meets Jews engaged in *Aufarbeitung* in Germany. Beyond Anette Kahane’s quote above, I recall being asked by a progressive activist in Remembrance Culture what exactly a Jew saw himself doing in *Aufarbeitung*. “This is a German responsibility, to uncover the crimes of our parents or grandparents and to hold ourselves as Germans to account, to get other Germans to do the same. I’m not sure what role a Jew could play in this.” As a Jew, I am reduced to my people’s victimhood in the history of the Shoah, but have no voice in what is done with that memory.

The prevalence of Black voices that are heard not just in social media but also in the making of actual policy; the emergence of Black empowerment literature in academia as

well as in children’s programming and children’s literature, these show that African Americans are granted agency as living members of society and are given a voice in attempts to rectify historic injustices against their communities. And in case there are those who want to dismiss the parallels between Shoah history and slavery in the U.S., we can use Native Americans as our parallel instead. But the fact is, space is finally being granted for Native voices. It happened much later than it did for Black voices, but indigenous participation, too, is growing across the spectrum, and in meaningful ways. In America, non-white voices have demanded a role in the conversation, have taken their space through their own agency, and have been (slowly) granted it by willing allies, in the face of obvious visceral opposition. The non-dominant community’s own decisions also play a role here: In the U.S., non-White voices are demanding to be heard, while in Germany, most Jews prefer not to be identified, for the reasons I’ve already listed, or for fear for their safety. This means that in Germany, instead of Jews being active in the construction of memory and identity, the structures of memory and remembrance are brittle and controlled by the dominant society. The voices of the oppressed are only amplified as ghost echoes, not as living agents.

Lauding Germany for their “progressive” approach to working through the past as a model for the United States runs the risk of erasing the remarkable progress that oppressed communities in the U.S. have achieved in making their voices heard, and risks diminishing the enormously meaningful role of the voices of the oppressed in any mature progressive discourse on dealing with the crimes of history. Isn’t that kind of social justice, leading hopefully to truly restorative justice, the reason that we are, to speak directly to the title of this magazine, “pursuing our social conscience”? Because if that is indeed our goal, then there seems to me to be far more opportunity for progress in America than in Germany, because Germany believes itself to have dealt with the crimes of the past, while America knows it has not (whether or not it wants to in the future is a different question). And if that’s not why we’re “pursuing our social conscience”, then is it truly anything more than a group therapy session for the dominant society?

I’d like to conclude with one last German word: *Nestbeschmutzer*, which would directly translate to “one who defiles one’s own nest” and in content has a lot of parallels to “traitor” and implies something very dark indeed. When we began our research, we thought we lived in one of the only

clean nests in the world. We learned the truth, and we assumed that others didn’t know and would want to know so that they could help clean up their nest. We really thought we were helping our town to be its most honest self, to live up to the ideals it espoused, when the mayor gave speeches every year on the anniversary of Kristallnacht about “never forgetting”. But after our work was published, we were treated as though **we** were the ones who were making the nest dirty. We were even kicked out of a public event in September 2022 by important local public figures (one of whom would be awarded the Badge of Honor of the federal state of Rheinland-Pfalz less than two weeks later) who told us in front of our children and their friends “you are unwanted here” because of our research. What this implies is that these people all **knew**, that they considered this state of affairs clean, and that it was only our openly discussing it that made the nest dirty.

As Jewish antifascist journalist Kurt Tucholsky (whose books were some of the first to be burned by the Nazis) stated in 1922, “the one who points out the dirt is considered much more dangerous than the one who makes it dirty.” Our experience 100 years later shows that still to be the case. *Aufarbeitung* isn’t about cleaning up the dirt. It’s about going through the motions. And in its way, going through the motions has produced a partially antiracist society. But it’s a fragile one, built on brittle lies, and I’m not sure if that antiracist society would withstand a truly honest reckoning with the past. But as a Jewish resident in Germany, I certainly hope so ...



Zachary Gallant serves as Project Director of the “Values are One” project at the Global Ethic Foundation, funded by the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, and project lead of the *Integrationswerkstatt*, funded by the European Commission as part of the Muslim Jewish Coalition for Combatting Hatred. He lectures at the University of Frankfurt on migration and identity in Germany. His German book on *Aufarbeitung*, *Brauner Boden*, was published Open Access and can be found here: <https://www.westendverlag.de/brauner-boden-0a/>

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It's High Time to Act – Taking a Fresh Look at Puerto Rico

by Alana Deluty

Like many Americans, I've vacationed in Puerto Rico – drawn by its beautiful beaches, vibrant culture, and historic architecture. This year, I've found myself returning to the island again and again, each time with fresh eyes, and growing more and more attached. Most recently, I found myself stuck on the island during Hurricane Fiona, facing several canceled flights. Luckily, I was safe where I was staying, but we went several days without electricity or running water.

Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory – while Puerto Ricans have U.S. citizenship and can move to the mainland, residents of the island lack many of the rights that mainlanders get; including full voting rights and representation in Congress. On an individual level, while Puerto Ricans have access to federal benefits like Medicare and Medicaid (the closest thing Americans have to universal health coverage – but these programs are only for the elderly and the low-income), they don't have access to things like disability payments, and are often neglected when it comes to things like disaster relief aid. Puerto Rico regularly suffers from rolling blackouts, and residents go without electricity for often unknowable amounts of time. Aside from the general pain this causes, these blackouts create massive losses on an individual level – affecting individuals' ability to get to work, have access to refrigeration, and pay for the expenses associated with running generators during blackouts. Puerto Rico's power infrastructure is at a critical point at this moment, and blackouts have been an issue for a long time. Last year, the government decided to privatize Puerto Rico's power grid, and sell the contract to a company called Luma, which is not based in Puerto Rico, but is jointly owned by companies in Houston, Texas, and Alberta, Canada. After this privatization, the power grid is in even worse condition, with more blackouts than before, and it has generated Island-wide protests, as Puerto Ricans pay absurdly high utility costs for service that is below standard.

Beyond that, Puerto Rico is expensive – astronomically expensive. The cost of basic consumer goods, groceries, and household items can sometimes be 2-3 times what they cost on the mainland. I find it painful to spend \$7 on a bag of spinach – especially when Puerto Rico is a tropical island, with a climate incredibly suitable for growing produce. The first time I bought groceries in San Juan, the prices were a complete shock to me. Produce should be incredibly fresh,

cheap, and available – but it's not, for several reasons. After Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico lost 80% of its agricultural industry, and with the extremely high cost of recovery, many farms, without sufficient access to relief aid and credit, were forced to shut down. Additionally, the Jones Act, which is a U.S. law that requires all domestic shipping routes to be serviced by American-registered ships and be staffed by an American crew, means that the transportation costs of getting goods to the island can be considerable. The American shipping industry, which is both highly regulated and highly expensive, can charge shipping rates that are easily double what other countries' ships might charge – and Puerto Ricans have no choice but to pay these prices. Describing the intricacies of the Jones Act would take too long, but I will offer an example. A hypothetical ship from the Dominican Republic carrying onions, bananas, or some other product, cannot make a stop in Puerto Rico to drop off some bananas on its way to a port in Florida (as then it would be a domestic route staffed by a foreign crew). So – this ship has to first stop at a port in Florida, then the products would have to be transferred to an American flag carrier ship, and then have to be transported to Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans pay the costs for all of this excessive transportation.

How does all of this relate to social justice? When I was an undergraduate, I wrote my thesis about the philosophical concept of exploitation. (Yes – it's a dry topic, but I jazzed it up with lots of real-world examples). There are so many different kinds of exploitation, and there are countless examples in daily life, both small and large. One thing that is true across the board is that exploitative practices always have a beneficiary – this is true in every exploitative situation, from fast-fashion manufacturing to abusive relationships. Exploitative practices do not exist in a vacuum, and Puerto Rico is no exception.

Aside from the general indignity of being a modern-day colony, how do American colonial policies benefit U.S. interests? First, Puerto Rico's strategic location in the Caribbean allows the U.S. to have military bases that are close to both North and South America, and to have access to a large Spanish-speaking population that can join the U.S. military. The Jones Act, as it stands today, props up the U.S. shipping industry. Even though its high prices and large amount of regulations keep it from competing effectively in a global



An abandoned building in Arecibo



A flooded house in Cabo Rojo

market, the Jones Act ensures that there will always be customers, and that the U.S. will always have a market to absorb its third rate, unwanted products. The poverty rate in Puerto Rico is 45%, despite the fact that living costs are higher than many parts of the mainland U.S. With a massive diaspora happening from the island (and with many beachfront areas having their populations effectively replaced with mainland Americans and foreigners), Puerto Rico's high poverty rate, and accompanying depopulation, creates a cheap source of domestic labor for the American economy. After each natural disaster, and especially after Hurricane Maria, the island empties out as Puerto Ricans leave for bluer waters, and now there are entire towns that feel like ghost-towns – completely empty. A recently passed tax law allows Americans who move to Puerto Rico to avoid paying capital gains taxes on investments, which has spurred many cryptocurrency investors and real estate shareholders to make the



