

AMBER AMATO

Undergraduate, Elementary Education
IPDS Germany | June 2017

RESEARCH

During the pre-travel course we discussed topics ranging from culture shock and language development to German history and the Waldorf education model. We received a detailed itinerary and packing list, which made it easy to imagine what we would see and how to prepare. We even practiced eating the “German way”! While abroad, I learned through visits with our partner institute that inclusion in the classrooms is a relatively new concept and that some German teachers struggle to provide what is needed to educate children with disabilities. I also chose to do a research project comparing family leave policies, which was an eye opener for me. I was frustrated to learn that while Germany offers 14-weeks paid maternity/paternity leave, the United States provides ZERO weeks for new parents.

GROWTH

I feel I’m more well-rounded and knowledgeable about other cultures, not just Germany. I can see things from a big-picture perspective and am confident in myself, especially with regards to traveling, language and taking charge of my own safety. I gained the understanding that children learn and function best with free time *as well as* structured classes and came home with new and less harsh classroom management skills.



FAVORITE MEMORIES

- Exploring the Black Forest and experiencing the breathtaking scenery and richness of German traditions.
- Relaxing in the mineral pools.
- Stopping for Ice Cream!
- Wandering through small town shops and bakeries.

