



# Princeton Alumni Association of Germany

## In this issue

- Portrait of a Princetonian
- A Summer at the Ifo
- Working for Wiesbaden's Lord Mayor
- First Time Abroad
- Interning at the Bundestag
- Farewell to Reinhard Loosch

Nr. 9 1st and 2nd Quarter 2011

## Portrait of a Princetonian in Germany: U.S. Consul General Janice G. Weiner '80



Janice G. Weiner is a career member of the U.S. Foreign Service with 21 years' experience in the Department of State. Prior to that, she worked briefly as an attorney for a California-based law firm, and spent 18 months in Munich, Germany as a post-graduate fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Patent, Copyright and Competition Law. This past year, she has served as the press attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, overseeing all media aspects of one of the U.S.'s most important western hemisphere partners.

Ms. Weiner joined the State Department in November 1987. Her first assignment was to the then-U.S. Embassy to the GDR where, from April 1988-June 1990, she served as a political/economic officer during a momentous period in modern German history, meeting with environmental

activists and, after the fall of the Wall, opposition politicians around the country. From 1990-1992, she served as a political officer at the U.S. Embassy to Belgium, where she worked on a variety of bilateral issues, including liaising with the Belgians over the start of the break-up of the then-Yugoslavia.


After a year of Turkish language study, from 1993-1996, Ms. Weiner served as the Human Rights Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, dealing with numerous delicate human rights-related issues at the height of PKK terrorism, including the trial of the Kurdish Democracy Party MPs. While in Ankara, she won awards for her work and reporting, including AFSA – the Foreign Service Union's – award for intellectual courage, and runner-up for the Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's inaugural annual human rights award. From 1996 to 1998, Ms. Weiner was Officer-in-Charge of German Affairs in the State Department's office of Austrian, German and Swiss affairs, where she also served as the office's deputy, helped prepare for a number of high-level (including President-Chancellor) meetings, and worked with our Embassy in Berlin in the early stages to gain approval to build our new Embassy on Pariser Platz.

After a year of Polish language study, Ms. Weiner was posted to Warsaw, Poland from 1999-2002,

where she served as Deputy Political Counselor, with primary responsibility for internal reporting. She developed broad post-Solidarity contacts, focused on Poland's EU accession, and coordinated law enforcement assistance programs.

Ms. Weiner served at the U.S. Consulate General in Toronto, Ontario, Canada from 2002-2005 as chief of the Consulate's political/economic section, focusing on issues such as SARS, energy and electricity (including the Blackout of 2003), securities regulation and U.S.-Canada border security issues, and spent time as deputy, and occasionally acting, Consul General. She returned to Ankara, Turkey from 2005-2008 where she served as the U.S. Embassy's Political Counselor during a period of constant political turmoil in Turkey, with considerable focus as well on Turkey's relations with its neighbors and in its region – the EU, the Cyprus issue, Iraq, Iran, Armenia and the Middle East, among others.

Ms. Weiner was born and raised in Iowa City, Iowa. She graduated from Princeton University magna cum laude with an A.B. in Comparative Literature, and earned a J.D. from Stanford University Law School. She has two daughters.

**Ms. Weiner has generously consented to be the guest of honor of the PAAG's Annual Spring Get-Together in Düsseldorf on the 18th of June, 2011 and to host the cocktail party at her residence.** 

### Save the Date!

The annual Spring Get-Together of the PAA of Germany together with the PAA of the Netherlands will take place on the 18th of June, 2011 in Düsseldorf with U.S. Consul General Janice Weiner '80

## A Summer at Germany's Leading Economic Research Institute

by Sarah Gershkon '11



Munich celebrated its 850<sup>th</sup> birthday last summer. I was there to wish it well. By a stroke of great and undeserved good fortune, I found myself spending the summer in this beautiful city, interning at the Ifo Institute for economic research.

Every weekday morning, I would make my way through the “English garden” to the picturesque neighborhood of Bogenhausen, where the institute was located. After a bracing cup of German coffee and a few morning greetings, I’d head to my office to check any new emails and get started on the day’s tasks. On a typical day, my work might consist of seeking out and compiling comparative information on institutional factors affecting migration.

Although probably best known for its index of the German business climate, Ifo conducts a great deal of other economic research as well. The department into which I was placed focused on international institutional comparisons: examining the institutional differences across countries and their economic effects.

Across all the departments, my co-workers at Ifo never ceased to impress me. Everyone there was highly intelligent and dedicated to their research. As the least educated person in the office by far, I would frequently ask others about their work. Without fail, my inquiries were met with an enthusiastic and lengthy response.