The high price of basic goods, such as corn oil

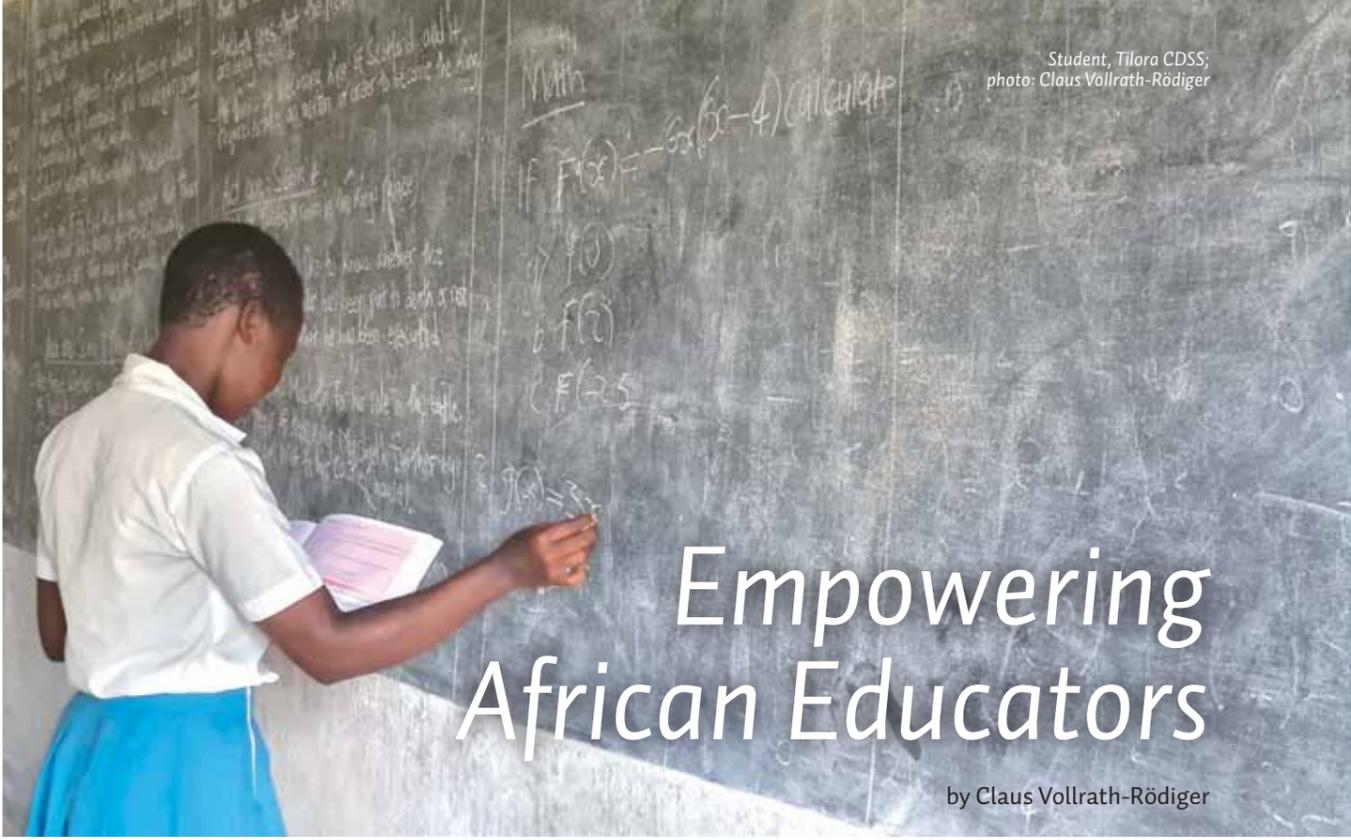
Island their permanent residence, often displacing local residents in many towns, such as San Juan, Dorado, and Rincon. Puerto Rico has effectively become a domestic tax haven for many Americans. Notably, these tax breaks are not available to Puerto Ricans. An investor from my own hometown recently made headlines for purchasing a large apartment building in Quebradillas, which he has been renovating and which are now being sold as condos. Some residents of this building had lived there for decades. Many of my friends see these individual changes as part of a larger shift, one that is pushing Puerto Ricans out, and they fear that "Puerto Rico will no longer be for Puerto Ricans."

Here is my proposal – first, the Jones Act needs to be repealed, immediately. It serves a purpose in keeping the U.S. shipbuilding industry afloat, but the massive cost it causes to human lives, and the economic suffering it leads to, is unacceptable. Second – and I do not want to speak on behalf of Puerto Ricans here, as I am not Puerto Rican myself, but the continued existence of Puerto Rico as a territory, and a source from which the U.S. can systematically drain wealth from the island, needs to end. Some Puerto Ricans want statehood, and others support independence; while I do not wish to comment on that, I do know that the current territory status Puerto Ricans live under is by definition, exploitative, and needs to stop. The U.S., like most beneficiaries of exploitation, has very little incentive to change the status quo. We, as Fulbrighters, have the privilege and the responsibility to call out exploitation and social injustices when we see them, and after over 500 years under different colonial powers, it is high time to act.



Alana Deluty spent her Fulbright year in Malaysia in 2016. She has lived in Malaysia, India, and Israel, and is passionate about social justice, especially as it relates to mobility and transportation. During the day, she works for a tech startup, but in her free time, you'll find her dancing, riding her bike, or looking at flights to a future destination.

All photos by Alana Deluty



Student, Tilora CDSS; photo: Claus Vollrath-Rödiger

Empowering African Educators

by Claus Vollrath-Rödiger

Pursuing our social conscience?!

Yes, but where to begin. There are so many causes brought to our attention daily. And why choose Malawi, of all places? Well, you have to start somewhere. Places, remote as they might be, like Malawi in the heart of Africa, can turn out to be very close – as the Ukraine has proven to us.

So, why Malawi? There are several aspects to the answer to this legitimate question:

- The abstract: we are living in one interconnected world. Change in one part of the world is affecting us all.
- The moral: the improvement of livelihoods is a moral obligation of us all.
- The self-interest: By raising the educational standards in poor countries poverty-driven migration can be reduced, a climate-conscious behavior will benefit us all, and poverty alleviation will result in a wider demand for our industries' products.

The Setting

The Republic of Malawi, located in southeast Africa, is one of the least developed countries in the world. Over 80% of its population of more than 18 million are engaged in subsistence farming. Since 1994, the Malawian government has established approximately 700 Community Day Secondary Schools (CDSS) in its 28 districts in order to widen access to secondary education throughout the country. Key features of these schools are (1) they are situated in rural communities, (2) materials for building them mainly

come from local contributions, (3) they have no boarding facilities, requiring many students to travel long distances each day to reach the school, and (4) the majority have no library facilities. The communities surrounding these schools are comprised of either poor subsistence farmers or small-scale fishermen. The government does not provide books or other learning materials so students are expected to buy them for themselves. The result is that many students do not have textbooks because they cannot afford to buy them. Consequently, 28% of students who enter secondary school drop out before completing it¹, the performance of the remaining students in national examinations is very poor, and very few proceed to go to universities. Only 15% of Malawian students overall complete their secondary education.² Girls are particularly at risk of failing exams. Only 10% of girls who complete all four years of secondary school pass final exams in CDSS.

Empowerment

Lack of money and self-interest of the powerful lead to a neglect of the educational sector by the government of Malawi (national and local). Much, therefore, can be achieved by ensuring self-help as parents and teachers are very inclined to send their children to schools. The NGO Open Learning Centre (OLC) in northern Malawi is striving to empower communities to do just that. The aim of this small NGO is to complement government efforts by supporting the secondary school students with books and libraries. This will enhance school performance and brighten their future prospects. Additionally, these libraries will serve the wider community.

The first step for the NGO is community organizing. Communities willing to undertake the work of erecting a school library and committing themselves to providing labor and materials are then selected. The hope for educating their children is as strong with Malawi's parents as elsewhere around the globe. Against the background of a government unable to provide adequate education, be it for lack of financial resources or willingness, it is easy to lose all hope. OLC, with its aspiring and enterprising leader Lameck Mphande, therefore encourages the parents, teachers, village authorities, and students to reach their goals even without the support of the government. Skeptical voices have to be overcome, belief in one's own powers to be re-established. Success stories of libraries or hostels built with local resources encourage others to do the same.

The local communities are greatly involved at each stage of the development. It is important to ensure their active participation because they need to take ownership of the whole project to ensure rapid construction, sustainability and ultimate utilization of the facilities. Therefore, meetings at village, area and district levels are important for this project. These forums help in mobilizing local resources for the construction of libraries and ensure the support of local authorities. Also, there can be no real care and optimum library usage if the local communities are not involved.

According to the World Bank 2010 report on vocational skills training in Malawi, enrolment is the lowest in sub-Saharan Africa at 35 per 100,000 people. The result is that even with a senior certificate, many youths lack access to formal technical education which is crucial for self-employment. Therefore, OLC collaborates with TEVETA (Technical Entrepreneurial and Vocation Education Training Authority) to provide vocational training to village youth on their building sites. OLC identifies young people who receive vocational skills training in bricklaying, carpentry and joinery at the construction sites. These youth provide the labor for building the libraries. TEVETA instructors guide building of the library and making of shelves for the libraries. Ideally, it takes the students six months of training to be given TEVETA certificates. Since the construction of the libraries is done in three months,



The Book Project; photo: Lameck Mphande



The new library building, Tilora; photo: Claus Vollrath-Rödiger



The new library room in Tilora; photo: Claus Vollrath-Rödiger



Teachers, Mr. Vollrath-Rödiger, Mrs. Brinkmann, Tilora; photo: Claus Vollrath-Rödiger

1. World Bank Working Paper No. 182, 2010.
2. UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report, 2017/8.



OLC members, School director, Mrs. Brinkmann, Mr. Vollrath-Rödiger, Kasuba library; photo: School staff



Community Authorities, Tilora; photo: Claus Vollrath-Rödiger

they are attached to these instructors until six months elapse. During this time both TEVETA and Open Learning Centre monitor and ensures that they get high quality instructions. Boys and girls benefit from life-long skills and are enabled to engage in self-employment afterwards.

The Result

This work for empowerment made my partner and I decide to support OLC by training in financial- and project management. And, as it later turned out, to help in the search for funding. So far, three libraries have been built. This was done in the record time of three months each! The major work has been done by OLC and the communities. The dedication of all parties involved deeply impressed us. We are grateful to the government of North-Rhine Westphalia, Senior Expert Service Sponsors' Association, and private donors for their financial support. A fourth library and a girl's hostel are planned. The realization will depend on sufficient funding.

The Future

First results of the ongoing evaluation are quite promising. Schools with libraries have experienced increasing student enrollment. Library use is extensive. OLC markets its new skills in planning and building to tap into local finance sources. This, together with increasing fund-raising capabilities will in the foreseeable future enable the NGO to stand on its own feet.

