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**The Experiment in International Living—Leading the Way since 1932**

Welcome to this special issue of Federation EIL's newsletter *In the Loop*. As an international non-profit association, Federation EIL represents the network of **The Experiment in International Living (EIL)** with independent members in 21 countries worldwide.

Federation EIL is unique. You will not find another similar network anywhere. Our membership and partnership organizations are always changing and growing. We look forward to acquainting you with the many benefits of association with Federation EIL and its wide array of intercultural travel and educational programs.

Founded in 1932, EIL pioneered the homestay concept and was one of the first organizations of its kind to engage individuals in intercultural living. Today, Federation EIL members lead the industry in providing responsible travel opportunities and intercultural learning experiences through independent homestays, thematic group programs, study abroad, language training, community service, work exchange and other tailor-made cultural immersion programs.

Not just another youth travel organization, EIL programs are distinguished by their high quality, educational compo-

nents, and the personal attention that each participant receives. Many programs are focused on the most important themes of the day - the environment, education, social justice as well as the art and culture of each host country.

In this issue you will hear first hand from several of our recent participants. They will share their experiences and how these programs have benefited them and, importantly, the communities that welcomed them. We hope you will enjoy this glimpse into The Experiment in International Living.

Subscribe to our e-news at [www.experiment.org/news.html](http://www.experiment.org/news.html)

**Meet Federation EIL Members at WYSTC:**

**CEI/Club des 4 Vents - France**

**Experiment e.V. - Germany**

**IYEP - Ghana**

**EIL Intercultural Learning - Ireland**

**Programas Educativos Interculturales A.C. - Mexico**

**SYTO - Nigeria**

**SASTS - South Africa**

**Update from Isonza School Argentina**

We are writing to you to offer a short update on the latest developments at the Isonza School! Our names are Andrew Hollar and Robyn Levine. We are two students from the United States in a community service-based scholarship program between Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and arranged by EIL Argentina/The Language Experience. For the past two weeks, we lived and worked

at the Isonza school teaching the older students basic English and how to use donated laptop computers. We are very excited to share some of the students' latest accomplishments and to offer some insight into life at the Isonza School, as well.

Thanks to a generous donation, we were able to contribute four power-saving laptop computers to Isonza.



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## Isonza School

*(Continued from page 1)*

After setting up an Internet connection and repairing an older desktop computer, we began teaching groups of 5-7 students on five computers for an hour and a half everyday. This hands-on approach proved extremely successful, and by the end of the two weeks, the students were able to use many Microsoft programs, research using search engines, and communicate through Skype. We hope that this technology will offer an outlet for the students to enhance their schoolwork, explore their interests, and communicate more frequently with the generous godparents who support their education.



**Federation EIL** has held consultative status with the **United Nations Economic and Social Council** as a nongovernmental organization in Category II since 1978, and with The **Council of Europe** since 1981. In 1989 it was recognized as a **Peace Messenger organization** by the United Nations Secretary General. Federation EIL is a member of **WYSETC: The World Youth Student and Educational Travel Confederation**.



My expectations as an African girl before I came to Germany, were not so different from those of students who - like me - wanted to participate in this beneficial educational program. I was not scared of the very cold weather -it was the language. I was, however, undaunted and tried my best to learn at least one word from everyone who walked into my life during my first weeks.

Another one of my expectations was to face racism, due to my dark skin color. I am happy to say that I didn't find this to be true at all! Participating in this program, I have been able to clarify certain stereotypes I had about Germany through experience.

Living in another continent with a totally strange host family can be very difficult. I

We also held English classes each day for the same groups of students and were continuously impressed by their enthusiasm for learning the language. During the first week, we taught the basics of the language using both traditional instruction and educational games to maintain the students' interest. By the second week, however, we no longer needed to rely heavily on games because the students remained inquisitive and actively participated in our lessons. During lunch and dinner, the students constantly quizzed us about how to pronounce words, translate songs, and express common phrases in English. We posted small signs with Eng-

lish words and pronunciation tips on objects throughout the school to satisfy some of their curiosity, but it is evident that the students desire further instruction. We wish we could have extended our visit to meet this need, and we are thrilled that your donation will allow the students to continue practicing English!

