

Initiativkreis  
Ruhr®



# RuhrFellowship 2016



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# Vorwort

Das Ruhrgebiet hat viel zu bieten: innovative und weltweit agierende Unternehmen, eine lebendige Kulturszene, eine ausgeprägte Willkommenskultur. Mit einem dichten Netz renommierter Hochschulen ist unsere Region eine Quelle für akademisches Wissen. All das sind Stärken, von denen sich auch in diesem Jahr wieder 17 RuhrFellows überzeugen konnten. Ausgewählte Studierende renommierter US-Universitäten kamen in die Region, um ihre Deutschkenntnisse zu verbessern, Industrie-Praktika zu absolvieren, eine Summer School an der Ruhr-Universität Bochum zu besuchen und die Region als Arbeits- und Lebensraum kennenzulernen. Nacht acht Wochen im Ruhrgebiet kehren die jungen Männer und Frauen als Impulsgeber für künftige Kooperationen in Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft in ihr Heimatland zurück und tragen zur Bekanntheit unserer lebenswerten Region bei. Von dem RuhrFellowship, das seit 2012 durch den Initiativkreis Ruhr und die Universitätsallianz Ruhr (UA Ruhr) getragen wird, profitieren somit alle Beteiligten.

Die zwei Besuchsmonate teilten sich auch in diesem Jahr wieder in zwei Phasen: In den ersten vier Wochen besuchten die Studierenden eine Summer School, zu der auch ein intensiver Deutschkurs

zählte. Das akademische Programm organisierte die UA Ruhr unter der Federführung der Ruhr-Universität Bochum. In der zweiten Hälfte absolvierten die RuhrFellows jeweils ein vierwöchiges Praktikum bei Mitgliedsunternehmen des Initiativkreises Ruhr. Praktikumsplätze boten in diesem Jahr Accenture, BP Europa, Brenntag, EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND, Evonik Industries, GELSENWASSER, HOCHTIEF, innogy, KPMG, NATIONAL-BANK, RAG, Ruhrverband, SMS group, Thyssengas und Vaillant an.

Zahlreiche Exkursionen führten zu Einrichtungen und Orten, die den Studierenden Einblicke in die wirtschaftliche Vielfalt und kulturelle Attraktivität der Region Ruhr ermöglichten. Die US-Stipendiaten besuchten unter anderem den Ruhrverband, den Chemiepark in Marl sowie die Druckerei und Redaktion der BILD-Zeitung in Essen. Sie waren zu Gast im Düsseldorfer Landtag, besichtigten die Kokerei Hansa in Dortmund, erlebten eine Grubenfahrt im Bergwerk Prosper-Haniel in Bottrop und besichtigten den Tagebau in Garzweiler. Sie nahmen an Veranstaltungen beim Kulturfest Extraschicht teil, besuchten eine Ausstellung im Oberhausener Gasometer und diskutierten mit Vorstandsvorsitzenden aus der Ruhr-Wirtschaft.

Bei einer Führung durch den SIGNAL IDUNA PARK bei Borussia Dortmund erhielten die RuhrFellows zudem Einblicke in die große Fußballkultur im Revier.

Schon seit 2014 zieht es nach Angaben des Deutschen Akademischen Austauschdienstes jährlich mehr als 10.000 US-Studierende nach Deutschland. Das Ruhrgebiet steht besonders hoch im Kurs: Gehört es mit 22 renommierten Hochschulen und mehr als 600 zum Teil internationalen Studiengängen doch zu den wichtigsten Wissensregionen Europas. Das ist ein Pluspunkt, mit dem wir weiterhin für den Bildungs- und Arbeitsstandort Ruhrgebiet werben können. 2017 möchten wir das mit dem RuhrFellowship erneut tun. Dann hat die Universität Duisburg-Essen die Federführung. Wir freuen uns schon jetzt auf viele neue US-Botschafter für unsere Region.

Viel Spaß beim Lesen!



**Dirk Opalka**

Geschäftsführer der Initiativkreis Ruhr GmbH



**Prof. Dr. Axel Schölmerich**

Rektor der Ruhr-Universität Bochum

# Preface

The Ruhr area has lots to offer: innovative and worldwide operating enterprises, a lively culture and social scene as well as a distinctive willingness to welcome others. With its close circle of renowned colleges, our region is a source of academic knowledge. This year, all of these strengths attracted another 17 RuhrFellows. These talented students from prestigious US-American universities came to the region to enhance their German language skills, complete an internship in the industry sector, to participate in a summer school at Ruhr University Bochum and experience the region as a place to both work and live. After eight weeks in the Ruhr area, the young men and women returned home as ambassadors of the Ruhr Area, will help future cooperation in the economic and academic fields and hereby increase the prominence of our exciting area. Starting in 2012, the RuhrFellowship has been carried out by the Initiativkreis Ruhr and the Universitätsallianz Ruhr (UA Ruhr) and allows all parties involved to profit.

This year's two-month visit was again divided into two phases. During the first four weeks the students participated in a summer school, which

included an intensive German course. This academic program was organized by UA Ruhr and headed by the Ruhr University Bochum. In the second half of the program, the RuhrFellows completed individual four-week internships with member companies of the Initiativkreis Ruhr. This year, internships were offered by Accenture, BP Europa, Brenntag, EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND, Evonik Industries, GELSENWASSER, HOCHTIEF, innogy, KPMG, NATIONAL-BANK, RAG, Ruhrverband, SMS group, Thyssengas and Vaillant.

Numerous excursions to various places and facilities gave the RuhrFellows insight into the economic richness and cultural attractiveness of the Ruhr region. Among other places, the US scholars were visited the Ruhrverband, the Chemiepark in Marl as well as the printing warehouse and offices of BILD-Zeitung in Essen. They were invited to sit in on a state parliament session in Düsseldorf, to tour the Kokerei Hansa plant in Dortmund, experience a day underground at Bergwerk Prosper-Haniel in Bottrop and tour the surface mine in Garzweiler. They took part in the cultural festival

Extraschicht, visited the exhibition at the Gasometer in Oberhausen, and intensively discussed with chief executives of top Ruhr companies. Finally, the RuhrFellows dove into the great soccer culture of the region with a tour of Borussia Dortmund's stadium SIGNAL IDUNA PARK.

According to the DAAD, the German Academic Exchange Service, more than 10,000 US students have studied in Germany since 2014. The Ruhr Area is especially popular. Due to its 22 renowned colleges and more than 600 majors offered, some of them international, the Ruhr Area belongs to the most important knowledge capitals of Europe. This is an advantage of when advertising the Ruhr Area as a place to learn and live. We hope that the RuhrFellowship 2017, which will be led by University of Duisburg-Essen, will be just as successful as this year. We are looking forward to gain more ambassadors for our region.

Have fun while reading!



**Dirk Opalka**

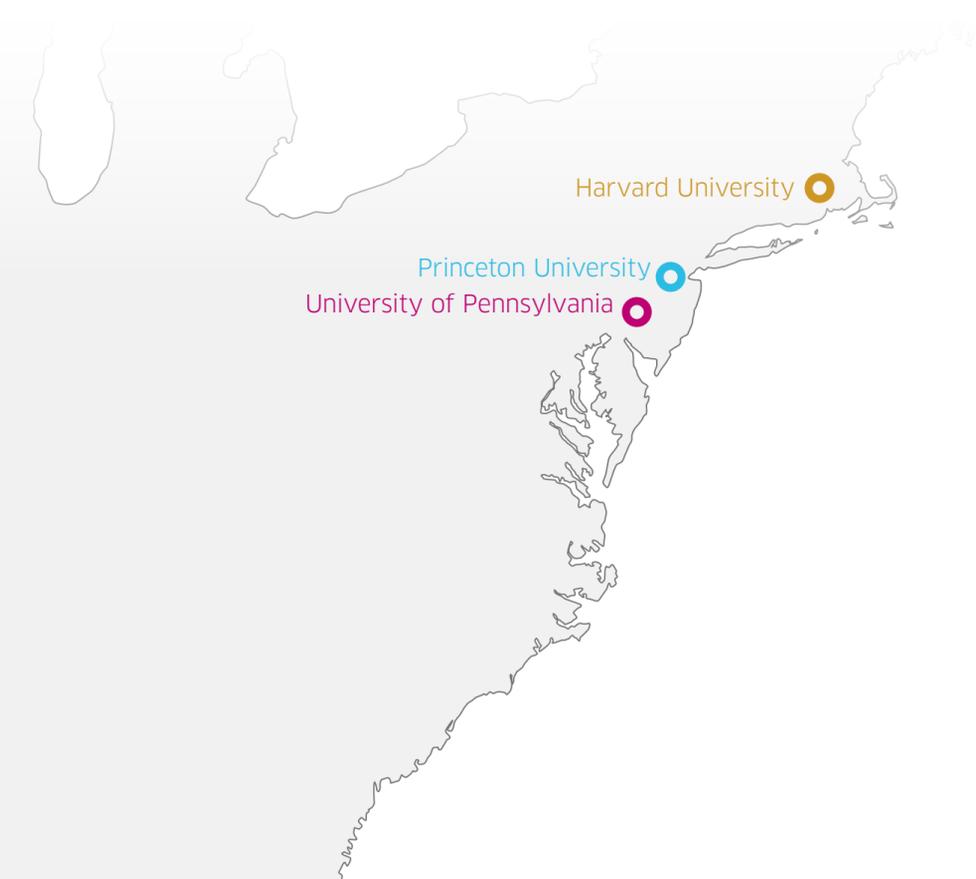
Managing Director of the Initiativkreis Ruhr GmbH



**Prof. Dr. Axel Schölmerich**  
Rector of Ruhr University Bochum

# Übersicht der Teilnehmer | Overview of Participants

Studierende	Universität	Studienfach	Unternehmen
Agarwal, Shreya	UC Berkeley	Economics and Statistics	KPMG
Azam, Humza Umar	Princeton	Electrical Engineering	innogy
Bajaj, Mira Amy	UPenn	Computer and Cognitive Science	GELSENWASSER
Chang, Shannon Theresa	UC Berkeley	Environmental Sciences	EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND
Chow, Chun Man	UC Berkeley	Chemical Engineering, Environmental Engineering Science	Ruhrverband
Cuan-Martinez, Javier	Harvard	Computer Science	innogy
Deldar, Kayvon	UC Berkeley	Environmental Economics and Policy	Vaillant Group
Kim, Phil	UC Berkeley	Chemical Engineering	BP Europa
Loughlin, Kevin	Harvard	Computer Science	innogy
Martinez Perez Tejada, Jorge	UPenn	Electrical Engineering, Systems Engineering, Cognitive Science	Thyssengas
Matsudaira, Matthew	Harvard	Economics	Brenntag
Metzger, Frederick David	Harvard	Chemistry	Evonik Industries
Miller, Samuel Richard	Princeton	Electrical Engineering	SMS group
Mupparapu, Vamsee	UPenn	Computer Science	Accenture
Ouyang, Iris	UC Berkeley	Mathematics and Computer Science	NATIONAL-BANK
Spragg, Robert Leland	UC Berkeley	Civil and Environmental Eng.	HOCHTIEF
Wang, Carrie	UPenn	Computer Science, Economics	innogy



# Phase 1 | Summer School

Ruhr University Bochum organized this year's summer school for the RuhrFellowship. The summer school strengthened the Fellows' language skills in a four-week intensive German language course and gave them insights into the Ruhr Area. They experienced not only the industrial hubs, but also the three UA Ruhr Universities: TU Dortmund University, the University of Duisburg-Essen and Ruhr University Bochum.

Visits to the universities enabled the Fellows to get an overview of the academic offer of the region and experience student life in the Ruhr Area. One of their field trips led them to the art collections of Ruhr University Bochum, where they admired antiques as well as modern art. Furthermore, they gained insights into the Ruhr Universities' excellent research activities by visiting the Center for Nanointegration (CENIDE) in Duisburg-Essen and the Fraunhofer Institute for Material Flow and Logistics in Dortmund.