Our role initially was to train in management. Now we coach and encourage. And we learn ourselves. The work with the staff of OLC and the communities is a constant process of getting to know the other's cul-

ture, and to strive to achieve mutual understanding. We share the belief in the importance of education. The ways to get there differ. We have to accept the diverse paths to reach a common goal. In our Fulbright year we all experienced the importance of international exchange and understanding. By working with OLC and the Malawian communities, we continue on this journey.

If you want to support this project, donations are greatly welcomed.

Please use the following fund-raising account and the keyword "The Book Project" (SES will issue a "Spendenbescheinigung"):

Verein zur Förderung des Senior Experten Service e.V.
Volksbank Bonn Rhein-Sieg eG
IBAN: DE50 3806 0186 2005 8200 17
BIC: GENODE33BRS



Claus Vollrath-Rödiger spent his Fulbright year in Michigan. After his Master's degree in sociology and his return to Germany, he completed his diploma in Business Administration and sociology. Having always been interested in global understanding and bridging worlds, he now works as a consultant with Senior Expert Services, Bonn. For several years Claus was the VP Finances of the German Fulbright Alumni Association.

Watts of Love

by Kylee Hernandez

In 2009, Nancy Economou visited the Philippines, where she witnessed a young girl with her face burned by kerosene. She later learned that an overwhelming number of families do not have access to a safe and sustainable light source. Kerosene lamps serve as the only source of light after the sun goes down, making work, studying, and caring for children a challenging and often dangerous task. Furthermore, families worldwide spend up to a third of their income on toxic lighting sources, such as kerosene, paraffin, or batteries, which often get thrown into landfills, leeching toxic materials into local water sources. In 2013, she returned to the Philippines with innovative solar lighting units that could be carried with the users. Seeing that there was increased safety and health by removing kerosene from homes, and the financial freedom that comes with saving the money that would have been spent on lighting, Watts of Love was founded.

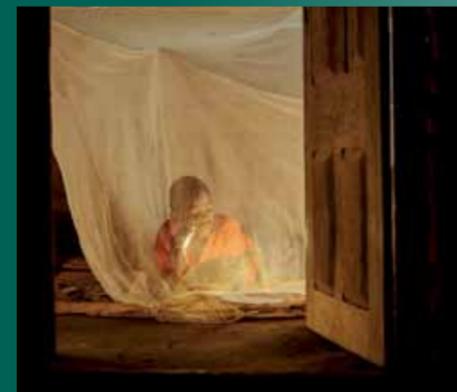
Watts of Love empowers those that we serve by helping them set goals and achieve their dreams while illuminating their paths with guiding light. Since 2013, we have distributed nearly 90,000 lights in 53 countries. In 2019, Watts of Love launched the Lighthouse model, our solution to scaling. Watts of Love intentionally seeks the most vulnerable people in the developing world, who live without access to sustainable light. We partner with in-country organizations and invest in local leaders to represent Watts of Love. Using a unique financial literacy curriculum, Watts of Love gently and compassionately instructs these recipients on how to save, invest and build for the future. We train entire communities on how to properly use the solar light and provide edu-

cation on basic financial concepts such as compound savings and return on investment. We emphasize the significance of redirecting funds previously used to purchase kerosene or other dangerous light sources and investing their savings in livestock. We want our light recipients to be successful where they are, aiming for communities to create self-sufficiency and look to their community members for inspiration.

And it's working. Across the world, families are irrevocably changing. We are hearing stories of children who would have been sold into child marriage excelling to the top of their class, stories of single mothers starting their own businesses and the elder continuing to care for their families. In Malawi, Stella's daughter received a light in September 2021. She brought the light and her new financial literacy home to teach Stella that they already had the money – their former battery money. Her daughter explained that if they saved their money, they could use it to buy things that will only increase their income, such as livestock. Stella realized, however, that she wants her money to work for her. So, she started a rum distillery in her yard, and now, she has employees. Her life, and the lives of her children, have forever been changed through financial literacy.

Watts of Love has lights in 53 countries around the world, but focus countries are Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, and the Philippines.

Find out more at www.wattsoflove.org
Watts of Love was introduced to Fulbright through a panel on human trafficking in early May.



Malawian boy reading under multi-light; photo: Kevin Kuster



Nepalese Women holding multi-light; photo: Kevin Kuster



Batwa tribe in Uganda; photo: Sean Economou



Mulert Award 2022

John Ashley Null

Emotional Wellness Training Program

The Tokyo Olympics will long be remembered as a turning point in elite sport where the mental health of athletes became an essential concern for all. Hertha Berlin takes seriously its duty of care to promote the emotional well-being of the participants in its Youth Academy. To that end, for the 2021-22 football season the Club engaged Arne Friedrich, then a Hertha Executive Board member, whose areas of responsibility included the Youth Academy, Dr. Ben Houlberg, an internationally respected youth developmental psychologist, and Dr. John Ashley Null, a Fulbright Alumnus and deeply experienced pastoral counselor to elite athletes, to design a pilot program to promote emotional wellness in Hertha's Under 17 youth team.

The project was founded on the principle that a person is not defined by their accomplishments, but by their relationships. However, relationships are what make accomplishments possible. After all, the first thing Olympic Gold Medalists do when they realize they have won is instinctively look to the stands to make eye contact with someone they love. Because no matter how wonderful the thrill of victory is at the very special moment, if there is no one with whom to share the joy, even a victory as great as that is empty. And, of course, it was the on-going love of those very people that provided the gold medalists the "emotional shock absorbers" they needed to keep going, despite all the disappointments and multiple setbacks that come with elite sport, until they had achieved their goal of the gold. In short, emotional wellness gives people the resilience they need to keep striving for a better future, and emotional wellness is the product of healthy relationships. Therefore, the Hertha pilot program concentrated on giving the twenty-four fifteen- and sixteen-year-old young men of its Under 17 team the tools they needed to

build healthy relationships. And what is the foundation of healthy relationships? Mutual understanding.

The program identified seven key skills necessary for mutual understanding: respect, empathy, trust, togetherness, forgiveness, gratitude, and resilience. One relational skill was featured each month. The U17 team met for emotional wellness training three times a month in ninety-minute sessions. Since youths learn best through role models, activities, and conscious integration, the first monthly meeting featured an interview with a member of the current pro team or staff about how the relational skill of the month helps the pro on and off the field. For respect, Dedryck Boyata, the current pro team captain, spoke about the importance of taking time to invest in other people, since it was the support which his family gave him that got him through a very difficult rehabilitation process after a serious injury at the start of his career. Other speakers include Fredi Bobic, Hertha Managing Director; Arne Friedrich, Hertha Sporting Director and former pro team captain; and Maxi Mittelstädt, current member of the Hertha pro team and alumnus of the Hertha Youth Academy.

The second monthly meeting consisted of a physical activity which reinforced the featured skill, broadened the youth players' understanding, and acted as a service project to the wider community. For empathy, the young men interacted with mentally and physically handicapped people at their workplace. On the one hand, the youth players learned that making a cheese board for which someone would pay money served a similar function in the lives of the handicapped as scoring a goal did for them. Despite the significant differences between the two groups, they all shared a basic human need to be productive and appre-



The Hertha U17 team presents Margot a team tricot for her talk



Margot Friedlaender talks with the Hertha U17 team about forgiveness

All photos by Hertha BSC

ciated. This awareness broadened the young footballers understanding of handicapped people and of themselves. On the other hand, for the handicapped, elite sportspeople coming to their workplace to learn from them reinforced that they had something significant to offer others, which increased the handicapped participants' own sense of accomplishment and being appreciated. Other service projects included playing blind football with members of Hertha's blind football team (trust), inviting their parents to a December party where they told them all things they were grateful that their parents did for them (gratitude) and learning from a former homeless teenager at the Mission to Bahnhof Zoo about how depression led him to the streets where shame and fear plagued him – the three very issues with which elite athletes have to struggle – and how he overcame them (resilience).

A very special highlight of the year was listening to Margot Friedländer speak about her experiences as a Holocaust survivor, including how she learned to forgive. The focus of the third monthly meeting was reflection and integration. The youth players were each given a personal notebook. In the final meeting of the month, the young men recorded what they have learned about the featured relational skill. They are then encouraged to write down how that skill could help their relationship with themselves, with their family and friends, with their football performance, with their teammates and coaches, and with others in school and the community. Finally, they are asked to write down one action item where they commit to growing better at the relational skill in a specific context. In their written comments, many remarked, for example, how they had learned for the first time that they should express respect and empathy for those different from themselves, rather than pity. Some committed

themselves to working on remaining positive when their teammates make mistakes in a match, since they knew how that felt. Several others recognized how they have failed to have empathy for their parents and have pledged to try harder at understanding and respecting them. Not surprisingly, then, those not directly associated with the Emotional Wellness project, like their coaches, commented that they could see a real difference in how the participants acted towards others. In the light of the positive evaluations, Hertha plans to continue the program in its Youth Academy for the 2022-23 football season.



John Ashley Null did his PhD on Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation at Cambridge as a Fulbright scholar. In addition to his current work editing Cranmer's private theological notebooks for Oxford University Press, Ashley serves as a chaplain to elite athletes and coaches, helping

them integrate the Reformation's emphasis on unconditional love with their vocation as professional sportspeople. A veteran Chaplain at five Olympic Games, Ashley also is the emotional wellness advisor for the Youth Academy of Hertha Berlin, a Bundesliga Football Club, in Germany. Finally, Ashley is a regular speaker for Hope Sports where Olympic and professional athletes build homes for homeless families in Tijuana, Mexico.



Mulert Award 2022 - Special Prize

Vera Kostiuik Busch

“Mother Tongue – Ukrainian”

Pro Ukraine e.V.

Growing up in Michigan, I was always in touch with my Ukrainian roots. My father was a member of the Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus for 50 years while my mother was a member of the Ukrainian Women’s Organization of America – Soyuz Ukrainok. I was an active member of St. Josaphat’s Ukrainian Catholic Church and many Ukrainian organizations while growing up in Warren.

Since our marriage in 1972 my husband, Dr. Ulrich Busch a lawyer by profession, and I have been involved in the Ukrainian community of North Rhine Westphalia and in all of Germany. When Ukraine became independent in 1991, we visited Ukraine in the fall vacation. We had been in Ukraine many times since 1973 but now there was an acute need to help this new nation through the winter.