We cannot express in this short letter how grateful we are for our experience at the Isonza School; the students were intelligent and eager to learn, and they kindly welcomed us into their community right from the beginning.

For more information:  
[www.tle.com.ar](http://www.tle.com.ar)

## Academic Year Program Participant Writes About Her Year in Germany

consider the Experiment a very good organization that knows how to maximize the benefit of a home stay by matching participants and hosts according to their equal or similar interests. I have learnt so much from my host family and they have surely left a footprint in my life as my second family.

Schooling in Germany has some similarities and differences to that in Ghana. Despite the differences, I have learned to cope with the system here. Joining some social groups in school and church also contributed to my successful stay here.

My saddest moment in Germany was when I learned the hard way that the perception of most people here about Africa...was a rotten one. I believe it is because the majority

of people are almost always informed about the weak sides of Africa only, while the many beautiful ones are left unmentioned.

I would like to thank God, my families, my friends, and teachers at school and church, and my neighbors for making my stay one which could not have been better. I also extend my appreciation to Experiment e.V. and its Ghanaian counterpart, IYEP, for organizing such beneficial educational institutions which enable people of different cultures to interact in such a wonderful way. Wendy Kyere, Ghana

Wendy received a scholarship from Experiment Germany for her academic year abroad.

For more information:  
[www.experiment-ev.de](http://www.experiment-ev.de)

## Governor's Institute Participant Reports on Summer Program in Vermont

Education is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life." It is this kind of challenging education that the **Vermont Governor's Institute on Current Issues and Youth Activism** ([www.giv.org](http://www.giv.org)) provides. As I sit here and look back at my time in Vermont, I realize that I am looking back on two of the best weeks of my life.

As we traveled from the airport to SIT campus I was completely captivated by the picturesque views that enveloped us. Upon our arrival we were met with welcoming smiles from the staff members - that night those smiles broke into laughter as we played Taboo. The camp had officially begun.

The following day I attended my very first "Issue Group". I chose Leadership with Ken Williams. We discussed everything from leadership styles, to ethics, to birth order and background with regard to leadership potential. He did not tell us what to think but rather instilled in us the ability of how to think, how to analyze leaders and individuals but more importantly how to evaluate and monitor ourselves.

I can't remember taking a class where I learned more or had so much fun. Every day we had a different combination of guest speakers, workshops, wisdom trees and activities. We participated in a mock Town Council, a mock UN, heard from local activists, Vermont politicians and national figures. We learned how to be effective activists, how to organize fundraisers, information campaigns, and how to more efficient communicators and public speakers.

It pleased me to be able to provide an Irish and European perspective on many of the issues and an international outlook was always encouraged and welcomed. In exploring many of the American and International systems I gained a deeper understanding not only of their structures but of our own, for it allowed me to compare ours with others, it provided me with a new clarity and perspective.

To speak with perfect candor I believe that I learned more from the leaders and other participants than I could have ever learned from any politician or textbook. Every time I sat down to lunch or dinner or even on the front

lawn I learned something new, not always just about burning political issues but about people as well. The sixty-two students and all the staff were quite an eclectic (and electric) group of people who were defined by their differences and united by many similarities. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with a team of people with such strength of character and clarity of purpose - they really were and continue to be a source of inspiration.

I left Vermont with a host of new friends, knowledge and experience. This program empowered each and every one of the students who attended the course, and everyone left not only aware of the problems but also aware of our ability and obligation to create change, and to find and implement the solutions.

Edith Delaney, Carlow Ireland  
Vermont Delegation 2009

Edith participated in the Governor's Institute as a recipient of a Travel Award from EIL Ireland.

For more information:  
[www.eilireland.org](http://www.eilireland.org)



### Volunteers for International Partnership

In 2004, the members of Federation EIL launched Volunteers for International Partnership - a program that combines the most important aspects of cross-cultural education with the values of service and personal commitment. Today VIP offers placements in 20 countries with start-dates all year-round. Placements are available in rural or urban settings and volunteers can participate as individuals or as a group.