During company visits and CEO talks throughout the month, the Fellows gained insights into the industries shaping the Ruhr Area and beyond. At Ruhrverband Essen the Fellows were able to visit a water treatment plant and to learn more about supplying clean water for "green" projects. The Fellows learned about gas production in the past and the future, as well as about the political and environmental challenges associated with it - during their visit to Thyssengas in Dortmund and a subsequent tour of the decommissioned Hansa Coking Plant, a stop on the Ruhr Area's Industrial Heritage

Route. During a visit to RWE's lignite surface mine "Garzweiler," the Fellows marveled at the enormous bucket-wheel excavators in awe. At Evonik in Marl the students got an overview of one of Europe's largest chemical parks and the processes for creating acrylic acid, an important substance for manufacturing various plastics, adhesives and paints. During a tour of the Axel Springer printing office in Kettwig and the Bild newspaper in Essen, the Fellows became familiar with automated production processes and the considerations that have to be made for one of Germany's most popular newspapers. Finally, the highlight was being led over one kilometer underground into a working coal mine at RAG's Prosper Haniel Bergwerk. While coal mines in Germany are set to close by 2018, the Fellows learned about RAG's plans for renewable energy and sustainable uses for former mining areas. A cultural program introduced the Fellows to the heart and soul of the Ruhr cities: At

Foto: ©RUB, Marquard



ExtraSchicht, also called the night of industry culture, the whole Ruhr Area was on the move - and our students as well, exploring former industrial facilities, listening to music of all kinds, enchanted by vaudeville comedians and fireworks. From the top of the Gasometer Oberhausen, one of the numerous industrial monuments and landmarks of the Ruhr Area, where they also visited the new exhibition Wonders of Nature, they had a stunning view over the whole area. A cruise on Lake Kemnade in Bochum showed them "the green lung" of the Ruhr Area and its green and natural landscape. After touring the 80,000-seat Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund, home of the BVB Dortmund, even soccer "newbies" couldn't resist buying yellow and black fan merchandise. The "Meeting of the Minds" brought the Fellows together with 20 other students from abroad completing research internships at the UA Ruhr Universities and treated them to both the rougher and finer sides of

Ruhr culture. The group visited the UNESCO World Heritage Site Zeche Zollverein in Essen and toured the Ruhr Museum. After a dinner of Currywurst, the group was treated to a performance by the French pianist Hélène Grimaud and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen at the Ruhr Piano Festival in the Essen Philharmonic.

The RUB RuhrFellowship Buddy program paired the RuhrFellows up with German students, each using his or her interests to show the Fellows new facets of German life - from the German-Turkish culinary culture (above all, Döner, but also Tortilla) to German music at the free music festival Bochum Total, and the European Soccer Championship.

Inside and outside of the classroom, these four weeks were an unforgettable learning experience and a real preparation for living and working in the Ruhr Area.

## Resümees aus Übersee | Résumés from Overseas





## Agarwal, Shreya

To reflect on the RuhrFellowship experience I soaked in over the past 2 months is an overwhelming task. I've always wanted to go to Germany, and growing up, all I had in my personal schema of Germany was Haribo gummies. So, although my initial excitement and anticipation of spending a summer in Germany was great, it became miniscule in hindsight, as I came back with much more than just a suitcase full of Haribo souvenirs.

### Various cultural and industrial visits

The experience began with various cultural and industrial visits in the Ruhr region. The most rewarding company visit was the one to the coalmine Prosper-Haniel. Going over a kilometer into the ground wearing the uniform and carrying all the heavy equipment and experiencing the life of a coal miner was incredible. From traveling through the expansive maze of dark and damp tunnels in mini-trains to seeing the enormous machines used to mine coal, the hour I spent underground made me respect miners even more. However, with the government focus on green energy and

the last coal mine closing in 2018, the coal and steel industry has to recreate itself. What is really impressive is the fact that the government, along with the support of other industries, is making all efforts to provide other employment options for the miners.

Apart from the technical aspects of the fellowship, I was also able to experience some amazing German culture. We kicked off the fellowship with a pub crawl in the Bermuda Dreieck. Bonding with the 'buddies' and other RuhrFellows over pints of German beer is how I was introduced to the German culture. In the following days, I was introduced to the German language. While I was initially very nervous about learning a new language, I found it extremely interesting. Instead of unconsciously ordering food at restaurants as I did earlier, I started practicing how to order dishes in German and honed my pronunciation while standing in line. Interacting with the buddies and asking them questions about their country ranging from the socio-political issues to the best restaurants and clubs in town, I learned much more about



Germany and in particular, the Ruhr region than I could have imagined.

My experience at KPMG was also a huge asset and broadened my perspective about German work culture. Being a part of the Consulting team in the Dusseldorf office, I was able to develop my quantitative as well as qualitative abilities and hone my communication skills. I was also able to experience the professional world in a client setting as I spent one week in the client office, where I assisted the team in advisory assignments. The highlight of my internship was the Interns & Working Students Social at the RheinKirmes where I was able to interact with other interns from different KPMG offices in the Ruhr region in a social setting. This event not only introduced me to the fun side of the professional life but also enabled me to build my international network.

### A completely unique summer

Even with the amazing business and cultural experiences, what I honestly want to shine light on is the quality of perspective I was able to acquire from

the past 2 months. During the summer of 2016, being in Europe amidst hugely significant political, economic, social events molded my fellowship into a completely unique, meaningful perspective.

One of the first things that happened during my stay in Germany was Brexit. The UK's leaving of the European Union was a huge political movement with a lasting economic impact. Although I do not doubt (with the expansive media coverage on Brexit worldwide) that I would have been as up-to-date with events in the US or back in India, I was able to gain so much more valuable and realistic insight by being present in Europe. As an Economics major, I was able to wholly experience the shifts of people's concerns, immediate, short-term reflections of Brexit in the market, as well as Germany's general political insight on the politics of the European Union.

Furthermore, the 2016 Euro Cup was ongoing during my stay, and I was able to live in the heat of Germany's involvement in Fußball. During the Euros, the streets were flooded with people and

energy, with tokens of cheer for the German national football team splayed everywhere. Even though I previously had not been excited by soccer, being in the middle of the energy and spirit made me go out and join the crowd, cheering as one with the culture.

Finally, huge social unrest was present throughout Europe during this summer as well. Threats of terrorism were pervasive throughout Germany as well, especially with the shooting in Munich which followed the horrors of the Nice attack. Being in the middle of this national tension hammered the actuality and immediacy of international unrest. I could not help but wonder, if I had been in the US during this time of upheaval, I would not have realized how real of a threat terrorism is. Reading of explosions in a different continent did nothing compared to hearing hushed voices talk with concern about the next city.

#### Impactful and meaningful exchange

The events that prevailed throughout the summer constructed the perspective that I brought back to Berkeley. I feel that with my new eyes, I can see differently, and make different decisions that think of the bigger, wider picture. The flow of interaction uncontained by one country allowed me to see if just a little more, how the world moves, how each event shapes the next, and the decisions of the country move the people. And for this reason I understand and appreciate the fact that this was an exchange fellowship if nothing else, because the same experiences and the same global events would not have been as impactful and meaningful had it taken place anywhere else in the whole world.





## Azam, Humza Umar

This all started because I was looking for an internship for Summer 2016 - something that would give me some real world experience and allow me to escape the never ending boredom that accompanied my bedroom back home. I applied for several internships, but the RuhrFellowship caught my eye. It was in Germany! I'd been to Germany the past summer participating in a German language course in Munich and I had learned German my previous year of college, though I hadn't had much time to practice it during my second year. The program also offered an internship. It seemed like an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to practice my German in an immersive environment, while experiencing the STEM industry. So I applied. Anika replied. I filled out some paperwork, booked a flight, and that's how I found myself checking into my room at Bochum Acora Wohnen und Hotel at 11pm on June 3rd.

### Classes & Tours

The first month of the program was focused on the German course as well as various tours and excursions of the participating universities and to partner companies of the Intiativkreis Ruhr.

I was placed in the Intermediate German Course as I had previously learned German, along with a few of the other Fellows. I say class, but it really didn't

feel like a class. It was more like a hangout session with friends and our teacher, Juliane. We did have assignments and we did occasionally do handouts of course, but everyday was a discussion. We'd talk about the history of the Ruhr area, about places we wanted to travel to, hobbies that we had picked up, words that we could use to flirt, and occasionally we talked about gepeitschte Drachen (whipped dragons). It was fun, and I learned a lot, which bolstered my confidence in my German language skills and allowed me to use them in real settings.

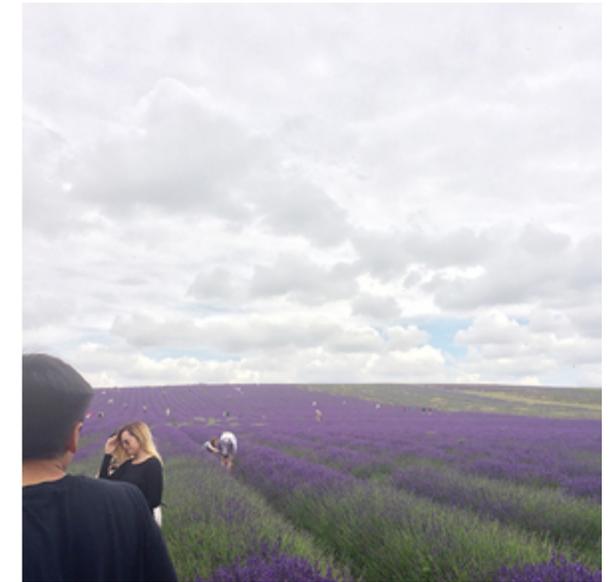
After class, or on days we did not have class (excluding weekends), tours kept us occupied. We visited major companies such as innogy, Evonik, Thyssengas, and BILD. We also had the honor of visiting the last remaining coal mine in Germany, which was a truly unique experience.

### Internship

The second month of the program I began working at innogy under Dr. Roland Hermes in the System Analytics wing of their New Technologies department. My job as their intern was to analyze a large data set of electrical measurements taken from a power system. It was definitely a new experience. I was in an office by myself working on an independent project. Though my superiors gave me some guiding advice, most of the decisions on how to



proceed were left solely to my discretion. Though daunting, this experience served to educate me on how assignments in industry pan out, the importance of communication between workers, and the importance of working efficiently while organizing and documenting ones work. It also helped me improve my German as I mainly spoke German during my internship, though important information was communicated in English. As a perk of working at innogy, I also received delicious, and most



importantly, free gourmet lunches, one of the biggest highlights of my internship there.

### Travelling

During free weekends, many of the Fellows, including myself, travelled to different European cities and countries. Because countries in Europe are so small, and transportation in Europe is so great, travelling to different countries and cities was both easy and affordable.



Along with some of the other Fellows, I travelled to Berlin and saw the Brandenburg Gate and the Berlin Wall, while experiencing the rich culture the city had to offer. We strolled through the old, but beautiful streets of Dresden, shopped in the malls in Frankfurt. We even visited Amsterdam and its famous Red Light District. In Brussels, Sam, the other student from Princeton, and I met up with an international student from our school that lived nearby, and she and her family took us around. My final weekend in Europe, I flew to the UK and visited some old high school friends studying abroad.

### **The People**

The best part of the fellowship, however, was not the travelling nor the food or tours, but rather, the people. Coming into the program, I guessed I would leave with four or five new friends and a bunch of acquaintances. When the program started, a few cliques did form, as expected, but there was no real sense of separation or exclusion. Everyone in the group was welcoming and friendly, and we'd often get together for movie nights (though this often ended up being only the guys) or go out to party together. At the end of the program, I was sad to be saying goodbye to not just four or five new friends, but five times that amount, including Amanda, who organized the buddy program, and Anika, the coordinator for our program. The people I met during this program are what truly made my RuhrFellowship experience a great and successful one.



## Bajaj, Mira Amy

As I sat on the plane to Germany in early June, I felt a twinge of excitement and anticipation that I'd never felt before. I'd traveled to Europe over the years, several times with my family and even once with friends after graduating high school, but this time was different. For the first time, I was going abroad by myself and for an extended period of eight weeks. I didn't know what to expect at the time, but now that I've returned home I can confidently say that the RuhrFellowship gave me a unique and unforgettable experience that I'll cherish for the rest of my life.