When I came back, I told people about the stores in Ukraine being empty and we started collecting goods, first at my children’s school, later in Ratingen and among friends, tennis clubs and the American Women’s Club of Düsseldorf. Later that year, I was able to work with the German government and successfully transport 40 tons of Humanitarian Aid in a total of six trips to Ukraine with the help of the Technische Hilfswerk (THW). From then on, this has been my mission: to help children get a good education through support of the school my mother went to in Rohatyn, Ukraine.

Other pressing global issues, such as the worsening situation in Somalia, came to the forefront and drew focus to other parts of the world. The efforts of some of the partners I had previously worked with were needed elsewhere and I had to adapt. In order to keep up my work and to keep helping I founded a Verein, “Pro Ukraine e.V.” in Feb-

ruary of 2003. This charitable organization is a founding member of the “Umbrella organization for all Ukrainian organizations in Germany”.

Pro Ukraine e.V. provides lunches for needy children at Rohatyn Gymnasium. We founded a Bandura Ensemble for the traditional Ukrainian instrument and provided the Banduras and pay for the lessons. Yearly we invited pupils of the 10th grade to Germany to foster intercultural exchange and let them experience democracy first hand. Until February 24, 2022 our main support went to Rohatyn Gymnasium (now called Lyzeum). We provided school equipment, such as copiers, laptops and paid for internet access. Members of Pro Ukraine e.V. and I have repeatedly visited the Ukraine to witness the positive progress our involvement has made towards a democratic country yearning to be a member of the free world in the European Union. Rohatyn Lyzeum has become one of the best schools in Ukraine with a very high standard.

A lot changed when Ukraine was attacked. If you ask Ukrainians, many of them saw the war coming. It can be read in history books. Tensions had especially been rising since the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014. But people outside Ukraine did not pay enough attention and did not think war was possible, especially in Germany.

Since February 22, 2022, when Russia announced the recognition of the separatist states Donetsk and Luhansk, Pro Ukraine e.V. has been trying to help the refugees in Ukraine and in North Rhine Westphalia. Our Ukrainian Catholic church in Düsseldorf had over 1,000 volunteers, from all nations, also the American community, and was able to send off over 25 trucks, each with 20 tons



Some Pro Ukraine e.V. members at our annual club meeting 2022



Dr. Ulrich Busch and workers of “innatura” picking up new goods for Ukrainian refugees and Ukraine



Pro Ukraine e.V. uses our garage as a warehouse for the aid for Ukraine. Helpers from the American International Women’s Club of Düsseldorf



Ukrainian refugee children at Sunday school in Düsseldorf-Rath. Each pupil received a filled backpack from Pro Ukraine e.V.



of medicine and urgently needed supplies. The help and support has been overwhelming.

Pro Ukraine e.V. buys goods that are needed, from clothes to bandages to water cookers or warm socks and sends them to the school in Rohatyn to be distributed. We have presented about 900 school backpacks to those refugee children starting school in our area. We have been trying to especially support the 60 orphans in Düsseldorf, Cologne and Mönchengladbach. Many of the newly purchased and donated goods were also driven to the Polish-Ukrainian border, where they were unloaded and further sent off to their final destinations as far as up to the border, using minivans on small provincial roads which are safer.

Our activities are not just limited to Ukraine itself. Under our Ukrainian Catholic church in Düsseldorf, our priest opened a huge center where the refugees could choose and take what they needed: clothes, household wares or food. Help was given, documents translated and psychological help available for the refugee women and children. Pro Ukraine e.V. works together with the city of Düsseldorf and has been going to the Round Table Ukraine meetings to be informed.

After the start of the war, Pro Ukraine e.V. launched the project "Mother Tongue – Ukrainian", the idea of which is to help Ukrainian children not to forget their native language and culture. They suffer immensely due to the Russian invasion of their country. The German school system will absorb Ukrainian refugee children into existing classes and they will learn the German language. Pro Ukraine e.V. wants to ensure that Ukrainian language, culture and history are preserved so the children do not lose their mother tongue. It is important for them to feel understood and comfortable in a familiar community. On a psychological level, the Mother Tongue School will be a hub for young people to interact with others who have experienced similar trauma. Lastly, some adult refugees are teachers, who can become valuable members of both the fleeing Ukrainian community as well as the welcoming German community by teaching at the Ukrainian Sunday School.

At this very moment, it is hard to see a quick victory. So many have died for Ukraine, much has been destroyed, and once the war ends, the clean up starts. Cities need to be rebuilt, schools and hospitals need to be restored. People are already going back home to start this hard work. But what can we, as global citizens, do? We can try to help Ukrainian refugees find a temporary safe home here. We can speak out for and with Ukrainians, offering moral support and friendship. We can show we stand with Ukraine. There has been a lot of support from people everywhere. I am so proud of everyone for the monetary and physical help in donating clothes, food, goods and especially for the friendship. Pro Ukraine e.V. has received help from Fulbright Alumni, the American International Women's Club and especially from Mr. Iwama, the Consul General of Japan and his wife Tomomi, who have engaged the large Japanese Community to help Ukraine. Of course, because of our loyal founding members and their 19 years of dedication and support Pro Ukraine e.V. has been so successful.

One of the main things you can do, is give monetary support, through which supplies and much needed medical equipment can be sent to support Ukrainian civilians, especially the children! Pro Ukraine e.V. works with trustworthy people to be 100% sure that our help gets where it is supposed to go. Helping people is worth it and I believe that when you try to do good, it comes back to you. Everything goes round.

If you are interested in supporting the work of Pro Ukraine e.V., you can find more information here: <https://www.pro-ukraine.de/>

Your help is needed.
Small and large contributions are welcome:

Pro Ukraine e.V.
Paypal: info@pro-ukraine.de
IBAN: DE27 3345 0000 0042 2622 20



Pro Ukraine e.V. is introduced to Ukrainian refugee orphans and their guardians at a picnic on the Rhine in Düsseldorf-Oberkassel



Vera Kostiuk Busch grew up in Warren, Michigan, and went to Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic High School in Hamtramck graduating in 1966. She received a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Wayne State University in Detroit with a major in German and a High School Teaching

Certificate. Vera was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to continue her education and get a Master's degree in Germany in 1970. She married Dr. Ulrich Busch in 1972 and has lived in Germany for 52 years. In Düsseldorf, she has been an active member of the AIWCD – the American International Women's Club of Düsseldorf since 1973. She has been active in many Ukrainian organizations and founded the charitable organization Pro Ukraine e.V. in 2003. For her continuous aid to Ukraine, she was honored by being named Ukrainian of the Year in the Detroit and Windsor area and has received the Medal of 25 years of Ukrainian Independence from Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, the former President of Ukraine. She was awarded Honorable Person of Rohatyn, Ukraine. The AIWCD has just awarded her the Continuous Service Award after the previous Award of Member of the Year. She is married with two children and three grandchildren.

All photos by Vera Kostiuk Busch

Mulert Award 2023 – Call for Nominations

Since 2010, the German Fulbright Alumni Association has granted the "Jürgen Mulert Award for Mutual Understanding," in memory of the association's initiator and founder, Dr. Jürgen Mulert (1938-2008). The Mulert Award is awarded annually to a distinct researcher, artist, professional, and volunteer across disciplines whose work reflects and advances discourse and peace through mutual understanding.

It is our pleasure to invite friends and members of the Fulbright family worldwide to submit online nominations for candidates for the 2023 Mulert Award. Candidates must be former participants of one of the many Fulbright programs. Nominated candidates and their projects may be professional or volunteer, and may have an artistic, social, economic or similar character.

The prize package for the Mulert Award winner includes the following:

- Recognition during the award ceremony at one of the Association's annual events in 2023 in Germany
- Project summary and biography in the 2023 issue of the FRANKly magazine as well as on the Association's website
- 1,000 EUR monetary support for the awarded project
- Networking opportunities within the Fulbright Alumni community
- Full travel support to the award ceremony (within Europe)

The Call for Nominations and all additional information is accessible online until Sunday, **January 30, 2023** on www.fulbright-alumni.de/about/mulert-award

Contact for any further questions:

Alexander Rose
[mulert.award\(at\)fulbright-alumni.de](mailto:mulert.award(at)fulbright-alumni.de)

History and Purpose

The German Fulbright Alumni e.V. was founded in Frankfurt in 1986 by former Fulbrighters and now has over 1,200 members. The Association is guided by the ideas of the program's founder, Senator J. William Fulbright, to bring together people of different nations to contribute to world peace through better international understanding.

The Association gathers globally minded students, scholars, and practitioners of a wide range of academic fields and professional expertise. Most of our members have spent a Fulbright year in the United States, and the Fulbright Alumni e.V. serves as the platform for which former grantees can continue to promote and work toward global understanding. We are committed to diversity, acceptance, and true internationality and perpetually strive to encourage further education regarding others' customs, histories, and challenges.

Based on personal and academic experiences and insights gained through participation in an international exchange program, the fundamental tenets of the mission of German Fulbright Alumni e.V. members are the following:

- to strengthen and support cross-cultural contacts and exchange between Fulbrighters from all over the world
- to encourage dialogue and interaction between international scholars, experts, and activists on topics important to the political, social, and cultural life of our societies

In promoting its political support for the Fulbright program, our Association maintains close but independent contact with the Fulbright Commission in Berlin to support the German-American Fulbright program.

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. is supported solely by its members. Grants and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals are welcomed.

Activities

Based on a young, lively, and broad-based membership, our Association organizes a diverse range of regional and nation-wide events. Admission is reduced for members of the Association, but all events are open to guests and members of partner organizations.

National Events

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. organizes a series of national events every year in order to realize the goals mentioned above. Equally important are the exchanges fostered among our members and interdisciplinary discussions on current issues.

Winter Ball & Topical Event

Early in the year, a weekend is planned to hold an event on changing topics followed by the annual Winter Ball to mark another year in celebration.

