

GAPP 2017

From April 2 to April 22, 2017, twenty-one students of the Hebel-Gymnasium in Schwetzingen had the chance to participate in the German American Partnership Program (GAPP), travel through well-known cities like Washington D.C. or New York City for one week and attend classes at Enloe High School in Raleigh, NC for two full weeks. The students as well as the teachers Mrs. Landgraf and Mr. Syrowatka stayed with their exchange students/teachers for two weeks and traveled around for one week in between their stay in Raleigh.

Unfortunately, the German group had troubles with their flight and could not leave for America before April 3. However, they received a warm welcome by their American exchange students when they finally arrived. To get to know each other, the American teachers Mrs. Perry and Mr. Kandah had planned an "Ice Cream Social" at Enloe High School for the first day at school. On Thursday, April 6, half of the German students had the chance to visit Ligon Middle School and get a different insight into the American school system. In the evening, everybody was attending the ice hockey game of the Carolina Hurricanes and the New York Islanders. Before the Germans left for Spring Break, the Americans had organized a party to get together again. With music, food and a lot of people to talk to, the German students were able to enjoy the end of their first week in America. Especially the soccer games, the basketball games and a late talent show brought the group closer together this night.

After leaving early on Monday, April 9, the Germans started their travel week. First, they headed to Jamestown Settlement, where once America's first English colony was located. There, they had time to look around and visit the outdoor museum consisting of recreated Indian and English villages. On the same day, the group went to Williamsburg, VA where they could visit the Governor's Palace and the recreation of Colonial Williamsburg, which is a living-history museum today. The second day of traveling took us to Fredericksburg, VA. Since Schwetzingen is its current sister city, the Germans had the chance to have dinner with the mayor of Fredericksburg and get a special tour through the city itself. The next travel destination was Washington D.C. on April 11. Besides a visit to the Capitol, the Supreme Court and the White House, the students had enough time to visit several monuments, memorials and free museums located on the National Mall in central Washington D.C. The final destination of the travel week was New York City, NY. Not only Time Square and Central Park were included in the two-day program. Museums like the MET (Metropolitan Museum of Art) or the American Museum of Natural History, Ellis Island, Wall Street, the Empire State Building and even the Broadway show "Chicago" were part of our stay in New York City.

Back in Raleigh on April 14, the reunited American and German students had the chance to do something on their own over the weekend. Several teenagers went to the East Coast for surfing or for visiting the towns near the beach. In their last week in America, the other half of the German exchange students went to Broughton High School for one day to gain a deeper understanding of the American school system. A tour of the Executive Mansion in Downtown Raleigh was planned for April 20 where the GAPP group saw parts of the Governor's home and its impressive Victorian architecture. On the last day, the parents, teachers and students got together and celebrated at a farewell party and said their last goodbye before the German group had to leave on Saturday.