



Erasmus-Internship
Finland to Germany
29.06-03.08.2024
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Erasmus+



Erasmus-Internship at Senioren- und Betreuungszentrum der Städte Region Aachen (SBZ), 52249 Eschweiler, Germany 29.06-03.08.2024

I arrived at Cologne International Airport at 5:30 PM, feeling a mix of fatigue and excitement anticipated the adventures Germany had in store for me over the next five weeks. My contact person recognized me instantly from my picture, and soon we were on our way to my Airbnb Hückelhoven. I was invited to the workplace summer party that Sunday, and the thought of meeting new people and absorbing myself in German culture made me shy.

On Sunday, as I mingled with my new colleagues, I was struck by how welcoming and open everyone was. The party was a perfect introduction to German social life, and I felt a sense of belonging that eased any nerves. The next morning, Monday, began with orientation. I met the staff, including Annika Thoma from my host school BZPG, and quickly learned the schedule. The day was busy with signing necessary documents, familiarizing myself with workplace rules, and even shopping for nurse scrubs since I hadn't packed any from Helsinki.

During my five weeks, I experienced the rhythm of working both day and evening shifts, each offering a unique perspective on daily life in Germany. One of the highlights was attending CHIO, the world's largest horse race, where I marveled at the uniqueness and tradition of the event. Another unforgettable moment was standing at the tripoint where Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands meet—a powerful reminder of how connected Europe is. These experiences, coupled with the daily life in Aachen, profoundly shaped my understanding of the world and my place in it.

Germany now holds a special place in my heart, as does the Senioren- und Betreuungszentrum der StädteRegion Aachen, where I gained invaluable professional experience. The Erasmus program has not only broadened my mind but also deepened my appreciation for different cultures and working environments. I hope more students will seize such opportunities to expand their worldview.

Leaving Germany in time for the new school semester, I couldn't wait to share my experiences with my classmates. The memories and lessons I gained will stay with me for a lifetime, and I am deeply grateful for everyone most especially Matti Remsu who made this journey possible. Thank you, Eschweiler, Hückelhoven, Aachen and most importantly thank you Germany and Erasmus-Finland.



At work



View from the chio-Aachen



Tripoint view

Introduction

Over the past five weeks, I have had the opportunity to complete an internship at the Senioren-und Betreuungszentrum der städteRegion Aachen Germany. This experience has been immensely rewarding and educational, providing me with practical skills and a deeper understanding of elderly care. The tasks I performed ranged from assisting with

personal hygiene to engaging in recreational activities, offering a holistic view of the daily operations in a senior care facility.

Week 1: Orientation and Initial Duties

During the first week, I was introduced to the Senior Care Center's staff, residents, and the general layout of the facility. This initial period involved a comprehensive orientation session, where I learned about the center's policies, emergency procedures, and the specific needs of the residents.

- Tasks:
 - Refunded towels and ensured that residents had enough water to drink in their rooms with the help of my supervisor.
 - Set dinner tables with cutlery sets with the help of staff on duty.
 - Help removed the protective socks and also replaced it with the help of supervision.

Week 2: Personal Care and Hygiene

In the second week, I became more involved in the personal care and hygiene of the residents. This included more hands-on tasks and developing a rapport with the residents to ensure they felt comfortable and respected.

- Tasks:
 - I did my first solo blood pressure test with 12 residences and weight measurement.
 - Disinfected bedside tables and other frequently touched surfaces to prevent the spread of germs.
 - Helped residents with bathing, ensuring their safety and comfort.
 - Assisted in cutting residents' nails and styling their hair, ensuring they felt nice and well-cared-for.
 - I also did prepare residents for bedtimes and helped them get ready to start their day.

Week 3: Daily Operations

The third week focused more on the operational side of the care center, particularly in maintaining cleanliness and hygiene standards within the facility.

- Tasks:
 - Arrange the lunchrooms after meals, ensuring a hygienic environment.
 - Assisted with setting up and cleaning after meals, ensuring that residents had a pleasant dining experience.

Week 4: Engaging with Residents

By the fourth week, I had built strong relationships with many of the residents. This week emphasized engagement and recreational activities, which are crucial for the residents' mental and emotional well-being.

- Tasks:
 - Assisted residents with personal hygiene and grooming tasks.
 - Engaged in conversations and recreational activities, providing companionship and emotional support.
 - Accompanied residents on a trip to Chio, ensuring their safety and participation in the outing.

Week 5: Reflection and Conclusion

In the final week, I focused on summarizing my experiences and reflecting on the skills and knowledge I gained. I also received feedback from the staff and residents, which will be invaluable for my future career in healthcare.

- Tasks:
 - Continued with daily routines, ensuring consistent care for the residents with the help of my work colleagues.
 - Assisted with any special events or activities planned for the residents.
 - Conducted a final review of my tasks and received feedback from my supervisor.
 - Went with my supervisor to visit my host school and met a lot of friendly people.

Conclusion

My internship at the Senioren-und Betreuungszentrum der städteRegion Aachen (SBZ) has been a transformative experience. I have gained practical skills in elderly care, learned the importance of empathy and patience, and developed a deep respect for the residents and staff at the facility. This experience has solidified my interest in pursuing a career in healthcare, particularly in geriatric care, and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of the senior community.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my gratitude to Erasmus for the financial support, Stadin AO through Matti Remsu who made sure I was safe and had all the right equipment to have a successful internship, Miss Jobber (my direct contact person at Senioren-und Betreuungszentrum der städteRegion Aachen) who made sure my stay in Germany was a remarkable one, Annika Thoma and Natalia Kreutzer from (Bildungszentrum für Pflege und Gesundheit gGmbH in der StädteRegion Aachen, BZPG), Olivia (supervisor at work)

the staff at the Senioren-und Betreuungszentrum der städteRegion Aachen for their guidance and support throughout my internship. Special thanks to the residents for their kindness and for sharing their smiles with me. This experience would not have been possible without their cooperation and kindness.



Aachen DB



workplace



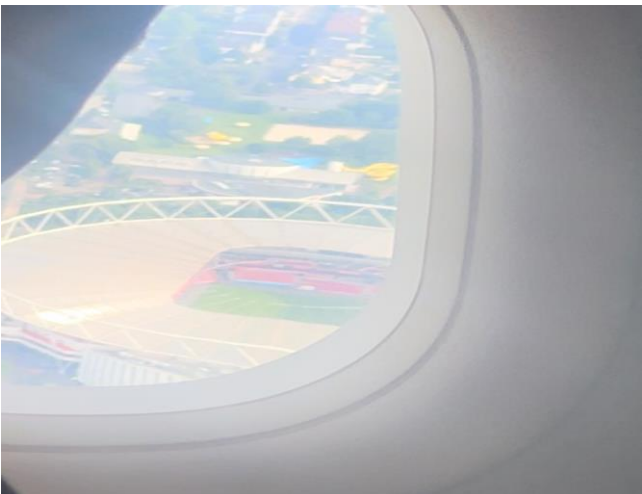
Me and staffs from BZPG and SBZ



Annika, Marie (me) and Stefanie



Workplace lobby



View from the airplane

Thank you for viewing my travel report, I hope it inspires you to consider Erasmus program.

Marie J. Merkerson