From these interactions, and from the projects I was involved in, I was able to get a feel for the type of work that was going on. For the first time, I saw how the economic theories and statistical techniques I had studied in class could be applied to current-day research. This fall, I returned to my studies with a renewed interest and curiosity.

As far as learning German goes, I couldn’t have asked for a more conducive environment. Everyone at Ifo was overwhelmingly friendly and patient, and, without exception, accepted my request to speak only German.

In a second stroke of luck, I managed to find an affordable dormitory in the vibrant “Schwabing” neighborhood. In no time at all, I became friendly with my neighbors, most of whom were young people working on their *Diplomarbeit* or interning like me.

Thanks to my new German friends, there was never a dull moment. Weekends consisted of hiking excursions, street festivals, swimming in nearby lakes, picnics in the park, and visits to Munich’s numerous museums. Weeknights were filled with long conversations and grilling in the garden. In addition to being great practice in German, these conversations broadened my perspectives on everything from politics, to grocery store hours, to the many merits of soccer. (Although no one ever managed to persuade me that *Leberkaese* was appetizing.)

Strange Bavarian meat products aside, I feel very lucky to have had this experience. But, of course, it was not luck, but rather the generosity and assistance of others, which made this summer possible. Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Summer Work Program, the Alumni Association, and especially Ms. Dagmar Westberg. *Vielen herzlichen Dank.*



## Working for Wiesbaden's Lord Mayor

by Rebecca Parks '11

This summer provided me with one of the most amazing experiences of my life. My 2-month stay in Wiesbaden, Germany afforded me opportunities and memories that will last me a lifetime.

I was employed by the Landeshauptstadt Wiesbaden. I found all my colleagues to be enthusiastic about my arrival and extremely welcoming. In the office, I was treated as an equal and was invited to

business meetings and events. In particular, I was often urged to come along to events such as the Germany World Cup games, as well as other local events. Thus, my experience was greatly enhanced with a personal and close-up look at everyday German culture and life. It is this that I believe shaped my experience the most – being allowed a first-hand experience, as well as daily interactions with the German people.

Working in city government, I felt like I had a direct window into the

ways in which German life was organized and run. I had the opportunity to learn not only important office working skills, but also how important and often arduous a task running a city is. At the same time, I was able to see the rewards of this hard work, in experiencing how Wiesbaden functioned as a German city. This particular internship allowed me to directly experience the rich and wonderful German culture.

As I reflect on my memories of this past summer, I remember

especially my everyday life in the city. Even the smallest details – such as grocery shopping and eating meals in local restaurants, or walking to work in the warm summer mornings – have left me with a personal taste of another culture and lifestyle. These memories will, I believe, last me a lifetime.

One of the most important details of the summer is my deepened knowledge of the German language. With full immersion working in a German office, as well as living with German roommates, my competence of the language is better than ever, and I know that I have taken a huge leap in my quest to become fluent in the German language.

On a final note, I would like to thank the Princeton German Department, the Summer Work Program, PAAG, sponsors, and Mr. David Fisher for this wonderful opportunity. I have truly been afforded a life changing experience, and I will forever remember my incredible summer in Germany. 🇩🇪



## First Time Abroad

by Andrew Mandelbaum '12

This was a summer of firsts for me, thanks to the Summer Work Program. My time in Berlin was my first trip overseas, my first job in industry as an engineer, and my first time in a country where my native language is not the primary one. I did not speak any German before I left the United States, and felt that my time in Germany would be as much an adventure as useful work experience.

My first few days were a blur of introductions and jet lag. Less than 24 hours after I landed at Tegel Airport, I

was riding the train to work. I was excited but also completely exhausted – I was barely unpacked, I had bags under my eyes, and I could do nothing but hope that I'd get on the right trains and buses. I eventually reached my employer, MTU Maintenance Berlin-Brandenburg in an industrial park in Ludwigsfelde, and met my supervisors and co-workers. I was given what would be my primary assignment during my two months with MTU (developing an internal scrap inventory control system to be used while the facility transferred much of its operation to SAP) and immediately felt welcomed and included. Things went slowly at first, as it was a struggle for me to get used to using software in a language I could not read. By the end, though, I was working efficiently and meeting goals and deadlines. It was not the job I had expected, coming from a mechanical engineering background, but I nonetheless found it very rewarding and edifying.

On the weekends, I roamed. I went to museums, air shows, and parks, just trying to see as much of the city as I could and still be able to absorb it all. I spread out from there, going to Hamburg, Potsdam, London, Rome, and Paris on successive weekends. I was on a whirlwind tour of Europe, and I couldn't get enough.