### Classes and Excursions

I had taken German in high school and my freshman year at Penn, but it had been a year since I had used any of my previous knowledge and was feeling pretty shy about using it at first. Our morning German classes instilled the confidence that I needed to get comfortable with using my German again in everyday life. In our small intermediate class of seven students we only spoke in German. This allowed us to improve our skills

greatly over the course of the month, learning more about German culture and about each other as the month went on. Every day during our thirty-minute break from class, the seven of us would walk to a nearby bakery. We would try to speak to each other only in German during this time period. Though it sometimes got us some funny looks from the German people around us listening to us struggle with "der, die, oder das?" in our American accents, it was a great way to improve our language skills with each other as a continuation of what we were learning in class.

Through our afternoon excursions, I felt like I was really able to learn a lot about the history and culture of the Ruhr area. I really liked that we went to such a variety of sites, from a printing press and university science labs to the parliament building in Düsseldorf and water treatment plants. My favorite excursion though, hands down, was going 1200 meters deep to visit the coal mine. It was unlike anything I have ever done before, and it was really interesting to see one of the last active coal mines in Germany. These excursions gave us



some insight into how the Ruhr region continues to transform itself after the deindustrialization of the area.

### Internship and CEO Meetings

In July, I worked at Gelsenwasser AG, a utilities company in Gelsenkirchen that provides fresh water, natural gas, and electricity to residents in the area. In America, almost everyone drinks tap water. But Germany is a different story. Tap water is not generally served in restaurants, and many people seem to have the perception that it is not safe to drink (even though it is). This key difference was especially highlighted as I worked at a water provider, as they are working to change that perception, and I really enjoyed hearing the perspectives of the people there on this cultural difference. I worked in the corporate communications department of Gelsenwasser. My main

project was to come up with a proposal for their new Intranet, but I also attended several meetings and completed other tasks as they came up. Though my colleagues all spoke English very well, I spent most of the time during this month communicating in German— I even wrote a blog post for their upcoming blog entirely in German. As a result, this month gave me a unique experience of working in a foreign country and I was able to observe differences and similarities in the work culture as well. This internship made me reflect on what it must be like for people who come from a different country to work in America (like my parents did). Though we were all busy with our internships this month and no longer spending the entire day together, I valued the times in July when the Fellows were able to meet as a group. Some of these times were when we had evening meetings with the CEOs of companies such as BP

Europa and National Bank. We had some really good conversations during these meetings about topics such as climate change and the unique challenges Europe and the world are facing today.

#### Travel

I had the great experience to travel on the weekends over the eight weeks to Amsterdam, Budapest, Zürich, Milan, Berlin, and Hamburg. This was an amazing opportunity, introducing myself to new cities with new friends in less than 48 hours, sleep deprived but as happy as can be. These trips really gave me some of the most extraordinary memories of the summer and brought me so much closer to the other Fellows. I went to a huge city fair in Zürich that only happens once every three years, I ate the best pasta of my life in Milan, I woke up at 8:00 am to see the fish market in Hamburg, and I experienced the famous bathhouses of Budapest, just to name a few. I loved the way that being in Europe made it so easy to experience so many different cultures in just a short flight or train ride.

#### Wrapping Up

I am so thankful that my on-a-whim application turned into the remarkable summer it did. There is no way to fully capture how amazing these two months were. Though it wasn't always easy, it was a truly exceptional experience of growth and transformation. I'll always have a special place in my heart for Bochum and all of the people I got the chance to meet this summer. Bis später, Deutschland!





## Chang, Shannon Theresa

**W**hen I applied to this program, I thought of Germany as a land of vibrant culture, efficient people, and beer. Once I experienced more of the country, I found myself in awe of how Germans have gained the well-known stereotype of being timely, efficient people despite travelling mainly by the country-wide train system, Deutsche Bahn. Delayed and, very occasionally, cancelled trains became part of the everyday experience. Despite the many jokes and jabs made at the expense of Germany's public transportation, it had little impact on my overall experience other than dispelling the image of efficient public transportation being the reason behind Germans' timeliness.

### **Perfect combination of language and learning**

Yes, it is true that Germany has much better beer than America. Even though I am usually not a big fan of beer in general, I found myself enjoying a cold Kölsch in a Cologne brewery while watching the semifinal game in the Euro Cup. Whether watching in a pub or going to a public viewing, soccer is deeply ingrained in German culture. Often times after a big win by the German national team, cars would drive around the city-center of Bochum incessantly honking and hollering out their windows in celebration. No matter where we watched the game, I could feel a sense of comradery throughout the crowd as we all 'ooo'ed and



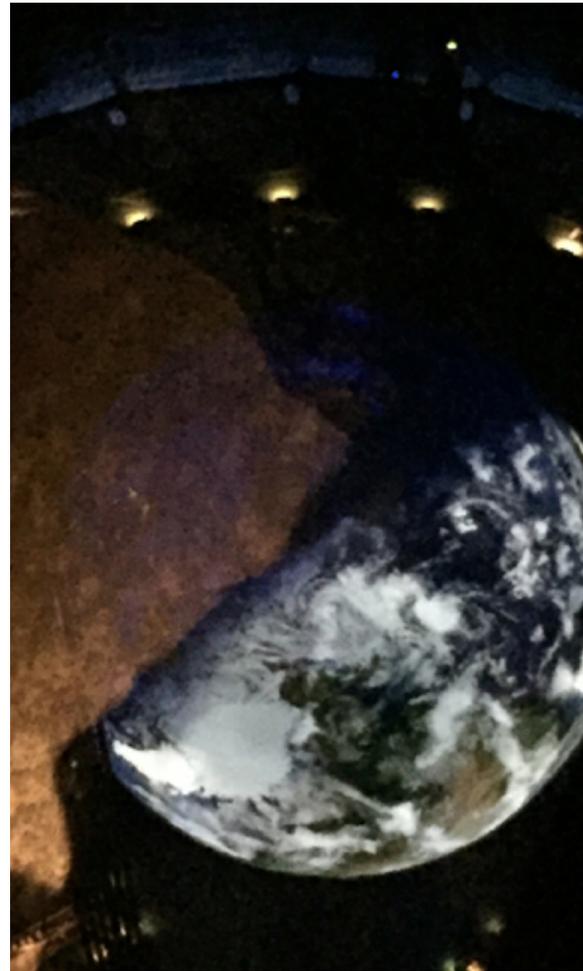
awed at the goals and missed shots made in each game, although I'm sure I would have felt differently about the comradery had I been watching a Bundesliga game between rival teams.

I applied to this program because I had studied abroad the previous summer in Madrid and found the intercultural experiences intoxicating and wanted to continue these experiences. This program offered the perfect combination of language learning, cultural exhibitions, and internships.

In a very quick three-week course, we were taught the basics of the German language. Although the class did cover a lot, it was difficult to gain a deep understanding of the language because of the time constraint. However, the course did inspire me to continue learning German and learning languages in general.

#### Rewarding internship

My internship was at EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND. Yeah, try saying that name three times fast. Seeing this name on my acceptance email was intimidating in itself, given I hadn't taken any German courses and had no idea how to pronounce the name of the company I was to spend four weeks interning at. Despite my apprehensions, my internship ended up being rewarding. I worked in the River Basin Management division with a team of about six people. As most people in the fellowship discovered, July is primetime for Urlaub (vacation) and many people at my company were gone after the first



week of my internship. Even though people came and left often, everyone I met was very friendly and excited to tell me about the company. For the first three weeks, I read papers online concerning Industrie 4.0 and its application to American wastewater treatment plants. For the last week, I spent time learning GIS and making maps.

#### Ask questions actively

The internship was rewarding in many ways but was also difficult because I didn't speak any German. Communication was sometimes a challenge because of the language barrier, but going through the experience taught me to actively ask questions and be patient when there are small misunderstandings. Overall, the fellowship was rewarding because it informed me about the Ruhr area, its industrial culture and the work culture.





## Chow, Chun Man

It was hard to imagine that the Ruhr area we were living in was once a heavily industrialized, polluted region where smog enshrouded the cities and rivers gave off an unpleasant odor. Not anymore. The moment I left the U-bahn station on my first day in Germany, I was greeted by blue skies and green fields, the emerald mine shaft of the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum looming in the background. Throughout my stay in the Ruhrgebiet, I was thoroughly impressed by the tremendous transformation that the region has undergone over the past couple decades. The Ruhr River (with its impounded lakes such as Baldeney See and Kemnader See) is now a popular destination for water sport lovers. Citizens even request the government to let them swim in it (a project that the company I interned at, Ruhrverband, was heavily involved in).

### Bochum and the Ruhrgebiet

Bochum struck me as a nice, little, but dynamic town. Perhaps because I had lived in huge metropolises such as Hong Kong, San Francisco, Chicago, and Tokyo, to me Bochum did not feel like the 16th most populous city in Germany. Nevertheless, it was the small-town feel (which was of course a subjective) together with the sense of community that gave Bochum its charm.

Walking around the city, one could easily find people roaming around the shops and markets near the Rathaus, hear the chatter from the outdoor cafes, and smell the scent of grilling Dönerfleisch that pervaded alley ways. Not far from the hotel where we stayed, the Tierpark provided a great running, sun-bathing, and chilling place for those who love being outdoors. At night, we often wandered towards the Bermuda Dreieck, getting lost among crowds in bars and clubs.

Everyone I interacted with in Germany was friendly. I mean the German stereotype that I had heard of before coming—the strict, orderly, beer loving—still held: very seldom had I seen Germans jaywalk or cut in line, and there was always beer at the buddy events. Several times, strangers would strike up a conversation with me on the train, or we'd all have great conversations with the buddies from the Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB). We talked about almost anything, from eating to traveling, from politics (so many people were interested in the rise of Trump in the American elections and also Brexit) to sports (well mostly football), from cultural differences and similarities to climate change. People in Germany, to me, seem to possess a strong sense of global awareness that keeps them strongly connected to the rest of the



world, even though they might have never been outside of continental Europe. I still remember the morning when my contact at Ruhrverband came by my desk and handed me the local newspaper with the title: “Hongkong hat Geschmack.” I kept that newspaper article with me.

For someone who likes both sports and the arts, I enjoyed staying in the Ruhrgebiet, for Bochum and its surrounding cities provided ample entertainment opportunities. Together with other Ruhr-Fellows, I played indoor soccer with their RWE colleagues and also pick-up soccer with Afghan immigrants, and we all went to Westpark for the Euro Cup public viewing parties (which according to my coworkers had only started since the 2014 World Cup). Bike rental was free for rides under one hour, which was perfect for cycling down the gentle slope from the University to our hotel. The



Klavier Festival concert in Essen, the Starlight Express musical in Bochum, the random street performances we walked by during ExtraSchicht, and the pop music in discos around the Bermuda Dreieck (and during Bochum Total) satiated my cravings for various musical genres. And when I was tired of the city life, I could escape to the Sauerland (well mostly for work with the Ruhrverband), to the mythical Siebengebirge (Seven Hills) by the Rhine River, or the farms of Unna, where we were graced by German hospitality and had fun barbecuing at a buddy's family party. Despite staying here for only two months, the Ruhrgebiet felt like home to me.

#### Identity: Past, Present, and Future

After living in the Ruhr area for a while, I found that the Ruhrgebiet is its own living museum. Not only do remnants of the heavy-industries of the past still exist, as exemplified by the coal mining and purification structures scattered throughout the area, but also the seemingly natural landscape is dotted with artificial hills (slag heaps) shaped



by mining activities. Even many of the activities such as football and beer, one could perhaps argue, are framed by the working class culture of the region in the past centuries. However, at the same time, modern skyscrapers, shopping arcades and universities stand across the region. The juxtaposition of the old and the new is what makes the Ruhr area special and fascinating.