#### What do volunteers say about VIP?

*My project took place at Guga S'Thebe Arts and Culture Center in the oldest township in Cape Town, Langa. On my first day I was introduced to all of the*

*staff. A few people were a bit reserved at first but once we struck up conversation we talked for hours. We shared stories, discussed the center, the projects they were working on, apartheid, the history of Langa, our families, HIV/AIDS, Cape Town, tourists, their concerns for the future and the list goes on and on. Katie/Volunteer to South Africa*

*I spent three weeks working at Kadın Koordinasyon Merkezi (KKM) (Women's Coordination Center) in Istanbul. KKM provides many forms of support to local women who are in need. I wanted an assignment that would make me feel like I made a difference and genuinely contributed, despite only being available for 3 weeks. I*

*worked 7 hours a day and could see the difference I made. It was very, very fulfilling to know I made a difference. Paul/Volunteer to Turkey*

*Without a doubt the four of us stood out with our white skin but the people of Ibadan, Nigeria greeted us warmly. It was fantastic to have the opportunity to become familiar with their cultures, languages and traditions. (VIP) Ireland and the staff in Nigeria took fantastic care of us, and our host family was so welcoming and friendly. Brenda/Volunteer to Nigeria*

For more information:  
[www.partnershipvolunteers.org](http://www.partnershipvolunteers.org)

## Independent Homestay Programs—Responsible Travel Since 1932

The Experiment in International Living pioneered the homestay concept over 75 years ago. Today, living with a family in another



country is universally accepted as one of the best ways to meet new people and to appreciate and understand the cultural diversity that makes up our world. Importantly, homestays also generate benefits for local people and their communities thereby having a positive economic, environmental and social impact on a community.

Host families open up their homes and hearts to people who wish to immerse themselves in another culture, share in the everyday life of a family and feel a part of a community. They provide meals, accommodations and friendship as well as an introduction to their community, their culture, their language and their local customs.

### What do Experimenters say about their homestay experiences?

*“There is nothing as scary as staying with a bunch of strangers who speak a language you know little of (if any). Yet speaking at the end of the homestay, I know that the time spent here is the real highlight of this trip. The strangers become family who you share a bond with and will be part of you for a very long time in your life.”*

Gary from Ireland

*“My host family (in Nigeria) could not have done more to make me feel at home. I had my own room and bathroom. I ate with the children in the home daily and they made such an effort to accommodate my dietary requirements. I had an incredible time and learned so much.”* Kate from Ireland.

*“The most important thing was that I lived with a kind, big and welcoming family. I could get to know a little bit of the Mexican traditions that are so different from the Europeans. In general life in Barra is slower, not as fast as in Germany, where people live to work. In Barra family is the most important thing you have: they talk, they laugh and they share a lot of time together. I needed only a little of time to become part of “my” family.”*

Annabelle from Germany

For more information:  
[www.experiment.org](http://www.experiment.org)

### Experiment In International Living to hold General Assembly in Paris, 18 – 21 April, 2010



The EIL General Assembly brings together the National Directors from our 21 member organizations and provides a forum for doing joint planning and program development and for sharing expertise on important aspects of international education and exchange.

Each year like-minded organizations interested in building mutually beneficial relationships with EIL are invited to participate. This is a unique opportunity to present your organization and establish the kind of business relationships that are possible only through one-on-one meetings. For more information contact: Ilene Todd, FEIL Director: [federation@experiment.org](mailto:federation@experiment.org)

#### Federation EIL

70 Landmark Hill Suite 204  
Brattleboro Vermont 05301 USA  
802-246-1154  
[federation@experiment.org](mailto:federation@experiment.org)

The mission of the Federation EIL is to facilitate its member organizations in the lifelong involvement of individuals in intercultural learning experiences. This process helps develop understanding of and respect for people throughout the world.

### The Worldwide Network of the Experiment in International Living

[www.experiment.org](http://www.experiment.org)