After I got back from Paris, I had one final week in Berlin before it was time to cross the Atlantic again and return home. I was surprised at my own reaction as the flight crept closer: I had grown to truly love Berlin, and had mixed feelings about leaving. Of course, I wanted to go home, but I was comfortable where I was. I was enjoying my job, I was enjoying the people, and I was enjoying the city. If anything, leaving has just made me more eager to return. 🇩🇪

## Interning at the Bundestag

by Katherina Roesler '12

This summer I had the opportunity to intern for the SPD-Fraktion in the German Bundestag.

The SPD (Social Democratic Party) is currently the main opposition party in the German Parliament (the Christian Democrats are in power) and has roughly 150 members in Parliament at this time.

I worked for Angelica Schwall-Düren, a Parliament member involved in many European issues who heads a European Working Committee. I wrote reports under the direction of her senior staff member and sat in on committees and parliamentary sessions. In this way I learned not only about European issues but also about Germans' stances on immigration, social security, and welfare, among other hot topics. Luckily, my colleagues were very approachable and helped me to learn about politics from a more personal angle as well.

I had one large project (a report on US-EU relations regarding data security and the financial crisis) and wrote reports on the lectures and events I went to. I also translated articles and observed the Parliament in session, which was really great. As to my goal of improving my written German (I am a native speaker but never formally learned to write), this internship was the perfect experience. My supervisor challenged me to improve my written German and edited my reports to show me my mistakes. Although he initially seemed disappointed that my written German was not on par with my speaking abilities, he quickly adjusted the work to my skill level and helped me to write "in a German mindset." My verbal comprehension also improved and was crucial to my experience, as without it the committees and conversations I participated in would have been meaningless.

As far as I know, the SPD does not offer paying internships, and the cost of living in Germany is quite high. Thus I would not have been able to intern in Germany at all without the help of PAAG and am extremely grateful to have been given this opportunity. Thank you. 🇩🇪



**Reinhard Loosch '52**  
† 7.March 2011

With sadness we note that Reinhard Loosch, a steadfast

supporter of the PAAG, passed away on the 7th of March this year. Reinhard was a retired senior civil servant who served as Director of the International Collaboration Department of the German Federal Ministry for Research and Technology until his retirement in 1995. He represented Germany at the Atomic Energy Agency, the OECD and the German-Soviet Commission for Economic, Technical and Scientific Cooperation. He was a German Delegate to the ESA Council and was European spokesman for the Inter-Governmental Agreement on the International Space Station.

Many of you will remember Reinhard from a fascinating talk he

gave as our guest of honor at a PAAG event in Würzburg in September, 2000. He happened to be one of the 350 young German students that Allied High Commissioner John McCloy sent to the United States on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August, 1950 aboard the *SS Brasil* to learn the American Way of Life and use that knowledge to promote German- American cultural exchange. Reinhard spent most of the rest of his life doing exactly that with great success and dedication. We will all miss his wit, wisdom and deep commitment both to the Transatlantic Partnership and to the Princeton Alumni Association of Germany.



**Many of the fascination internships described in our newsletters, particularly those at cultural institutions, are unpaid. They are only feasible for our students because the PAAG provides stipends to help the students meet their living expenses while in Europe. The PAAG receives no financial support from Princeton for this project so we are completely dependent on those few generous donors who have made these internships possible. Each stipend recipient at an unpaid internship receives between 400 and 600 Euros a month from the PAAG. Last summer the PAAG provided over 7,000 Euros in stipends, primarily through the generous support of Ms. Dagmar Westberg. We would like, therefore, to ask you to consider making a donation for this purpose so we can continue to expand this wonderful program. As you can see from the students' articles, these internships provide young people with a life-changing experience. People or organizations who support an internship can have the stipend named after a person or an institution of their choice.**

**Donations to support the internship program can be made to the account no. 129001844 at the Nassauische Sparkasse Wiesbaden, BLZ (Bank Code) 51050015, IBAN DE10 5105 0015 0129 0018 44 SWIFT Code: NASS DE 55**

#### **Save the Date!**

**The annual Spring Get-Together of the PAAG will take place on the 18th of June, 2011 in Düsseldorf with Consul General Janice Weiner '80  
Invitation coming soon!**

#### **Help select the Class of 2016!**

**Volunteer for Alumni Schools Committee work by contacting Leslie von Wangenheim (LVW@WANGENHOME.COM) or Frank Mayer (affaldssakt@hotmail.com).**

#### **Impressum**

This newsletter is a publication of the Verein der Freunde zur Förderung der Universität Princeton e.V.  
Hirtenstrasse 10, 65193 Wiesbaden  
Responsible for its content is David T. Fisher  
Email: dtf@princeton.edu