General Assembly & Mulert Award Ceremony

Every year, all members are invited to the General Assembly. Here, each board member reports on his or her activities during the year, followed by the election of a new board. After the General Assembly, the Mulert Award ceremony takes place to celebrate the winner and their prizewinning project.

Welcome Meeting & Regional Leaders' Meeting

Each Fall, the Welcome Meeting offers an exciting opportunity for contacts and networking. Our main goal is to welcome back German returnees as well as get to know American Fulbrighters just embarking on their Fulbright experience in Germany. The meetings foster discussion forums to address issues relevant to those newly returned from a year abroad and jointly serve as an introduction to the Fulbright family beyond the exchange year.

Strategy Meeting

At the Strategy Meeting, the most devoted core of our members gather to discuss the present and future of the Association we all hold so dear.

Sailing Trip

"Bright People under Full Sail:" International sailing trips on the Baltic Sea have been organized every two years since 1991.

Family Weekend

Our yearly summer event, which has been held in Saxony since 2000, is primarily geared towards families with children – however, anyone is welcome to join as a member of the Fulbright family!

Regional Chapter Activities

Regional chapters organize more informal cultural and social events on a monthly basis, including lectures, discussions, and *Stammtische*. To find out about the next *Stammtisch* in your area, contact the regional coordinators listed to the right. Other typical events open to everyone include movies, outdoor activities, and cultural events. Of course, we also celebrate American holidays, such as Independence Day and Thanksgiving.

International Activities

Our Association places emphasis on strengthening personal contacts among Fulbright alumni from around the world. Some core activities are listed here:

- 2022 Fulbright Association 45th Annual Conference in Bethesda, Maryland, USA
- ENAM Conference in Cagliari, Italy
- 2021 ENAM Conference & 30th Anniversary of the Hungarian Fulbright Association, Budapest
- 2019 Fulbright Association 42nd Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., USA
- 2019 ENAM Conference "Disinformation: Fake News of New Trolls" in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria
- 2018 ENAM Conference "One Europe – One Transatlantic Partnership" in Cologne, Germany
- 2018 Fulbright Association 41st Annual Conference in Puebla, Mexico
- 2018 "Alumni-Focused Strategy Seminar: Best Practices, Success Stories and Alumni Associations" in Yerevan, Armenia
- 2017 Fulbright Association 40th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.
- 2016 ENAM Conference "Energy, Renewables & Sustainability" in Baku, Azerbaijan
- 2016 Water Act! Heritage and Innovation Symposium, Ifrane/Morocco
- 2016 Fulbright Association 39th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.
- 2015 International Fulbright Conference "Water Act", Paris
- 2015 Fulbright Association 38th Annual Conference in Atlanta
- 2014 Fulbright Association 37th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.
- 2013 Fulbright Association 36th Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.
- 2012 Fulbright Association 35th Annual Conference in London
- 2012 1st ENAM Annual Conference in Rome

Our Services

The Association publishes the national journal, the *FRANKly*, annually, as well as an Alumni Membership Directory. As a service to the general public, the national office provides information and assistance to any private person, university, or institution on questions of cultural and academic exchange with the United States. Each regional chapter contacts and assists American Fulbright visiting scholars in its local area. For further information, please contact our national office in Frankfurt or one of our officers listed here.

Focus Conferences

Different regional chapters of our Association organize several national conferences and seminars, usually covering a specific topic.

A selection of past events:

- 2014 International Fulbright Conference "Entrepreneurs in a Borderless World," Berlin
- 2011 The German Fulbright Alumni Association at 25: Shaping a Changing World, Berlin
- 2009 change@crisis, Munich
- 2007 Climate Change, Erlangen
- 2005 J. William Fulbright Centennial, Frankfurt
- 2004 EU Enlargement, Berlin
- 2002 Quo vadis USA, Berlin
- 2001 Nutrition, Calw
- 1999 Biotechnology, Frauenchiemsee
- 1998 Intercultural Communications, Frankfurt
- 1997 Managing Public Organizations, Frankfurt
- 1996 A Chance for Global Understanding, Berlin
- 1995 Environmental Strategy, Heidenheim
- 1994 Where is our New Frontier? Stuttgart
- 1993 Market Leadership and Brand Names, Böblingen
- 1992 Health, Cologne
- 1991 German Reunification and the Future of German-American Relations, Berlin
- 1990 Signs for Tomorrow's Architecture, Landscape, and Urban Development, Darmstadt
- 1989 The French Revolution in American and German Perspectives, Regensburg
- 1988 The United States and Germany: Corporate Cultures in Comparison, Mannheim

Executive Board

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 welcomemeeting(a)fulbright-alumni.de
Fulbright Alumni e.V. Office – Tristan Cristofolini,
 contact(a)fulbright-alumni.de

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 Hans-Burkhardt Steck
 Prof. Dr. Jürgen Kocka
 Ingo Zamperoni

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<https://fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/dresden/>

Franken – Désirée Doyle
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<https://fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/franken/>

Frankfurt am Main – Martin Kohler
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Hannover – Claudia Detje
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New Members

Welcome to the Fulbright Alumni e.V.! As a member, you become part of a unique network of change-makers. Participate in our national and regional activities, meet inspiring people, and contribute new ideas!

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------|
| Leif | Böttcher | Zeynep | Alraqeb |
| Sebastian | Pompe | Rita Christina | Wende |
| Lizanne | Kraft | Birte | Caesar |
| Anna-Lena | Götz | Valeria | Eckardt |
| Dominik | Vinke | Timo | Päschke |
| Christian | Huth | Ann-Christin | Grözinger |
| Anne | Markard | Zoe | Merz |
| Kilian | Lerch | Christa | Orlowski |
| Ronda | Geise | Caroline | Skodlerack |
| Mary | Tobin | Jeff | Peck |
| Antonio | Garcia y de Garmendia | Elisabeth | Bauschmid |
| Heinrich | Schwarz | Nadine | Ellinger |
| Joshua | Smeltzer | Maximilian | Schneider |
| Christina | Colberg | Nicole Emellie | Yu |
| Christopher | Brott | Felix | Clausberg |
| Sebastian | Jelsch | Jacob | Eder |
| Dörte | Schulze | Georg | Stahlmann |
| Talke | Hoppmann-Walton | Mortiz | Emmelmann |
| Martin | Grosshauer | Maximilian | Baumann |
| Alexandra | Schaller | Sara | Verma |
| Jan | Stoltenberg | John | Anderson |
| Henrik | Behr | Lucas | Radice |
| Fiona | Burdette | Connor | Widmaier |
| Jil | Babilon | Alicia | Schwarz |
| Caroline | Gunderson | Rózsa | Simon |
| Marc | Wasserek | Bruno | von Lutz |
| Tobias | Reinerth | Ellen | Ambiel |
| Matthias | Brimmers | Sam | Wiemann |
| Mauriz | Porsche | Andrei | Cosovan |
| Simon | Wittigslager | Jule | Abel |

Remembered

Celebrating the Lives of Alumni and Friends

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Werner Besier | 21 February 2022 |
| Prof. Dr. Elmar Weitekamp | 5 February 2022 |
| Walter Nohlen | 21 March 2022 |

In awe in Hrensko



Family Weekend Group 2022 with a new generation of children

Our entire group fit in one boat



Impressions of the 2022 Family Weekend



Waiting to board the boat



On the way to the boat



Elke, the organizer



Visiting Hrensko before the fire



Passionate Card Players

All photos by Elke Handschug-Brosin

We Keep the Fulbright Experience Going!

STRATEGY MEETING

Bad Hersfeld, April 1 – 3, 2022

by Herbert Schwörer



Photo: Jana Frey

Deeply engaged participants during the different sessions of the strategy workshop

Photo: Andreas Dewald

Strategy! Does a “Verein”, which has existed for more than 30 years really need a strategy meeting? Probably not – but many of us were coming in with thoughts and fresh ideas on how we envision the Fulbright Alumni community to develop during and after the COVID-19 experience.

It was the first weekend in April when the Fulbright Alumni e.V. met for its strategy meeting. The Youth Hostel in Bad Hersfeld, located close to the river Fulda, offered a splendid work environment for the group of almost 20 who probably made a good representation of the Fulbright Alumni network ranging from founding members to recent returnees across a broad range of disciplines.

Friday evening offered the opportunity to reconnect at the Bootshaus to chat and meet (potentially) new members. Instantly, memories of past or common experiences were exchanged and the Fulbright spirit became visible – which was a perfect warm up for the strategy work on Saturday and Sunday – during this Winter Wonderland of early April.

Andi Dewald and some of the Board members welcomed the group officially on Saturday. It felt so great to be together again in person, rather than meeting through the small tiles of zoom. Gathering around a big table was much more pleasant and kept us energized in looking at some of the areas that we wanted to cover and revitalize.

With such challenging aspirations ahead, Bernd Riedel and Herbert Schwörer took the lead in facilitating the workshop. At the very beginning the group realized that this would not entail very long and potentially tiring discussions. Rather, everyone engaged and remained active and motivated throughout the entire workshop, aiming at results that could be carried forward towards implementation.

A key topic was to once again look at the mission of the Fulbright Alumni and to determine what it means to each and every one today. Burning questions to tackle were how the mission could help to be creative in identifying focused activities that carry out the Fulbright vision and, equally important, how the mission could energize the members all the way into the regional chapters.

An everlasting constant is the idea of the program’s founder, Senator J. William Fulbright, to bring together people of different nations and to contribute to world peace through better international understanding:

“ There is a multiplier effect in international education and it carries the possibility – the only real possibility – of changing our manner of thinking about the world, and therefore of changing the world. ”
 – J. W. Fulbright

After a very sparkling brainstorm session we dared to summarize all of the broad range of individual interpretations into one statement:

We keep the Fulbright experience going – by fostering
 – multi-disciplinary
 – inter-cultural
 – cross-generational
exchange within and beyond the Fulbright Community (One Fulbright Community).

All participants agreed that it would require the combined work of the Board, the Extended Board, the leads of the Regional Chapters, and each individual alumn to turn the Fulbright spirit into motion. With time and resources being limited, the main driving force for any alumn will be the passion for the Fulbright spirit.