Through the multiple excursions, company visits, and lectures, we have seen that the Ruhrgebiet, rather than going on the quest for a completely new identity, has chosen to embrace its past and reshaping its unique culture to pursue new initiatives. The area has partly de-industrialized, but downstream processing of petrochemical and chemical manufacturing still play a significant role in the economy. Universities, with RUB being the first one, have emerged in the region, bringing in new ideas and innovations that can create new industries. The industrial past is still celebrated through heritage sites such as the Landschaftspark in Duisburg and Zollverein Complex in Essen,

while ecological restoration (renaturation) measures have transformed the area into a pleasant living place. Solar panels and wind turbines can be found across the landscape, and the last hard coal mine in Germany (which we visited) will shut down by 2018. The area's vibrant arts and culture scene and strong football teams (sorry Schalke 04, I've always been a Dortmund fan) make it an attractive place for people to settle in.

Living in the Ruhr area, I can taste the past, the present and the future, and I am excited to see its continued sustainable development over the next decades.

#### Rewarding internship

Managing water is not a simple task, and I am so glad that I got to intern under Ruhrverband, which secures the water quality and supply for around 4.6 million people. Through the internship, I learned more about wastewater and drinking water treatment (they built the first activated sludge unit in continental Europe!), chemical and biological



analytical techniques for water quality management, hydroelectric power generation, reservoir management, river restoration, the EU's Water Framework Directive, and many more water-related topics. My internship has been rich and rewarding, and I am happy that I got the chance to have a glance at the German working culture.

#### Conclusion

Although ich spreche kein Deutsch (not even ein bisschen), everyone I encountered was extremely patient in explaining or translating things to English for me. Over a mere eight weeks, I had grown used to the taste of sparkling water and eating Würste, Brot, and Kartoffeln for many of my meals, the usual delay of rush-hour RE trains, and the craze that Germans had over beer and football. I will definitely miss the cheap Döner, the excursions and hangouts, my colleagues at Ruhrverband, and just living in such an interesting area. But most of all, I will miss all the friends whom I have made, and I am really thankful for Initiativkreis Ruhr, University Alliance Ruhr, Ruhrverband,

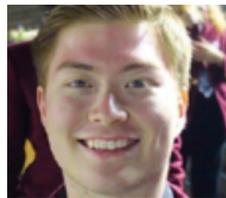
and everyone else who helped us during our stay in Germany and made the RuhrFellowship such a memorable experience for me.

#### Side Note on Traveling

Oh yes, traveling is a must as a Ruhr Fellow! There are a lot of places within the area that are interesting or worth visiting (especially for those on a low budget, since the NRW/VRR semester ticket pretty much allows us to get to most of these places). Here are a couple: Düsseldorf: great for shopping and walking along the Rhine; Cologne (Köln): definitely have to visit the Dom! Münster with its cathedrals and university; Hattingen with its wooden houses and the Blankenstein Castle; Aachen + Dreiländereck (where the German, Belgian, Dutch borders meet); a bus trip to Maastricht (Netherlands) is also a must! Siebengebirge (hiking to the castle Drachenfels) overlooking the Rhine; Ahr Valley: Altenahr, Ahrweiler (famous for wine), Bad Neuenahr (hot baths); Bonn: birthplace of Beethoven! Hamm: it has a huge glass elephant in Maximilianpark; also has the largest Hindu temple on continental Europe (quite unexpectedly).

Because of its position in Western Germany, traveling to other places in Europe was also pretty easy. Other places I have visited include: Frankfurt-Rhine River Boat Trip (Bingen, Bacharach, St. Goarhausen, Boppard), Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, Nuremberg, Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Würzburg, Antwerp (Belgium), Rotterdam, Delft, The Hague (Netherlands), and Switzerland (for five days after the fellowship: Basel, Luzern (Mt. Rigi), Bern, Aletsch Glacier, Zermatt, Lausanne/Lavaux, Spiez, Zürich).





## Cuan-Martinez, Javier



Prior to participating in the RuhrFellowship, I had never really traveled outside of the United States. Even though I was born in Mexico, I immigrated to America when I was only four, so I am not able to remember many of the aspects that encompass a foreign country. Germany, the tours, the teachers, the buddies, and the RuhrFellows all helped mold me into an international citizen of the world, and I will never forget the memories of Durstlöscher after class and foreign language practices at the Sprachcafé. Also, I didn't just improve my German during my stay in Bochum, I also learned that two people don't need to necessarily speak the same language to be friends.

### German

One of my main incentives for participating in the RuhrFellowship was improving my German. I had been studying German for about four semesters up until the start of the program, and I desperately wanted to find as many people to speak the language with as possible. For these reasons, I had an absolutely great time in the advanced German



classes that were offered in the first month of the program. For three straight hours we would speak nothing but German, and I honestly felt pretty sad whenever the end of class neared. Juliane, our teacher, was adept at keeping us all engaged and making sure that we all received an equal amount of time to practice our German. As a result of the social atmosphere that she perpetuated, the entire

class was able to bond quite quickly. This led to breakfasts at the nearby Café and German movie nights when we didn't have an event to attend. The weekly Sprachcafé sessions were some of the high points of the program. People of all different backgrounds congregated at this Café, and the languages ranged from Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Russian, etc. Here, I was able to engage in perhaps the pinnacle of my German speaking experiences. I met a Syrian refugee who did not know any English, but I was able to speak with him in German, nonetheless. He relayed to me all of the struggles that he had to endure in order to escape to Germany. The mere fact that I was able to comprehend his joy, sadness, and anger during the conversation proves how a language can open barriers that one would have never even dream of. By simply knowing German, I was able to connect with another fellow human being and share in his joys and woes.

### Life in Bochum

Living in a small, yet not-so-small city like Bochum was an enriching experience. The many museum





tours and excursions that we took throughout the city allowed me to see how far Bochum (and Germany as a whole) has come since the 20th century. Its history in the coal industry is deeply rooted in all of the memorials and museums that one sees whenever one is strolling through the narrow streets. After seeing all of the pictures

of the black, dirty past of Bochum's coal days, breathing the new, clean air of today made me appreciate the efforts that Germany has taken to transfer its energy sources to green energy. This was a refreshing outlook on environmental policy, since I had never experienced energy reform in the U.S to the same degree that Germany has

implemented. Bochum is also close to many other exciting cities, like Dortmund and Dusseldorf. For this reason, Extraschicht was a highlight of the program. From the Fußball Museum in Duisburg to the fireworks in Dusseldorf, Extraschicht was an amazing cultural event that many of us in the RuhrFellowship were able to bond over. We

traveled from city to city in a matter of minutes and were able to see firsthand true German culture at its finest. Days like the one during Extraschicht are worth remembering for a lifetime.

#### **Internship at innogy**

Before I attended the RuhrFellowship, I had never been exposed to a professional business environment, let alone one in Germany. For this reason, working at innogy greatly helped develop my professional skills in the workforce. The first aspect of my work environment that I noticed was that everyone was extremely welcoming and willing to help me find my place in the office. It was a bit difficult in the beginning because my German was not on par with everyone else's, but I was eventually able to communicate quite well with my coworkers and make long-lasting connections. The project that I worked on was also interesting. I'm not sure how much I am actually allowed to divulge, but I will say that by having the chance to work closely with coworkers on a project like this, I was able to substantially improve my communication and people skills.



## Deldar, Kayvon

I have a confession to make: growing up I was never quite fond of Germany. The primary reason for this disposition was growing up as a huge Argentine soccer fan and the fact that the German national team eliminated them from three consecutive World Cups, including an absolutely embarrassing 4-0 win in the 2010 World Cup. But after the RuhrFellowship this summer, I leave with an undeniable affinity for this awesome country, with Herbert Grönemeyer's Bochum in my ears, Wuppertal's Schwebbahn in my heart, and delicious Döner Kebab in my stomach.

### First Month

There are many merits of the RuhrFellowship, especially for students like me with an interest in energy. These became evident during our first month as RuhrFellows, as we toured RWE's above-ground lignite extraction field and power plant, took an underground tour of the last active coal mine in the Ruhr Area, and had a discussion with the CEO of BP Europe. But if energy isn't your thing, there are events planned with emphasis in other fields as well. We visited, among other places, BILD, the prominent German print media company, the Parliament of the state of North Rhine Westphalia in Düsseldorf, the local water utility company and their water treatment plant, and for avid soccer fans such as myself, the BVB Borussia Dortmund stadium. This summer



also coincided with the European Soccer Championship, which occurs every four years. When the German national team, or die Mannschaft, played, there would be a huge public viewing in Bochum, which had an absolutely electric atmosphere with thousands of cheering fans. Participating in these public viewings is one of my most endearing memories of my first month in Germany.

The other key portion of our first month was a German language class. We had the choice of



being placed in a beginner or intermediate German course at the Ruhr Universität Bochum (RUB). As someone who came into the program with no more than a few words of German knowledge, I obviously took the beginner's course. The class and instructor were excellent and gave us a great introduction to the German language. I remember that after the course I went to the deli counter at the local grocery store REWE and ordered my sandwich meat and cheese completely auf deutsch and it was a moment of immense pride for me and



gave me confidence to learn more German in the future.

### Channeling My Inner Marco Polo

Americans are often criticized for only knowing English, but in our defense, Europeans have a bit of an unfair geographical advantage. For the sake of an analogy, Europe is about the same size as the United States, but in the European version of the United States, every state would speak a different language. From Germany, you could get on a

two-hour flight and land in several different countries with completely different languages and cultures. This aspect of European life is another merit of the RuhrFellowship: if you want to visit a completely different place, you're only a short trip away. In my three months of living in Germany, I will have seen six different countries that speak six different languages.

In June, while some Fellows were touring Vienna and Prague, I took a flight to Madrid to visit family. In July, I took a short three-hour bus trip to Amsterdam to visit the dikes and museums, of course. I got to experience a huge European festival in Budapest, Hungary in August, and I will visit Norway and the UK after my internship ends before heading home. On top of all of this, Germany is a huge country with major cities like Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich, all of which have starkly different atmospheres and characteristics. Being a part of the RuhrFellowship will allow you to experience many different cultures without needing too much time and effort.

#### Grown-Up Life

My internship was at Vaillant Group, a company that produces and manufactures heating, cooling, and solar appliances. The internship was located in Remscheid, which is only a 30-minute drive from Bochum, but takes roughly two hours by train due to poor connections. Therefore, I had the blessing in disguise of being the only Fellow to stay with a host family. I was reluctant to leave my new best friends and Tuesday night dance parties at Hardys back in Bochum, but living with a real German family



provided a great opportunity to experience real German life and expand my German language skills. For the majority of the time, I lived with a coworker from Vaillant Group and his girlfriend in Wuppertal, which is a city very close to Remscheid. Most mornings we would bike together to work, and nights we would have interesting conversations or watch movies. It was a distinct privilege to have this open cultural exchange with a host family.

At Vaillant Group, I worked in the electronics department, specifically the software development team. This was a bit of a new experience for me,



as I majored in environmental economics, but the team was excellent in showing me the ropes for my various tasks. I primarily worked with Matlab and Simulink to create the components of heating appliances, such as pipes, temperature sensors, heat exchangers, etc. The German work life was a nice combination of a serious yet lighthearted atmosphere. The software team was relatively young, which definitely made it more relatable and comfortable for me. The team would also hang out outside of work, including soccer games on Mondays and barbecues at different coworkers' houses. I was even invited to participate in a 5K race with the Vaillant



Group employees in which we raced against other German companies in the area.

#### Conclusion

The RuhrFellowship has truly broadened my perspective this summer. Not only have I been exposed to a new country and language, but I've also experienced work life abroad and met many remarkable people. I have enjoyed this program so much that I am even considering coming back to the area for work or higher education. Ultimately, the RuhrFellowship has provided me with a unique and fun summer experience that I will cherish forever.



## Kim, Phil

Two years ago I moved from the Arizonan desert to the San Francisco Bay Area in California to attend school. It was a big leap, both geographically and mentally. The inevitable changes in my environment were physically and mentally stressful, but in retrospect coming to California is one of the best decisions I have made in my life. College is all about trying new things. They say you haven't done college correctly if you walk out the same person as when you first entered. The RuhrFellowship was the biggest opportunity yet to make sure that I walk out a different person.

In the fall semester of 2015, I was on the lookout for opportunities for the upcoming summer in 2016. I wanted to try two things: one, study abroad in a country I have never been to, and two, gain professional work experience through an industrial internship. When I first heard about the RuhrFellowship, I felt that this program and I were meant to be, it was fate. I jumped on the application right away, knowing that the fellowship would allow me to kill two birds with one stone. To make things feel even more magical, my school was just recently added to the list of participating schools.

