

## #1 My Way To The CBYX/PPP

### ...and the application procedure.

Sometime in spring of 2017, my mum told me about the Parliamentary Sponsorship Program because her colleague's daughter had already participated as a student. Since I was looking for experience abroad anyway (at that time I had already shortened my education by half a year), I thought to myself "Why not?", informed myself a little about the program and finally applied online. At that time, I didn't know that this was the first step of a long application process.

Since GIZ GmbH (Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit Bonn) first had to check the formal requirements, I only got access to the detailed applicant portal after a few days. When I saw this, I was a little deterred by it. Thank God I still had about 3-4 months until the application deadline at that time. So I worked on getting the letters from my supervisor and my teacher and also translating my Curriculum Vitae into English.

About 10-15 days before the application deadline I finally clicked on "Send application". I then had to wait and worry.

Contrary to my expectations I received an invitation to the interview day in Bonn in November. I took some days off and booked a hotel - rather a hostel, since Bonn is about 320 km away from Schweinfurt, my home town. Through a facebook group I found a ride and we finally drove to Bonn in a group of three, exchanged information and talked about German and American history.

I remember very well that on the day of the selection meeting I was very excited and didn't really know what to expect. However, this excitement soon subsided as we were warmly welcomed by the PPP/CBYX project management and former participants.

Right at the beginning we were divided into groups where we met for the first item on the agenda. In groups of three or four we had to prepare a topic and present it afterwards.

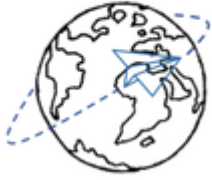
Then we wrote an English and knowledge test about German-American history and general facts. Especially before this test I was scared, because I didn't know exactly what was asked. In the end, however, I had worried for nothing.

As a last point, each applicant had an individual interview with the respective selection committees. In my case there were two former participants and one GIZ employee. My interview lasted about 40 minutes and honestly, I thought I hadn't made it.

### But - SURPRISE! - I made it!

From other applicants I learnt bit by bit that they had already received answers from the GIZ. I became more and more jittery and annoyed my parents and my brother every day by calling them from work and asking if a letter had come for me.





As so many times before, I called my brother on a Friday while I was on my way to the butcher to get lunch for my colleagues and me. I didn't expect anything, as the call was now part of my daily routine, but when my brother told me that there was an envelope from the GIZ in the mailbox, I was immediately electrified. I was meeeeeeeega excited and dropped almost all the meat loaf rolls. Of course, I still had to work four hours and you can believe me: I didn't do any overtime that day.

When I finally opened the letter, all I saw was "Congratulations". I was completely perplexed and just couldn't believe it. Starting in August I will spend a year in the USA! From then on it went completely off: I had to shorten my planned 6-month stay in England, tell my family and friends about it and of course: do some paperwork. Without the help of my family I would never have been able to do all this and I am so thankful that I get such great support of them.

Have a great week,

Lena