The group then split up into smaller teams to cover various topics. Key results on the event team’s side were to reorganize the association’s annual event structure and to start working towards three national events across the year: a Welcome Meeting combined with a regional leaders’ meeting in Fall, a ‘Winter Ball’ paired with a special topic event at the beginning of the year, and the ‘Mitgliederversammlung’/General Assembly and Mulert Award in the months of April or May. In order to facilitate plan-

ning and implementation of such events, along with the virtual events, efforts will be undertaken to ‘standardize’ event management.

Activating and ‘re-activating’ members was considered vital to the way forward for the Fulbright Alumni e.V. Key activities will include the proactive support of the regional chapters, individual members calling upon their ‘inactive’ Fulbright contacts, a digital membership directory, dedicated offers to U.S. grantees, and the ongoing efforts during and around any of the events.

Other workshops were conducted to brainstorm, share, and determine new ways to shape alumni work. For anyone interested in the details, feel free to contact any Board member.

All participants left on Sunday not only with concrete results but also with new inspirations and the collaborative experience of being able to make an impact in the sense of Senator Fulbright, in keeping the Fulbright experience going.



Participants of the Strategy meeting strolling through the Winter Wonderland of April 2022; photo: Bernd Riedel



We keep the Fulbright experience going!; photo: Andreas Dewald



President Andreas Dewald ringing the gong to start off the meeting for facilitators Herbert Schwörer (left) and Bernd Riedel (right); photo: Jana Frey



Herbert Schwörer was a Fulbright scholar at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in between 1983–86 where he received his Master’s degree in Computer Science. As a Teaching Assistant, he worked with Dr. Murray Turoff, who is considered a Founding Father of Computer Mediated Communication. Herbert joined the Fulbright Alumni in the year of its foundation and has supported the Board ever since in various activities. Currently, he is working as a Business Coach and Consultant.

photo: Ellery Studio

Celebrating 35+1 Years of Keeping the Fulbright Experience Going in Cologne

by Alexander Rose

The Fulbright Alumni e.V. was founded in 1986 and has kept the Fulbright experience going for over 35 years now! As last year's 35th anniversary could not be celebrated due to Covid-19 restrictions, we were even more excited to come together in Cologne this May 20 - 22 to meet old Fulbright friends, to form new connections and to celebrate our General Assembly, the 35th +1 Fulbright Alumni e.V. Anniversary and the 2022 Mulert Award Ceremony. A weekend packed with reflecting on exciting projects carried out over the past year, (re-)electing our board, awarding this year's Mulert Award winners and celebrating the anniversary together.

After getting together for dinner and drinks on Friday evening, we kicked-off the official program on Saturday morning with our annual General Assembly. Together, we recapped all successes achieved during the past year, discharged the 2021-22 board and elected the new one, which included electing extended board members for newly created positions, i.e. the chairs for sustainability, podcast, grant management and project management. One of the main changes this General Assembly brought about was saying goodbye to the Fulliman, who accompanied our association for thirty years from 1992 to 2022, and welcoming our new association logo to join the one Fulbright Community! Exciting times are ahead of us with many in-person events and newly launched projects and we wish the newly elected board all the best for this adventure. For those interested, a detailed report of this year's General Assembly is available for download in our website's member's section.

Saturday evening was the real highlight of our weekend in Cologne: together with over 50 members, supporters and friends, we celebrated 35+1 years of the Fulbright Alumni e.V. in the restaurant Consilium in Cologne. After inspiring opening remarks by Dr. Ralf Heinen, vice mayor of Cologne, and Dr. Pauline Kao, consul general at the U.S. Consulate in Düsseldorf and Fulbright alum, we awarded the 2022 Jürgen Mulert Award to Dr. John Ashley Null for his exceptional Emotional Wellness Training Program,



Saying goodbye to the Fulliman and welcoming our new association logo; photo: Andreas Dewald

promoting healthy relationships, inclusiveness and mutual understanding in Hertha Berlin's U17 team. Given that last year's Mulert Award did not take place, we were equally excited to award an additional Special Prize Mulert Award to Vera Kostiuk Busch. Vera received the special award for her remarkable "Mother Tongue – Ukrainian" project, which she brought to life with her charitable organization Pro Ukraine e.V. The project focuses on teaching and supporting Ukrainian refugee children in Germany to preserve their Ukrainian language, culture and history.

We are pleased that both Dr. John Ashley Null and Vera Kostiuk Busch joined the award ceremony in-person and enriched the evening with their deeply personal speeches. You can find reports on both projects in this edition.

Congratulations once again to both recipients and all the best to the entire Fulbright Alumni e.V. community for the next 35+1 years!

Alexander Rose joined the Extended Board as the new Chair for the Mulert Award in 2022 (see page 7).



The newly elected 2022-23 Fulbright Alumni e.V. board



Andreas Dewald presenting last year's FRANKly to Dr. Ralf Heinen, vice mayor of Cologne



The two Mulert award winners at the 2022 Fulbright Alumni e.V. Jubilee: Left to right: Thomas Weißschnur, Dr. John Ashley Null, Vera Kostiuk Busch, Andreas Dewald



Seven presidents! Left to right: Uwe Koch, Wiltrud Hammelstein, Oliver Steinmetz, Andreas Dewald, Dr. Benjamin Becker, Antje Hildebrandt, Dr. Juliane Kronen



Dr. Pauline Kao, consul general at the U.S. Consulate in Düsseldorf and Fulbright alum during her inspiring speech

All photos on this page by Thomas Weißschnur

FULBRIGHT ALUMNI REACHING OUT



Group picture of the attendees of the ENAM Conference in Cagliari in May 2022; photo: Massimo Cugusi

Building Relationships to Combat Disinformation

ENAM Conference Cagliari 2022

by Daniel Hofmann

In May of 2022, two of our board members, Andreas Dewald (President of the German Fulbright Alumni Association) and Daniel Hofmann (Extended board member Outreach) took part in the ENAM (European Network of American Alumni Associations) Conference in Cagliari. Together with representatives from 10 other European alumni organizations, including representatives from our fellow GAA (German American Alumni) Network organizations and two U.S. Department of State representatives, Edward Loo and Ruth Newman, Andreas and Daniel spent two days in Italy learning more about the topics of mis- and disinformation. They took part in the ENAM general assembly, learned from initiatives from other American alumni associations and together strengthened the network further.

The first day of the conference focused on the importance of understanding the differences between mis- and disinformation and the relevance of both in today's world. Together with the Digital Communication Network (DCN) Global, a collaborative network founded by the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) alumni, the

ENAM board of directors organized a keynote given by Spanish professor Roberto Gelado and DCN Communications Coordinator Marianna Tanagia. They gave the attendees an introduction to the topics and their relevance and the work and initiatives of DCN Global. Based on the input, the attendees split up into groups to discuss how misinformation has been affecting their home countries: the topics mentioned ranged from Covid to the media coverage of Russia's war in Ukraine. Based on the shared experiences, the groups went on to discuss potential project ideas, e.g. initiatives to ensure media literacy, that could address the challenges of mis- and disinformation. An interesting panel discussion with business and government representatives on their individual experiences concluded the first insightful day.

On the second day the ENAM general assembly focused on the current bylaws, as ENAM aims to open up the association for individual membership. Over the course of the morning, many ideas for the possible integration of individual members, the resulting election process, the governing bodies and the possibilities of funding were

The attendees of the conference discussing the relevance of mis- and disinformation in their home countries; photo: Massimo Cugusi



Andreas Dewald presenting the German American Alumni Network to the members of the ENAM general assembly; photo: Daniel Hofmann



Edward Loo, Network Engagement Specialist at the U.S. Department of State, reading the 2021 FRANKly; photo: Andreas Dewald

exchanged and discussed. The numerous ideas brought up from the member organizations were summarized and presented to the ENAM board of directors, who since have gone on to incorporating these suggestions into an initial draft of amended ENAM bylaws. The discussions on the bylaws will continue over the course of the upcoming months leading up to the next ENAM Conference.

In the second part of the general assembly, the different member organizations had the opportunity to present focus topics for the other organizations. Within this slot, Andreas presented the GAA Network and gave a very well received introduction to the Unconference format. The format is a participant driven format: participants can propose topics that are then selected by the audience and discussed in smaller breakout sessions. Two of our active alumni, Bernd Riedel and Eugen Litwinow, together with their company Ellery Studios, the Fulbright Commission and various members of the German Fulbright Alumni Association developed a professional approach to the Unconference format that has been successfully used at various events, e.g. the annual Welcome Meeting. Other

presentations included a display of the social activities initiated by EPAG (U.S. Government Program Alumni Association of Georgia) to engage their members and an introduction to the structure of and the activities of the Hungarian Fulbright and the Azerbaijan Alumni Associations.

The conference concluded with an amazing networking dinner in the middle of Cagliari, where a chef served local dishes and all attendees sat down at a long dinner table, typical for Italian culture.

A special thank you to this year's host, the Italian Alumni Association, Amerigo and their president Massimo Cugusi for organizing this great event.

Next year's ENAM Conference will take place in Dublin in January 2023 as we continue our engagement to connect with and learn from other alumni associations across all of Europe.

FULBRIGHT ALUMNI REACHING OUT



An 'Erinnerungsfoto' of all participants at the IAC; photo: Maurice Heilmann, APPPs e.V.



Discussion between members of the GAA-Network on the goals of the Transatlantic Conference (TAC); photo: Rózsa Simon

The Power of Collaboration The First In-Person GAA Network Meeting

by Daniel Hofmann

After establishing first connections with other German American Alumni Associations – the PPPs, the APPPs, NABN and CBYX – last year, we continued to build on these relationships and the exchange with the German American Alumni Network (GAA Network) throughout the year.

After hosting a virtual session in March, in which we followed up on our initial discussions on the set-up of the GAA Network, we got the chance to finally meet for our first ever official in-person GAA event this year. The event was organized by the APPPs board and took place in Berlin in July. Together with representatives from the other alumni associations six of our board members (Rózsa Simon, Jana Frey, Alexandra Schaller, Lisa Schmidt, Andreas Dewald and Daniel Hofmann) took the chance to spend an amazing weekend in Berlin.