Fast forward to February, and I get the news that I somehow portrayed myself competent enough

to be selected a Ruhr Fellow. I was going to Germany! Such a leap was incomparable to that from Arizona to California, not only by the distance but also by my lack of knowledge in the German language. I remember being extremely excited but also frightened for my upcoming summer. But you know that an experience is going to be a good one if it both excites you and scares you.

### The Internship

My favorite part of the RuhrFellowship was my internship at BP. I worked with additives in diesel fuel in the Global Fuels Technology (GFT) department in Bochum. During the rather short internship period, I created an overview of over a hundred approved diesel additives, analyzed their data, and proposed ways to improve the BP additive approval procedure.

My mentor Oliver played a significant role in making my experience more fruitful. Despite his already busy schedule, Oliver was always enthusiastic in answering my questions and addressing my concerns. And trust me, I had many. His patience also helped me get through multiple German documents necessary to complete my overview. Most importantly, Oliver made clear on day one what he wanted by the end of the internship: a presentation that summarizes all my work and



analysis. In other words, he gave my internship a form of a project, allowing me to work towards a specific goal and gauge my resources carefully in order to get there in time. The presentation proved to be an excellent way to wrap up my experiences at BP: the PowerPoint slides I created were physical proof of my contribution to the department. On my last day, I presented my slides to my mentor and senior advisors of the department.

Finally, the people in the GFT department were very approachable and made me feel welcome. Although many were not comfortable speaking English, they still made the effort to converse with me in English at the coffee machine and in the cafeteria. Though intimidated at first, I found myself discussing American politics with senior scientists and engineers over mushrooms and schnitzel a week into the internship.



### Excursions and the German Language

I was pleasantly surprised by the sheer diversity of our excursions in the Ruhr area. Besides visiting various universities and companies in the area and learning about their research and opportunities, the RuhrFellows also visited the BILD newspaper, an active coal mine, the NRW Parliament, a philharmonic concert, and many more. My personal favorite was the visit to an active coal mine that was at least a mile below the surface. We actually got to walk down the mine trails and see large machines and drills in action. It was shocking to think that people spent hours upon hours underground every day in the hot, dark and

humid environment that is a coal mine. The experience was made even more unique as the coal mine is the last of its kind, and is set to close in 2018.

I personally had zero knowledge in German before the program. Fortunately, a little over half of the Fellows were in the same boat I was—and we were all very motivated to change that. The intro German course proved very effective: in just ten classes, we covered one semester worth of German. I think this was made possible by the teaching style that greatly utilized context clues and the sheer motivation of the students. Many

of us left planning to further develop our German language skills.

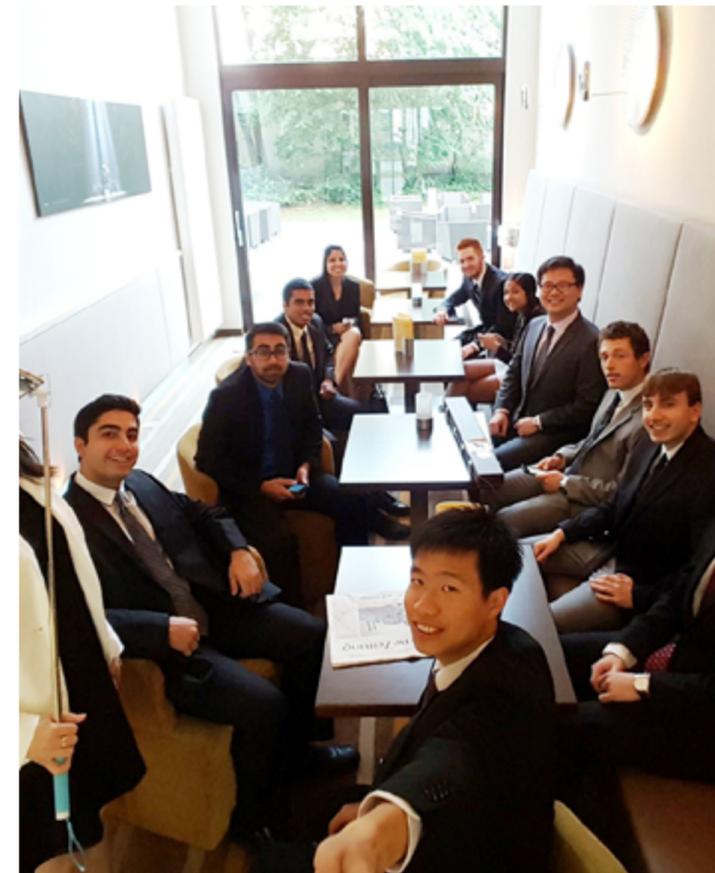
### Traveling

I did not travel much on the weekends of the program for two reasons: one, I would not survive a full week of German class, excursions, and/or internship without a weekend spent relaxing and two, I had planned a two-week Europe trip with my two sisters at the end of the program. Instead, I learned to make short trips, usually lasting half the day, to cities near Bochum. Most memorable is the Christopher Street Day (European equivalent of Gay Pride) in Cologne. A few Fellows, along with other American interns in programs like REACH and RISE, joined me to celebrate the rainbow flag. During the two-week trip with my sisters, I got the chance to visit yet another Pride event, this time in Amsterdam.

### Ciao!

This summer in Germany with the RuhrFellowship program has easily been my most interesting summer so far, filled with new faces and experiences, crossed-out items on the bucket list, and many first's. Would I want to come back to Germany again? Well, frankly, I don't think I would. Now, I have genuinely enjoyed this fellowship and do not regret my decision to spend my summer in Germany. I learned a lot here, including the fact that Germany is not the best fit for me. Would I have known this without the RuhrFellowship? Definitely not.

I still plan on visiting other places either inside or outside the United States as much as possible in the future. Wherever I end up, though—I'm sure this summer did heck of a job preparing me for what's coming.





## Loughlin, Kevin

It seems that people who go abroad often talk about “culture shock” upon arriving – having to make some major adjustments to their way of life in order to adapt to their current surroundings. It therefore came as a pretty big surprise to me that, during my time in Germany, I had to make very few adjustments to my American lifestyle. Don’t get me wrong – there were certainly differences, some of which I liked (Germany’s awesome public transportation system), and some of which I didn’t (water wasn’t normally served complementary at German restaurants). But in the grand scheme of things, these are not exactly life

changing, make-or-break facets of the culture or society. The truth is that there is much crossover between the American way of life and the German way of life.

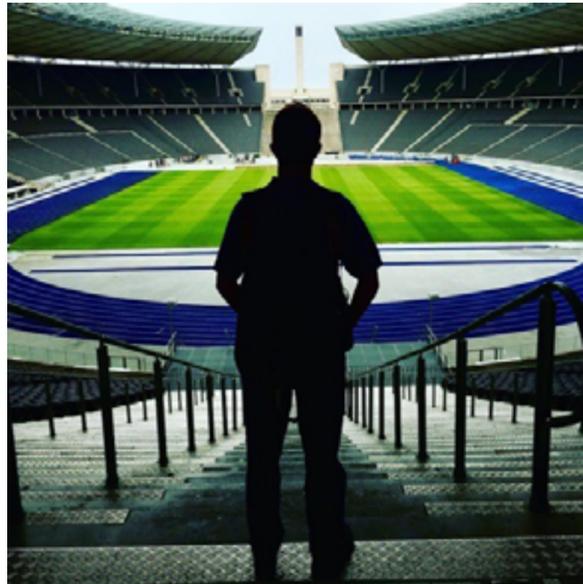
Even the languages in Germany reflect this idea. During my time in France, I used French. In Peru, I used Spanish. In Germany, I used... English (well, mostly English). Part of this was that I was in a program designed for students from American universities. But a bigger part of it was that the vast majority of Germans could speak English wonderfully.



As a language-enthusiast, I still highly recommend learning German if you’re going to be living, studying, and/or working there. Even if everyone in your school or workplace can speak English, it’s a more satisfying social experience if you learn German. Plus, learning German (and foreign languages in general) is fun! But as you can imagine, since I was using English in most everyday

situations, my German did not improve to the level I had hoped it would. I had gone to Germany hoping to come out somewhat proficient, but given my lack of insistence that I speak German with friends (and perhaps my inability to do so), you could say that this part of my venture was a failure. What I realized, though, was that emerging with German proficiency should not have been (for





me at least) a primary goal. Before I heard about the RuhrFellowship, I had never even considered doing an internship in Germany. I had never studied the language, and I hadn't envisioned myself living in Germany at any point in my life.

The RuhrFellowship, therefore, was my chance to get a pretty good taste of Germany, to find out if it was something for me. With such a large portion of the population able to speak proficient/fluent English, and with a program catered to introducing me to Germany through my mother tongue, the German language wasn't as necessary as I thought it would be for obtaining such an experience.

The question remains, then, whether I look back upon my time in the program as satisfying – and the answer is a resounding yes. I discovered the wonderful Ruhrgebiet, from its history to economy to population to culture. I traveled. I learned. I had fun. I gained new perspectives on the world and its current happenings. And most importantly, I made friends from all over, both in terms of



students from RUB and colleagues from my internship at innogy.

At the end of the day, I got my taste of Germany, and I've enjoyed it to such an extent that Germany is now on the shortlist of countries where I'm interested in working and living. I'm quite excited to see where I end up after I finish my studies in the USA. Regardless, I am so happy that I was given the opportunity to be a Ruhr Fellow, and I thank all involved for making it such a memorable, enjoyable, and formative experience.





## Martinez Perez Tejada, Jorge

**E**ngineering, Science, Technology, rich history and culture, the Energiewende, highly developed industries, strong economy, athletic power-house, all of these make Germany one of the countries I admire the most. For as long as I can remember, Germany has symbolized engineering and scientific prowess, hard work, and efficiency to me. Studying, working, and living in Germany, the RuhrFellowship was a perfect way to learn first-hand about all of these in an unparalleled fast-paced journey.

A one-month-long tour around the Ruhr Area and Europe as student-ambassadors, coupled with German classes in the morning followed by a one-month fast-paced internship at a top-notch company. We felt welcomed, valued and received lots of support from all venues. The RuhrFellowship: Great educational & professional opportunities with awesome people in amazing places. What else could one ask for?

### The cultural shock

Society functions on a higher level of trust than I was used to in Canada, the US and Mexico. Starting from my arrival at the airport, I totally missed the scrutiny one endures in the US, no checking, one quick question and done. Overall, Germans do respect rules. In Mexico, and certain US states, traffic

lights are a suggestion, so to speak. In Germany red lights create invisible barriers that only a few selected non-Germans can walk through. On public transportation there are no entrances/gates and one rarely ever has to show her/his ticket. Dogs, even without leashes, are allowed on public transportation. In the Mensa or dining halls, which are way better than whatever we have at Penn, cashiers barely check what food you get. They take your word for it and everybody pays what they should. All of these make day-to-day activities run smoothly and painlessly. I am aware this cannot be implemented overnight in most places, but it is lovely when it works.

### The REAL cultural shock... wait, what?

What I found most shocking was that some of the "buddies," Ruhr Universität Bochum (RUB) student-volunteers, were very interested in Latin American countries, learning Spanish and truly liked the culture. At the same time, a few of them were not fans of what they perceived to be typical German culture. I had felt the opposite way my entire life! The things they did not like about Germany made me like it, while I complain about some of the things they like about Mexico. We agreed we should switch passports. In general, the students I met were warm, welcoming and eager to take time off to help us out and have a good time.

### Tuition is whaaat?!?!

German views on education contrast sharply with those in the US. All German education is mostly public and basically free; few attend private schools and they tend to perform worse than students in public schools. Administrative fees per year total ~€600 at RUB, even for international students. One wonders why doesn't everybody learn German in high school and go to college in Germany. To Germans, tuition-free college is normal, while the costs in the US...well, the "best" German guess I got was: "I know it is very expensive, maybe \$3,000 USD a year." They did not believe the numbers I gave them. Another key difference is the emphasis on gaining work experience early on. Besides co-ops and internships, which are mandatory, Germans can work and study part-time throughout their degree. This may extend their time in school, but at such a low cost, why rush?