This was kicked-off with a lovely get-together on Friday night in a burger restaurant near the East Side Gallery. During dinner, you were already able to feel the excitement of the group looking forward to a fun weekend full of discussions and laughter.

Following a lighthearted evening, we gathered at the International Alumni Center (IAC) in the heart of Berlin the next morning. The IAC is a beautiful space with open doors for social organizations to host events. The open and light flooded space was the perfect place for many great discussions. The day was structured into time slots, each of them offering different breakout sessions on various different topics, ranging from topics like “GAA Network Vision & Mission”, “the ENAM bylaws” and “the planning of the Transatlantic Conference 2023”, to the topic of “engaging our regional chapters”. Having board members with diverse expertise from all the different associations present, lead to intense discussions, but most importantly to amazing outcomes. In the afternoon we got the chance to present all of these in front of Antonia Chibuzor, Cultural Affairs Assistant at U.S. Embassy Berlin, U.S. Department of State, who was so kind to stop by on a Saturday and share her thoughts with us.

One outcome we would like to share with you at this point is our newly defined vision:



Selfie after a successful day before dinner in the courtyard of the IAC; photo: Alexandra Schaller

“The German American Alumni Network – Together we engage. Connecting and representing our alums”.

After a long and intense day, we decided to take advantage of the lovely summer weather and had dinner outside in the courtyard. With delicious pizza, salad and a glass of wine we celebrated all the outcomes and newly build relationships. The day was concluded with an intense session of “Werewolf”.

At this point we also want to thank the APPPs organizational team, who did an amazing job coordinating and planning a wonderful weekend.

It was great to see how much we were able to achieve during one day by being in the same room. The energy and excitement were infectious (the good kind ;)). With great results, we will continue the exchange within the GAA Network. It is amazing to see how the collaboration between the different associations is so beneficial for all of us. We will continue to keep you posted on the many amazing activities we have planned with the GAA Network moving forward. One of these endeavors will be the shared planning of the above mentioned Transatlantic Alumni Conference, which will be held in Erfurt in June of 2023 under the title “Reimagining Transatlantic Bridges for a Brighter Future” (see the official flyer on the back of this issue).

Daniel Hofmann has been the Extended Board member for Outreach since 2021 (see p. 7).



The FAeV delegation at FaCon22; photo: Ross Patterson



2022 Selma Jeanne Cohen Dance Lecture Awardee - Dr. Janaki Nair; photo: Ross Patterson



Seeing old friends again and making new ones – Wiltrud introduces her good old friend Rosemary Hoffmann to Allie and Andi; photo: Wiltrud Hammelstein



Keynote Speech by Ukrainian Ambassador Oksana Markarova; photo: Ross Patterson

45th Fulbright Annual Conference

“Reunion” – after three years, the Fulbright Association sent out invitations to an in-person conference and about 300 Fulbrighters from the U.S. and other countries joined in the 45th Annual Conference from October 6 through 9 in Bethesda, Maryland. For the German FAeV Andi Dewald, Allie Drexler and Wiltrud Hammelstein participated and reunited with old friends and made new ones.

The conference was opened with an inspiring keynote by Ukrainian Ambassador Oksana Markarova. She highlighted the crucial role that many Fulbrighters are playing in Ukraine and said that “in times like this, we have to clearly show the war will never defeat us and put us back in some dark age ... we need to enhance everything that makes us human.” The keynote was followed by an insightful panel discussion.

The next two conference days were packed with concurrent session presentations, round tables and Fulbright talks. To enable a relaxed start, a gentle yoga session was offered on the rooftop of the conference hotel each morning.

A tradition at the Fulbright annual conference is the Selma Jeanne Cohen Lecture on Dance. Selma Jeanne Cohen was a Fulbrighter who endowed the Fulbright Association for this annual lecture on dance. This year’s lecture was held by Dr. Janaki Nair with focus on her performance of Kathakali, a classical Indian dance.

It was great to (re)connect with so many inspiring Fulbrighters, to learn from them, to exchange ideas and to get inspired, especially for the work within our own association.



Wiltrud Hammelstein spent her Fulbright year 1986-87 in Illinois, where she obtained an MBA. After graduating from the University of Cologne in business, Wiltrud worked with a transatlantic focus in private multinationals as well as for the Amerika Haus in Cologne. Today, she is a senior consultant for data privacy, based in Brussel with multinational customers. Wiltrud is a lifetime member of the U.S. Fulbright Association, a frequent attendee of the annual meeting, and a long-time member of the FAeV, where she served on the board for 10 years, 4 of which as President.

Andreas Dewald was elected the president of the German Fulbright Alumni Association in 2021 (see p. 6).



Time for a group picture at the 2022 Welcome Meeting; photo: Christa Orłowski



Welcome speech by FAeV President Andreas Dewald; photo: Alexandra Schaller

A Great Welcome in Leipzig

October 21 - 23, 2022

by Alexandra Schaller

At the end of October, the German Fulbright Alumni Association’s annual Welcome Meeting took place. This year’s city: Leipzig.

The event was primarily for Fulbright Germany Alumni returning after their time in the U.S. in 2021 and 2022, but also for current American Fulbright Grantees in Germany. The main goal of the event was to connect Fulbrighters throughout Germany – and it did not disappoint.



Group discussion during the Unconference; photo: Alexandra Schaller

On Friday, the 21st, the Welcome Meeting started with an informal Get-Together in a place called “Wenzel”. On the way to the restaurant, the Alumni already got a great first impression of the city of Leipzig. The food was great and the beer was even better that night.

The following day started at 9 am with an official welcome from the board of the Fulbright Alumni and the representatives of the German-American Fulbright Commission. After a short break, the Q&A session with Julia Hozakowska started. Julia assumed duty as Consul at the U.S. Consulate General in Leipzig for the states of Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia, back in August 2020.

After the session with Julia, the group started an “Unconference”. An Unconference is a “community-driven event in which the attendees organize the agenda themselves. Every participant gets the possibility to take ownership of a

topic and, if voted, moderate a session.” No sooner said than done. The Fulbrighters decided on topics like “Improvement of Social Media”, “Discussion between Democrats and Republicans” or “Interactive kids games”.

Following this, the attendees formed interest groups and discussed each chosen topic in intensive and interesting ways. After the Unconference, the first half of the program was finished – the Fulbrighters left the first location and had the option of attending the afternoon event, which was about “Building Transatlantic Networks in Eastern Germany.” The venue for this part of the “Welcome Meeting” was the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut Sachsen at their offices directly located on Leipzig’s historic Marktplatz. The institute’s members shared some stories of their work familiarizing young people with the U.S. and curbing right-wing extremist tendencies.

In the evening, all of us met again at Auerbachs Keller. The restaurant is the second oldest in the entire city and has a great history. After good conversations during dinner, we started splitting up and planning our evening together.

Sunday morning began with brunch at the Barfusz, which was very extensive with continental European and American food. It was another great opportunity to share experiences with other Fulbrighters and to socialize. Brunch was followed by our choice of a city walking tour or a visit to Leipzig’s Bach Museum. For the city tour through Leipzig, the group of Fulbrighters was split up. The city guides told very personal stories of their history with Leipzig and Saxony in general.

After these last events in Leipzig, the “Welcome Meeting” officially ended. Many new connections and friendships were made during this weekend in Saxony. What a great experience!

Alexandra Schaller is the first holder of the Podcast Chair in the Extended Board (see p. 9).



Berlin

Tour of the Bundestag; photo: Alexander Rohlf

by Alexander Rohlf

Dear friends and fellow alumni,

greetings from our vibrant and open-minded city of Berlin, which is also a capital of transatlantic relationships and a magnet for active Fulbrighters. Over the past year, we have been able to welcome many newcomers, U.S. grantees and alumni veterans to our Regional Chapter. With a large crowd of dedicated members, the Fulbright Commission at our side and transatlantic institutions just around the corner, it is easy to find exciting events or lively discussions at our regular “Stammtisch” meetings.

Berlin’s diversity and richness in culture make it a pleasure to discover the city together and to meet new friends from all over the world. As a result, we all share beautiful memories of recent Fulbright events such as celebrating Thanksgiving together at the Hard Rock Café or our annual “Independence Day” Grillfest in Andi’s garden, marvelling at arts exhibitions, visiting the “Gedächtniskirche” Christ-

mas market, crawling through Berlin’s underground in the “Unterwelten” bunker, cleaning up the “Sprengelkiez” on World Cleanup Day, rowing with several canoes on the Spree, hiking through the “Gärten der Welt”, admiring the works and life stories of fellow Fulbrighters at wonderful events organized by the Fulbright Commission as well as exploring the Bundestag upon invitation of one of its members. We are excited to fill the Fulbright spirit with life in the coming years as well and are always happy to welcome new members to our regular meetings and special events.

If you are interested in joining our mailing list, please contact rc.berlin@fulbright-alumni.de.

Cheers,
Regional Chapter Berlin
Alex



Party at the Orangerie in Neukölln; photo: Alexander Rohlf & Alexandra Swanson



Stammtisch at “Weinerei Forum”; photo: Genevieve Brechel



Fulbright Startup-Event at the “Fraunhofer FOKUS”; photo: Alexander Rohlf



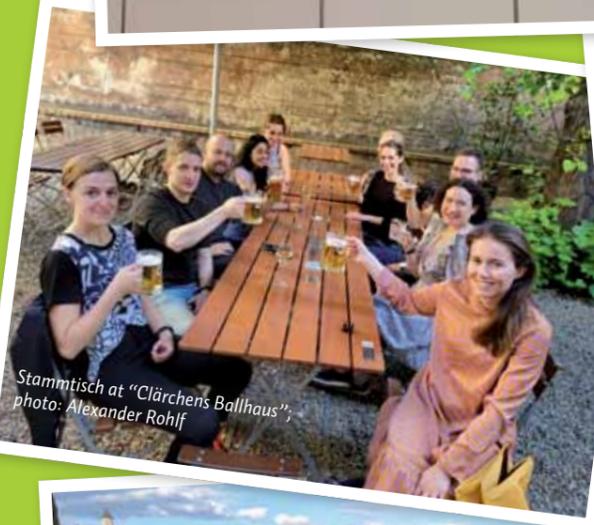
World Cleanup Day in Sprengelkiez; photo: Rózsa Simon



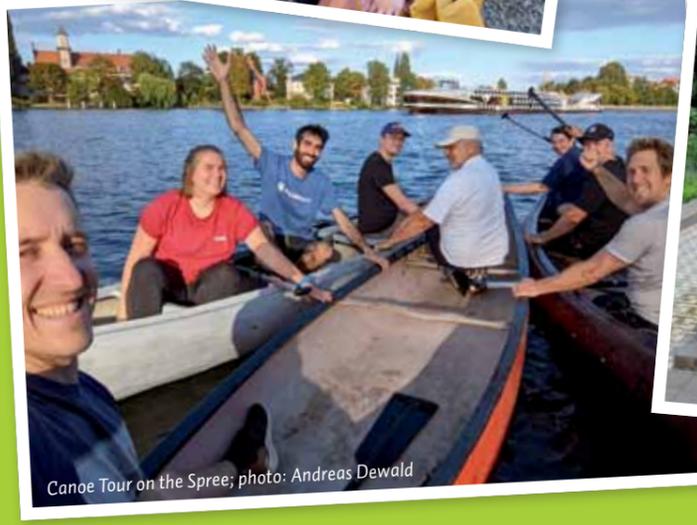
Tour of the Bundestag; photo: Alexander Rohlf



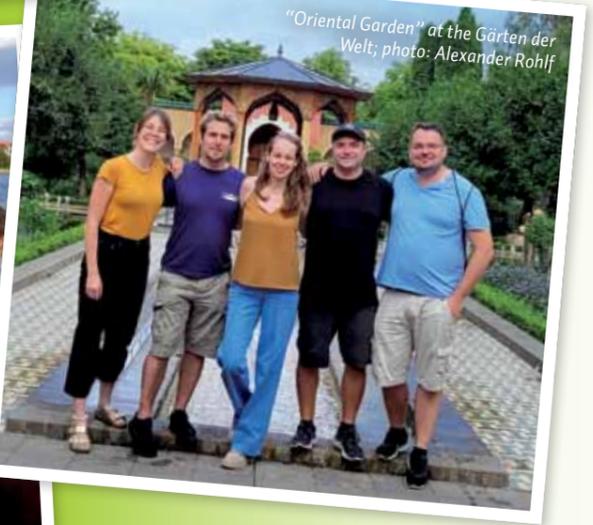
Grillfest in April; photo: Andreas Dewald



Stammtisch at “Clärchens Ballhaus”; photo: Alexander Rohlf



Canoe Tour on the Spree; photo: Andreas Dewald



“Oriental Garden” at the Gärten der Welt; photo: Alexander Rohlf

Hamburg

Moin ... and Thank You!

by David Patrician

Moin aus Hamburg. This past year, with the corona pandemic and the war in Ukraine, has been a challenging one for Europe and the world. Yet I remain hopeful for better days ahead.

In November, we joined some of our friends from the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) Program for our annual Thanksgiving dinner. It was an inspiring evening with delicious food and great conversations. It was also gratifying to see everyone in person again, and not just on screens and zoom meetings. In December, a few of us met up for Glühwein and to ring in the holiday season.

Corona made meeting up in the winter a challenge. However, in spring, we were able to meet again for a small Stammtisch. At the 4th of July party, we also had the chance to say goodbye to U.S. Consul General Darion Akins. After three years in Hamburg, he returned to Washington for his next post. On behalf of the entire Hamburg group, I want to thank him for his support of the Fulbright Program and our chapter.

In addition, this summer the U.S. Consulate moved from the Alster Lake to the nearby Hafen City. It is unclear if this is a temporary move (for renovation work) or if this will be permanent. Either way, we certainly have many good memories at the "Little White House" on the Altster, and welcome the new U.S. Consul General, Jason Chue, to Hamburg.

Thank you! For the past ten years, it has been an honor and pleasure to be the regional coordinator for the Hamburg chapter. I plan to step down from this position at the end of the year. We have had dozens of activities, hosted three national welcome meetings and also had the great privilege of hosting the 2018 Winter Ball.

In addition, we established strong contacts with other transatlantic institutions including the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange Program, the Hamburg Amerikazentrum and the U.S. Consulate. During this time, we also took some fun trips, including visiting the Kieler Woche (Europe's largest sailing event) and getting a private tour of a U.S.



U.S. Consulate - "Little White House on the Altster"; photo: David Patrician



Thanksgiving Dinner with the Congress Bundestag Youth Exchange; photo: André Jäger.



Hamburg Winter Ball, David and Nadine Patrician; photo: David Patrician

Navy ship. Some of our Fulbrighters have taught students, others were involved in local theater. Several have worked building airplanes at Airbus and Lufthansa, truly helping the world come together. All of us were brought together by our Fulbright experience.

I am proud of our chapter and all that we have accomplished these past ten years. It feels like the right time to step aside and let someone new take the lead. I wish Benjamin Ziech all the best, and still look forward to being active in our chapter. Senator Fulbright once said, "Educational exchange can turn nations into people, contributing as no other form of communication can to the humanizing of international relations." I can only agree, and continue to be thankful for my Fulbright journey.

Frankfurt Reloaded

by Martin Kohler

After two years with many restrictions with regard to public meetings, gatherings and restaurant visits, 2022 gave us a new start.

With certain rules for restaurant visits (e.g. maximum of 10 people) becoming inoperative, it was easier to plan and attend Stammtisch events and we made full use of it. The restaurants chosen served a broad range of African, Italian and Indian cuisine just to name a few and confirmed Frankfurt's reputation of being an international city.

Another proof of this internationality is the close contact to the U.S. Consulate General Frankfurt. We were invited to a reception in honor of the new Consul General, Norman Thatcher Scharpf, and visited a rooftop Christmas market with Andrew Halus, former Public Affairs Officer.

Speaking of parties: of course I also have to mention our annual 4th of July barbecue party traditionally hosted by family Mittwollen in Offenbach – many thanks!

However, our regional chapter is not only about eating and celebrating. We have also indulged in sporting activities (Taunus hike) and cultural excursions (James Bond movie night, Jewish Museum visit, guided tour of a Cold War bunker).

So let's see what the rest of 2022 has in store for us!

If you are new (or old) to Frankfurt and would like to join us, visit <https://fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/frankfurt-am-main/> and don't hesitate to contact me.



4th of July bonfire; photo: Knut Mittwollen



4th of July buffet; photo: Knut Mittwollen



4th of July decoration; photo: Knut Mittwollen



The first Stammtisch of 2022; photo: Martin Kohler



“Heaven under our feet
as well as over our heads”

Munich

by Barbara Weiten

The Munich regional chapter can look back on a year of varied activities – in spite of some challenges still being posed by the pandemic.

Being active in nature has been a recurring theme throughout the year: “Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads”, – to quote American naturalist Henry David Thoreau from his famous book Walden – even if we managed to immerse ourselves in the outdoors only for a day here and there, and unlike Thoreau not for multiple years at a time...

In the spring, we went for an easy but very enjoyable hiking tour around the Eggstätt-Hemhofer Seenplatte, North-West of lake Chiemsee, walking by or around seven smaller lakes and also taking the time for a quick swimming stop – and getting back to our transportation just before a thunderstorm hit.

In August, we took advantage of a beautiful Sunday with a relaxed hike around two larger lakes in the outskirts of Munich, Ammersee and Pilsensee. Some of us also took the opportunity to try out stand-up paddling – after renting the boards and getting quick instructions on what to do, we spent a fun hour paddling across the lake – definitely a highlight for me!

On another Sunday in October, we made our way up the “Hoher Peißenberg” in the foothills of the Alps – a moderate mountain hike with the original intention to enjoy a panoramic view. Instead, we were faced with a very foggy, melancholic fall mountain landscape – but still enjoyed the hike and treated ourselves to some Bavarian cuisine at the top, enjoyable with great company even without the view.

As always, we continued our tradition of celebrating American holidays. One of our local Fulbrighters kindly hosted a 4th of July Potluck BBQ on his balcony. For Thanks-

giving, with some pandemic restrictions, we enjoyed a sit down three-course menu instead of the earlier buffet that still attracted the highest number of guests of all our events – as Thanksgiving dinners have also done in the past. For Christmas, we tried a virtual secret Santa gift exchange – and are looking forward to returning to the in-person version this year.

In addition, we integrated various movie nights and an interesting exhibition into our program. For the latter, we visited Kunstlabor 2, Munich’s largest interim use cultural space realized by MUCA, the Museum of Urban and Contemporary Art. On more than 10,000 square meters on 6 floors in a former health center, we could visit permanent and changing room installations by more than 100 local and internationally renowned artists, some of them alluding to the former purpose of the building as a health administrative center, some others alluding to American pop culture icons, such as donuts or pizza boxes...

The regional chapter also tried out various activities for our regular monthly “Stammtische”: Beer gardens were the location of choice in the summer, often located in different parks in Munich, for instance the Bamberger Haus in Luitpold Park in Schwabing or the Hirschgarten in Nymphenburg. In September, we went for the “Wirtshaus-Wiesn” to feel some Oktoberfest atmosphere, in October we tried our luck and skill ;) at bowling before feasting on burgers and curly fries, and in January we braved the cold for Bavarian outdoor curling before recovering with hot wine punch.

All in all, it has been a fun year with great company, and we would like to invite all of you living in or around Munich or visiting the area to join us for our activities next year!

Find out more here:
<https://fulbright-alumni.de/regional-chapters/munich/>

All photos by
Andreas Schoberth



Thanksgiving Dinner with PPP Alumni at Hirschgarten



Taking a break at the shores of Ammersee



Stammtisch at Bamberger Haus



Bavarian curling at Nockherberg

Dresden



Felsenbühne Rathen Gala Event



First Mentoring Encounter with Ruth and Elena



Advent cookies production



Making advent cookies

All photos by
Elke Handschug-Brosin



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