### People in the US support who? Why?!

The 2016 Presidential Election cycle has gathered a lot of attention internationally. Germans were befuddled and most of them wanted to gain an insider's perspective on the matter. It was a main topic during many conversations, including our visit to the North Rhine-Westphalia parliament in Düsseldorf. Moreover, we were invited to a city-wide radio station to talk about it. Four of us accepted the invitation, for which I am very thankful as I had the chance to express the views of voices that are rarely heard.

### Working hard ≠ working a lot

Germans are workaholics, right? Wrong! I was very impressed to experience Thyssengas' work culture. First, I was surprised to read work weeks were 38 hours long (off work early on Fridays!). Being the worst morning-person ever, I loved that I had a flexible schedule. More importantly, I was very excited to work on the project I chose. I researched Power-To-Gas technologies, a system that uses renewable electricity to produce hydrogen and renewable Synthetic Natural Gas (SNG) and its potential to help Germany meet the Energiewende targets.



During my fourth and "last week," I presented an overview of my findings to what seemed like the entire office (~50 people). Towards the end, some of the toughest questions came from the CEO and VP, the last of which was "What are your plans after your internship is over?" It was hard, because I did not have any, so they offered me to stay as an intern for four more weeks! I thoroughly enjoyed my time working at Thyssengas and applying all I had learned throughout my time at Penn.

Now, working on weekends in Germany? Unthinkable. When I suggested doing some reading over the weekend to get ahead, my manager immediately replied: "nonono, weekends are not for working. Do whatever else, not work. If it is going to take a few more days, then it takes a few more days. It is ok." A similar mentality was extended throughout the entire area. Only a few businesses open on Saturdays, but they close early and do not open again until Monday morning. Everything was closed, EVERYTHING. Furthermore, the amount of vacations and time-off never ceased to amaze me. They all take somewhere between 3 to 4 weeks off and truly stick to their 7.2 hour-shifts, with a half-hour lunch break at 12:00. I am not kidding, we were all ready to get lunch at exactly 12:00 and back on our offices by 12:30 +/-5 min. To me, my work schedule was a great combination of flexibility and efficiency.

#### A note to non-meat eaters

Being a vegetarian/vegan in Germany? No problem! Ok, maybe one or two...

Less than a year ago, I began the transition from an animal-based diet to a vegan diet. Contrasting my excitement for coming to Germany, I worried I could not keep my diet during the program; I thought it would be impossible. Admittedly, it took over a month to revert back to a vegan diet, BUT at



my own fault. Vegan or at least vegetarian options are virtually always available, except of course if your boss takes you to a food cart to have a Currywurst, which is German for overly spiced sausage. At events, restaurants and grocery stores I always had options. I always had a choice. Had I done my research properly, in terms of vocab and places available, and stuck to my beliefs from the start, I would have continued my dietary guidelines without problems.

#### Live long and prosper

One of the many ways German culture is embedded in the way people speak could be heard with every farewell from tour guides and hosts: "I wish you a safe and successful stay in Germany." This strongly contrasts with the common "have a good time" or "enjoy your stay" one would expect in North America. Every closing remark I can remember included the word "successful" and this is by no means a coincidence. The pragmatic perspective: "your trip has a purpose, I hope you achieve it" resonated



particularly well with me. Moreover, I appreciate the phrase's generality. It implicitly acknowledges the fact that people may have different underlying motives. If one's purpose is to have fun, pursue that, be successful at having the best time in Germany. If you want to travel all around Germany or visit as many European countries as physically (and financially) possible, then you should do that. And most importantly, do so safely.

While I cannot speak on behalf of all the 2016 Fellows, as far as I know, we were all successful during the RuhrFellowship. People traveled, improved their German, practiced multiple different languages, played many different sports, gained valuable job experience, met amazing people, broadened our network and widened our world-views and perspectives. Seriously, what else could one ask from a summer?

I thoroughly appreciated the many opportunities, but company visits sit at the top of the list. Having the chance to hold lively discussions with figures such as parliament members, CEOs of companies



such as National Bank, Thyssengas, BP Europa and Ruhrverband, and hearing their points of view, the challenges inside and outside their company that concern them, as well as their questions to people from abroad, provided me with a deeper insight not only on how top leaders think, but also how big players in Germany do. Those discussions were eye-opening and shaped my international outlook. Coming to Germany I had high hopes and neither the RuhrFellowship, the people involved with the program nor Germany disappointed. In fact, they all exceeded expectations. After a short break in Mexico, I plan to come back to Germany, and most likely to the Ruhr Area, to start my professional career. Given all the benefits of being a student in Germany, I will most likely pursue a Master's Degree here as well. But I will leave that for later. For now, I could not be happier with my time in the RuhrFellowship and cannot thank the Initiativkreis Ruhr enough for all the opportunities and such an amazing experience.

Dankeschön und bis später!



## Matsudaira, Matthew

### Great Expectations

“You’ll neeeeeveeeerrr waaalk aloooooone!” The stadium filled to capacity with red and yellow football (as it is called in the rest of the world) fans sing in anticipation of a historical matchup in May. The two clubs are Liverpool FC and Borussia Dortmund, sister clubs with the same anthem, and both my favorite clubs. As I watched the emotional 81,000 fans in that Dortmund stadium singing on television, I thought to myself, “I will be there this summer.”



After taking a year of German language, and nearing my last summer before senior year in college, a program with an internship in Germany was a no-brainer. Hence upon hearing of the RuhrFellowship Program, I immediately applied. When I heard we would have the opportunity to see the Dortmund stadium, I was elated. As the country that had won the previous FIFA World Cup, I knew I would have many opportunities to experience football in Germany. Of course I wasn’t only excited about football in Germany, I wanted to solidify my German language skills, learn about European culture, and explore some of Europe’s most famous landmarks. The RuhrFellowship provided me with all of this and more.

### The Beautiful Game

Oh and it’s even more beautiful in Germany than I expected. Everyone loves it – watching it, playing it, talking about it, making bets on it – it’s an ageless, genderless, colorless pastime – no, religion. The passion is unrivaled, and virtually everyone backs a certain club. In the Ruhrgebiet that would probably be either Borussia Dortmund or Schalke 04, although the former is obviously the better team. The rivalry between the two is called the Revierderby, one that runs far outside the stadium. Shop owners commonly display a flag or bobble-head with either club’s badge, and when I made the mistake



of wearing a Dortmund jersey into a Schalke-fan-owned kebab shop, the owner told me (somewhat jokingly) that he could not serve me. One of my highlights of the summer was, of course, being able to visit the 81,359 capacity home of Borussia Dortmund, the Westfalenstadion, and sit on the locker room benches of the multi-million-euro talents on the team.

Since the Bundesliga season plays only from fall to spring, we did not have the opportunity to watch any games. However, we were fortunate to be in Europe during the biggest and most watched European event – The European Cup. The Euro is only every four summers, so to be in Europe during it – only a border away from the host country France – was something special. I watched something like 95% of the games, and watched my favorite team of the tournament, Portugal, win it all. The explosively cathartic ending to that game, surrounded by equally emotional fans, was one of the most memorable moments of my life.

Watching football is fantastic, but playing it is infinitely better. It was initially difficult to find a way to play, surprisingly, but eventually through my “buddy” Denise’s helpful searching, I got to join a “class” for high level football. I was grateful to have the opportunity to preserve a little Japanese/American pride and show some Europeans how their game is played.

### Döner, döner, and more döner

Food in Germany can be incredibly cheap, especially in the Ruhrgebiet, if one shops frugally. My favorite grocery shopping spot was the supermarket chain Rewe. I could purchase ingredients for a full week of meals and a bottle of good wine for less than twenty Euros – that’s like the cost of one bottle of wine in the US.

It’s a little difficult to describe typical German food – maybe Currywurst und Pommes (curry-ketchup on sausage with fries) – but generally speaking the Germans are fantastic with their meat and bread.



Their ability to cook the most tender beef and pork is simply magical. I've noticed Germans are very proud of their bread, since they so often tell me how terrible American bread is, but for good reason. I haven't been disappointed by the wholesome richness of a typical, freshly baked "vollkorn" wheat bread.

When feeling a little lazy, döner is the best meal option. Döner is delicious, affordable (on average 3.5 Euros), and convenient (döner shops are more frequent than Dunkin Donuts in Massachusetts). It's pita bread wrapped around shredded roasted chicken/veal/lamb, an assortment of vegetables, and topped with dilled yogurt sauce. I don't know how it's not a fad in the US yet, because among the Ruhr-Fellows it's stuff of legend. This conversation happened every day: "What are you doing for dinner?" "Döner." "Alright I'm coming with." I'll probably start up a döner chain in the US if another Ruhr Fellow doesn't first.

#### **Not in Kansas anymore**

You've got to be either a champion at holding it in, or be willing to pay a euro for the bathroom.

Water as we know it is called "still water," and you'll pretty much never find it in Germany. German's put away half their bodyweight in beer, and you should stretch before going clubbing because you will be out until sunrise. Jaywalking is never cool, even if there aren't any cars, even if you're a hipster. Germans aren't really made to flirt, but PDA is super acceptable. Punctuality is key, unless you're a train driver. Don't ask if a German can speak English, lest you sound rude. If someone says "danke" (Thank you) to you, you must always respond with "bitte" (You're welcome), not just "ja" or a nod. No one wears shorts, ever. And contrary to popular belief, Germans are hilarious - masters of sarcasm - if you can tell when they're being sarcastic.

#### **The most expensive unpaid intern ever**

I had the opportunity to work for Brenntag, the world's leading chemical distributor, based out of Mülheim an der Ruhr. The company wanted me to work with a project team that would plan the digitization of the company's processes. I expected that as an unpaid intern I would bring coffee to the others, print some papers, and maybe translate a few emails. Instead, I was flown to Berlin on my first day on the job, to take part in the project kick-off meeting with the CEO and highest employees in the company. From that day onward, the company flew me out to Berlin every week to work with the team, and back to the Ruhrgebiet for the weekends. They even covered my travel, stay, and food costs while in Berlin. It was an amazing display of hospitality, and my coworkers were very friendly and humorous. Furthermore, they provided me with many responsibilities, none of which had to do with coffee. The jobs I performed included researching digital platforms, presenting my research, forming datasheets, taking notes in customer/supplier interviews, and drafting management letters



and company newsletters. I'm not sure the work I did really covered the cost of sending me to Berlin every week, but I'm thankful to have been able to take part in such an integral part of the company's future. It was an unforgettable and very special work experience.

#### **Summary**

Great summer. It was an amazing experience all around. I loved my fellow RuhrFellows - we had a ton of unforgettable moments. My German is infinitely better via the useful German courses in the

first month and constantly hearing it around me. I wouldn't say my interest in Germany has been satisfied, it's probably been piqued more. I'm incredibly grateful to have such an amazing internship experience. In general the RuhrFellowship Program has been both fantastically enjoyable and uniquely important in my personal growth. I want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who made my summer so awesome - Anika and Amanda for all of the planning and organization, my fellow RuhrFellows, the "buddies," my coworkers at Brenntag, and all the döner shop owners.



## Metzger, Frederick David

Now two weeks after the end of the Ruhr-Fellowship 2016, I have had some time to reflect upon the whirlwind last couple of months. I am excited to share some of my experiences in Bochum and elsewhere in the Ruhrgebiet. I have been very fortunate to have had opportunities to travel internationally before, but never have I had the chance to get to know another part of the world for an extended period of time.

### June

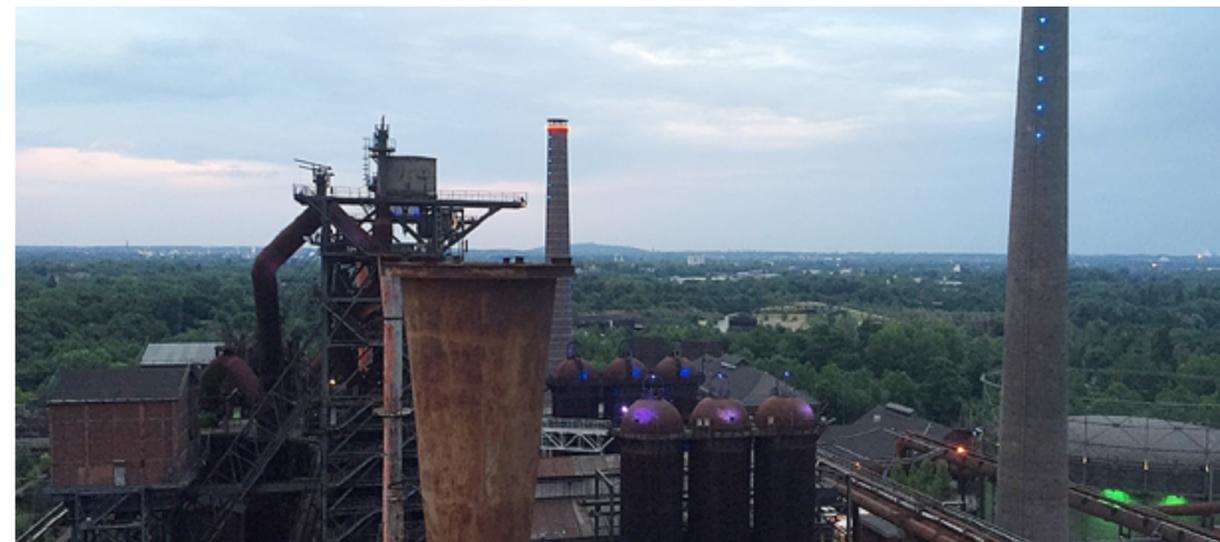
Soon after arriving in Bochum the RuhrFellows were immersed in a combination of activities designed to familiarize us with German culture and demonstrate the dramatic changes that have occurred recently in the Ruhrgebiet. The rector of Ruhr Universität Bochum, our host university, explained to us over lunch on our second day that coal mining and steel production have historically been the driving force of the local economy, but that the industry, because of new regulations and international competition, this is no longer the case. The region now relies on academia and technology to sustain the economy. We saw this focus on technology and innovation first hand during visits to companies such as Evonik, RWE and BP Europa. Furthermore, these companies have a strong commitment to social responsibility that includes and goes beyond their association with

the Initiativkreis Ruhr. In addition, we discovered some of the world class fine art and music that is thriving in the Ruhrgebiet. It was special to see the integration of art and industry, as I previously thought of these as distinct spheres.

We also had the pleasure of taking a month of German classes at Ruhr Universität Bochum and got a taste of what it would be like to study at this university. The intermediate German class focused on conversation, as we all had different levels of experience, and we tackled such topics as tourist attractions, regional dialects and immigration. I especially enjoyed the challenge of giving an 8 minute presentation on a tourist attraction in North Rhine Westphalia. I spoke about the Cologne Cathedral, which I had visited just the week before. I also had the special pleasure of playing in the university orchestra, and got to know some full time students at the university and other local musicians.

### July

The cultural excursions and company visits continued in July, but the main focus shifted to the internship. Because I focus on synthetic chemistry in my studies at Harvard, I needed to learn some chemical engineering basics for my work at Evonik. By the end of the month I had learned a lot



about a specific type of industrial crystallizer and had helped to design one on a small scale. Evonik is a great place to work because of the diversity of its employees. While some of my fellow interns were from Germany, others were from Spain, Slovakia and Russia. I learned a great deal about

other cultures and education systems from my colleagues. I also found some very generous Bochum residents who invited me to participate in their Fahrgemeinschaft. In just a short time, I was able to learn a lot about a new field and make lasting connections with people from around the world.



## Miller, Samuel Richard

Before the RuhrFellowship, I had yet to leave the United States. In fact, I had gotten a passport just the summer before in case of my internship or a club I'm a member of involved international travel. I haven't even been able to travel much around the US, so I knew this would be an interesting experience for me. I also hadn't any German language experience, having only taken a few years of Spanish in high school and college. If that wasn't enough, I hadn't ever had a full time job either, much less a job in the field that I plan to go into later. After considering the aspects mentioned above, I knew before I even left that this summer would be a transformative one for me.

### First Impressions

When I first arrived at the airport in Düsseldorf, I immediately found some of the buddies organized by the program, who came to pick me up, along with my roommate Chun-Man. After the first few days in Germany, I started noticing several things that I didn't initially expect to see. The first being the use of English everywhere, and not just on signs or in music. I've heard that around half of all Germans speak English to some extent. Young people in particular as well as those with a college education are much more likely to know English. Even though I did learn a bit of German during the program, I didn't have to worry about misunderstandings, because

most people I talked to would speak in English as soon as they saw I was having trouble saying what I wanted to say in German.

The second thing I noticed was the prevalence of the Döner Kebab, which ended up being my favorite dish in Germany. Of course I knew about the popularity of Bratwurst, Schnitzel, and Bier before I arrived, but I did not know about the large Turkish community in Germany and the effect it has on the local cuisine. For those who don't know, Döner Kebab is meat cooked on a rotisserie, usually veal, chicken, or lamb, similar to the Greek dish Gyros. Not only was this food in every town I went to, but it was also cheap while still satisfying.

### Cultural Excursions

The first month of the program consisted of trips to various places and companies before the internship portion started. Some of these places were pretty similar to what we would see in the US, like Centro a mall in Oberhausen, a boat tour on the Kemnader See, and tours of universities in the area. Many of the other things, however, were fairly specific to Germany. For example, going down into the last operating underground coal mine in Germany was a pretty rare experience. We also got to talk with the CEO of the National Bank of Germany as well as the CEO of BP Europa. Even the tours of the different companies were interesting, my favorite being



the trip we took to Chemiepark Marl, a huge chemical park employing around 10,000 employees from several different companies. It was even more interesting that we got to see these industries and companies from the German perspective, instead of the American perspective that we were all so used to.

### The Internship

For the internship phase of the program, I was paired up with the metalwork and plant machinery company, the SMS Group. Because I study electrical engineering, I have a particular interest in computer software, which is exactly what I got to focus on at the SMS Group. I learned a lot from my time there, and I think it has given me a good idea of what I want to work on in the future, both professionally as well as side projects to work on for fun.

I got along very well with my coworkers, particularly two other interns that were from Pakistan. It

didn't take long for me to get comfortable around them and have interesting, intellectual, and sometimes just bizarre conversations every day. Since the company granted me extra 4 weeks, the internship ended up lasting 8 weeks instead of only 4. This allowed me to learn much more than I would have otherwise, and I'm glad I took the opportunity. The company even gave me a little extra money to help pay for housing and food for the next month after the regular program ended (which they were under no obligation to do).

### The Fellows

One of the highlights of my time in Germany was simply the time I spent with the other RuhrFellows and with the RuhrFellowship Buddies. Everyone was very friendly, social, and welcoming, which made it very easy to adjust to life here. We even got to meet many other students from our schools

and from Virginia Tech who were studying in the Ruhr area under different programs. Whether it was going to different cities with the other Fellows, learning to cook with my roommate Chun-Man, or going to movie nights the other Fellows set up on weekends, I grew close to the others fairly quickly. The Fellows all lived together in the Acora Hotel in Bochum, which was pretty centrally located and very well taken care of. The third month I stayed in an apartment close to the Ruhr-University (since I chose to stay after the regular two-month program was over), but it was easy to find one with the help of my buddy. I'm going to miss the other Fellows, but we have already talked about visiting each other at college after the program, so we all still plan to keep in touch.

#### City Trips

Speaking of trips to other cities with other Fellows, we had plenty of opportunities to explore the rest of Germany and Europe on the weekends. Personally, I went to Berlin, Dresden, Frankfurt, Cologne, Brussels, Amsterdam, and many other places. Several of the other Fellows even went to Hamburg, Zurich, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, London and more. My favorite place had to be Dresden because of its beautiful gothic architecture and my favorite trip had to be our boat tour up the Rhine River, where we got to see the hills, vineyards and small towns along the way. The location of the program was honestly ideal for travel in Europe since nowhere in Western Europe was really that far away for a weekend trip.

#### Overall Experience

Overall, I'm very glad I took advantage of the opportunities this program granted me because of everything I got to experience while in Germany. I got to see so much of the country and German culture, as well as European culture in general. I got to taste great exotic foods, visit powerful global companies, and build connections in the Ruhr area and with



other students from the US. I even got significant experience programming (particularly in JavaScript and various frameworks, libraries, and technologies involving it) and working in a large company. I honestly do not think that anything else I could have done this summer would have compared to the RuhrFellowship, because nothing else could have been so packed full of knowledge, adventure and cultural immersion.





## Mupparapu, Vamsee

### Why the RuhrFellowship?

Whether it is German soccer, German history, or German engineering, I have always been intrigued by Germany and wondered whether I could experience living in such an interesting country. I had traveled to different parts of Europe before, notably many of the Mediterranean countries, but I had never visited Germany before. I also desperately wanted to experience studying abroad before I finished my undergraduate studies, but realized it wouldn't be feasible during any of my remaining semesters. The RuhrFellowship gave me the opportunity to combine these two desires in the form of a study abroad program in Germany for two summer months. But to top it all off, I also had the chance to intern at a company located in the Ruhr area.

When I read the good news that my application for the RuhrFellowship was accepted, I brought a halt to my summer internship search and seized the opportunity presented to me. Ultimately, I was fortunate enough to end up spending my summer studying at Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB) and interning at Accenture GmbH.

Despite my initial excitement about the RuhrFellowship program, in the few days leading up to my flight to Germany I found myself extremely anxious about the prospect of living in a country where I

didn't know the language and my circle of friends comprised of students I have never met before. After arriving, I soon realized that I had nothing to worry about.

### Living in Germany

The program organizers were able to provide accommodation for the Fellows at a hotel in Bochum that was fairly close to the University. It was easy for me to connect with other Fellows as we shared a lot of common interests and in some cases, the same academic major. The program also provided us "buddies," students at Ruhr-Universität Bochum who helped us explore the Ruhr area. These buddies, along with Anika and Amanda, who worked at RUB's International Office and were heavily involved in our program's excursions and gatherings, were all very friendly and accessible. This circle of friends that I so quickly developed eased any tension I had about living in Germany for the summer.

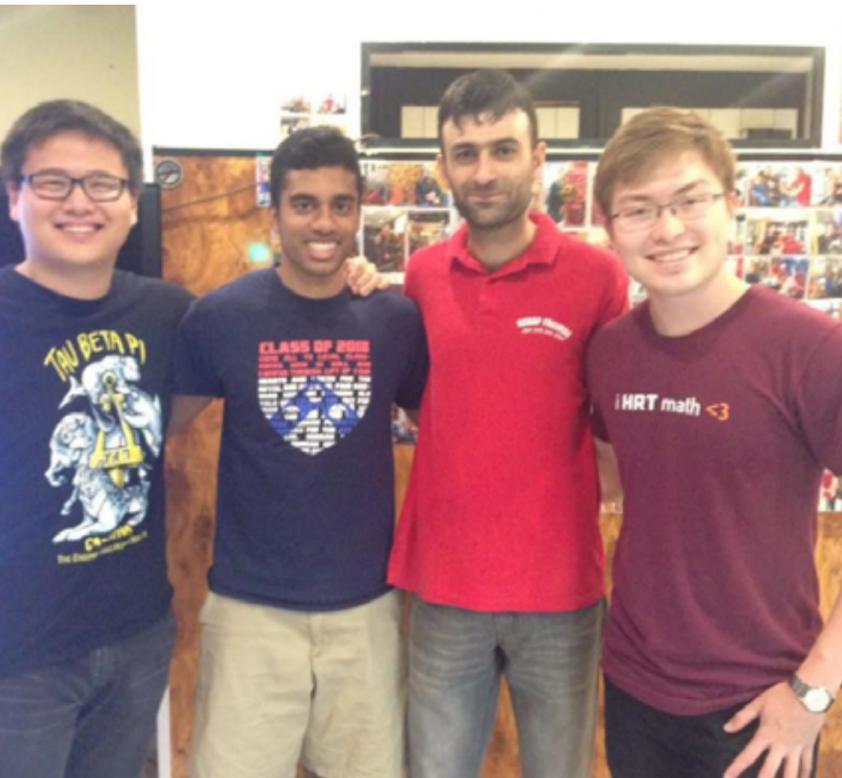
Of course, the most daunting obstacle I faced in Germany was the language barrier. Admittedly, I should have set aside more time than I had to learn the language before embarking on this journey; however, picking up common German sentences and phrases was fairly simple and straightforward. I found that the best places for me to practice my German were the restaurants, where I would order food and if



necessary, ask about special offers or recommendations. Speaking of food, during my time in Germany I became particularly fond of Döner Kebab, a type of kebab that originates from Turkey. Whenever I travelled in Germany, I was always sure to find a Döner Kebab restaurant, and sure enough, I even became a regular at the Döner Kebab restaurant near the hotel.

My time in Germany was especially unique because I was in Europe during the 2016 UEFA European Championship soccer tournament (also known as Euro Cup 2016). Unfortunately, any trip to France to attend a game was out of my budget, but I was able

to enjoy watching Germany's games thanks to the large public viewings that the Germans love to set up at local parks. For several of Germany's games, I went to the public viewing nearby with other Fellows and buddies to watch alongside many Germans. Although I am an avid soccer fan, watching these games refreshed my view on soccer, because I had never previously watched a game in such an enthusiastic environment before. I had no problem rooting for German National Team, as die Mannschaft is my favorite international team (other than the US National Team, of course). I thought they were unlucky to have lost to the eventual champions, Spain, in the 2010 World Cup and were well worth their



2014 World Cup victory. Their semi-final 7-1 win against the host nation Brazil has to be my favorite match that I have seen live (sorry Brazil fans)! Unfortunately, Germany could not repeat that feat in their semi-final loss to the host nation of this tournament, France. Although, I would have loved watching a European Championship Final featuring Germany at a public viewing, I am satisfied that I even experienced such public viewings in the first place.

#### **German Class, Cultural Excursions, and Internship**

Sprechen Sie Deutsch? You can't live in Germany without at least trying to speak the language. Fortunately, during the month of June I was able to take a German course at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. To my surprise, the course covered a lot (probably a university semester's worth of material) and I really felt that I learned a lot of German. Obviously the application of the language was more challenging than practicing in the classroom, but for the most part I was able to follow the "fake it, 'till

you make it" policy with success. When we didn't have class, we were travelling to different parts of the Ruhr Area; as part of the program many tours, excursions, and sightseeing events were planned to acquaint us to the area. While I enjoyed many of them, my favorite tours of the month were those of the Signal Iduna Park and the RAG coalmine.

During the month of July, all of the RuhrFellows took on their respective internships. Some of us interned at the same company, although I was the only Fellow to intern at Accenture GmbH. For the first two weeks, I worked at their office located in Düsseldorf; the commute took 90 minutes one way, but I was able to make use of that time by listening to my favorite podcast. For the next two weeks, I worked at the client location in Dortmund, which is a lot closer to Bochum. At each location, I worked with an accommodative team, who taught me a lot about technology consulting and the role it plays for businesses around the world. I am really grateful that Accenture provided me this opportunity



and the two teams I worked with for really taking the time to include me in several aspects of their work. – and, in addition to the client work joining an Accenture soccer tournament at the Fortuna Düsseldorf training stadium.

#### **Travelling around Europe**

During many of the weekends, I was able to travel across Europe and visit some famous cities. Outside of Germany, I toured Vienna, Austria; Prague, Czech Republic; Amsterdam, Netherlands; and Brussels, Belgium. Getting to these destinations was fairly cheap and travelling within the cities was simple. Travelling and touring these famed European cities will remain unforgettable experiences for me, not only because I have always been so interested in visiting them, but also because I may have to wait a long time to get to visit them again.

Thanks to the excursions as part of the RuhrFellowship Program, I was able to visit many of the major cities in the Ruhr area; however, I felt like I had to



see Berlin as well, and so I took a weekend to see Germany's capital.

#### **Looking Back**

I could not do everything I wanted to do during these two months in Germany; I did not visit certain cities, notably München and Hamburg, and I left with unconvincing German language skills. Due to various constraints, I was also unable to play as much soccer with Germans as I would have liked. However, all of this gives me the motivation to stay fit and improve my German so that I can once again visit and finally see these cities and perhaps even play soccer with the local residents. Of course, the only reason I am even contemplating visiting Germany again is because I had an amazing time as a Ruhr Fellow in Germany. I would like to thank the staff of InitiavKreis Ruhr, University Alliance Ruhr, Ruhr-Universität Bochum's International Office, the RuhrFellowship Buddies, and the other RuhrFellows for their roles in my summer experience.



## Ouyang, Iris

The underground excursion to the only coal mining site in the Ruhr area exemplifies my one-of-a-kind summer experience of the RuhrFellowship program. Divided into two teams, we went by elevator 1000 meters below ground level to the mining site along with actual miners. In the three hours spent underground, I witnessed what I would have only seen in movies or in a virtual reality - I wore all the proper clothes with a headlight, collected coal pieces by hand and watched it transported to ground level. We left the mining site with our faces smudged with coal and big smiles. For such a rare experience, local tourists would have to line up for years and wait for selection. As a Ruhr Fellow, I would say it is the most memorable experience in my life. This excursion not only allowed me to travel deep underground but also gave me a deeper understanding of the history of the Ruhr mining industry like no other means would have so easily rendered.

### The Unforgettable Internship Experience

As part of the program, I was matched with National-Bank AG for a one-month internship due to my background in math and my emerging interest in finance. This was in fact my first formal internship in a financial institution. With almost no prior knowledge, I received invaluable advice and made huge progress during my stay with my colleagues

- one has been an expert in the banking sector for more than 20 years, the other is the department head who inspired me to conduct a research project related to my field of study. The passionate, patient yet strict coworkers were extremely enjoyable to work with, and at the same time were the signposts to look up to when questions arose. My internship finalized my plan to pursue further study in finance and catalyzed my maturity in a professional working environment. I truly value the whole experience, especially the challenges and struggles as the saying goes, "what doesn't kill you make you stronger."

### Honored as We Could Be

With a full schedule in June, our brains were excited for the newest and coolest information from all kinds of activities after daily morning German class. Alongside various exclusive site excursions and lab trips, there were talks given by industry experts, CEOs of global firms and university researchers. Day to day, we were exposed to the most up-to-date research and industry expertise. Seemingly serious topics were in fact really fun to discuss, and not all trips were serious. As a soccer fan of German teams, I was thrilled to tour the preparation room and the 'prison' of Signal Iduna Park. The CEO of National-Bank even invited us all to a private old castle like the one in Harry Potter



for a three-hour French dinner! These are simply two examples that first came to my mind, but many more surprises were waiting for us along the way and the fun we had together was beyond our imagination.

### Refreshing Like a German Beer

We were all too excited to be in Europe to be satisfied with a full schedule - during the two month

fellowship, we lived life to the fullest. Seven of us took overnight buses to Prague and Vienna during the first long weekend, and separated into smaller groups thereafter. We drank and sang along our way and everything just felt right. With prior experience of booking and traveling in a group, I made private trips to Amsterdam, Munich, Salzburg, Berlin and Paris. There are also plenty of places worth visiting in the Ruhr area, such as



Essen, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Köln and the city we lived, Bochum. It was a lucky occurrence that the Euro Cup took place during our stay. We were able to attend 'public viewings' in different locations but with the same spirit to cheer for Germany. Together we watched the opening game in front of the Austrian Parliament Building in Vienna and my quarter-final game experience was in front of the Brandenburg Gate under a sky of red and yellow. All in all, everything was as refreshing as a German beer and as fulfilling as a Döner (a Turkish bread filled with roasted chicken or veal and vegetables, a must-try in Germany).

There are certainly many study abroad programs with intense language training and local field trips. Yet as a Ruhr Fellow, I was able to experience and accomplish far more than just improving my German skills and learning about German cities in the Ruhr area. If you would like a summer as rich as mine was, join RuhrFellowship next summer and you won't regret it.





## Spragg, Robert Leland

### All Abroad!

On June 3rd, my feet touched foreign soil for the first time in my life. In the Düsseldorf airport, Merle and Nadja, two of the German students who had signed up to be our “buddies,” were waiting for a group of RuhrFellows to arrive. Nadja even made a cake for us! This was the first of many acts of kindness from the German students that I would receive throughout the summer. Their help was just one component of our well-planned fellowship, which handled extremely complicated

logistics and worked tirelessly to make the Ruhr-Fellowship an amazing experience. I applied to the program because of its unique mixture of study abroad and work experience, and from it I gained insight into other lifestyles, had priceless networking opportunities, and made new friends from all corners of the globe.

### The First Month

My first month in Germany was a whirlwind of activity. With campus and company visits, cultural



excursions, German class, and other activities occurring daily, it was easy for time to slip by. To help mitigate this effect, and to have stories to reflect upon later, I began journaling. I recorded a few events from each day, and wrote extensive entries at least three times per week. Some of the highlights included visiting Gasometer, an old gas storage facility turned into a museum, descending over one kilometer into an active coal mine, and driving in a simulated vehicle at the University of Duisburg / Essen. I have never heard of a program that provides as diversified an experience to students as the RuhrFellowship. However, I do wish that our language class time could have been longer, since I arrived in Germany with almost zero German proficiency.

My first month abroad began with a long weekend designed to let us travel farther from Germany's Ruhr region. I took full advantage of this, and traveled to Barcelona to visit a close friend from Berkeley. She had been studying in Sweden during the prior semester so it had been a long time since we had seen each other. What a place for a reunion! Except for brief visits to the Netherlands and Belgium, this would be my only trip outside of Germany until I flew to Bratislava on August 2nd. During the fellowship, I tried to see as much of North Rhine-Westphalia as I could, making great



use of my student transportation pass. Through these excursions, I found the Ruhrgebiet to be a charming, green region, which couldn't have differed more from the industrial image that many Germans associate with it.



### July

During the month of July, I worked as a Civil Engineering Intern for Hochtief AG. Initially, I was worried about the long commute time, but it turned out that Google Maps did not "know about" the U-bahn subway in Essen, which cut my commute time in half. I was placed in a shared office with a pleasant woman named Frederike, who became my mentor. During my time at Hochtief, I worked on two tunneling projects; one in the United Kingdom and one in Norway. One of my greatest challenges of the summer was interpreting engineering drawings that were in Norwegian! Through my internship at Hochtief, I gained insight into the working life of German engineers, learned how to work through language barriers, gained experience in a specific discipline of civil engineering, and made international connections in industry. Despite the busy weekdays, July's weekends were

still full of adventures! On one, a group of Fellows traveled to Berlin for an extended visit. This was my first visit to the capital city of any country, and I marveled at the workplace of Angela Merkel and the historic Brandenburg Gate.

### Final Travels

I booked a return flight to the United States that was ten days after the end of the program, so that I would have the time for a post-fellowship adventure! After moving out of my room in Bochum, I began a ten-day trek around Europe. I traveled to six countries during this time. Some of the highlights of my travels included making new friends at a castle pub crawl in Bratislava, exploring the wonders of the Louvre, and biking around Copenhagen. I also proved to myself that I could handle a long and uncertain trip on my own. While one night in Budapest or two nights in Paris is not



enough time to fully appreciate either city, I consider my trip to be the "appetizer" for future European excursions. I also enjoyed the challenge of planning out my trip to be as affordable and efficient as possible. In the end, I made even more new

friends, had some crazy adventures, and made up for my limited previous travels outside of Germany. All of these experiences would not have been possible without the RuhrFellowship.



## Wang, Carrie

I chose to participate in the RuhrFellowship program because I thought it was a unique opportunity combining both language learning and internship in a different country. I have also never been to Europe before, so I thought it would be a fantastic chance to study, work, and travel around all at the same time. During the two months, I went through a one-month German studies program as

well as participated in many company excursions around the Ruhr area, and undertook an internship at innogy. I was also able to discover bits and pieces of everyday German life through traveling with my German buddy Nadja and talking with my German coworkers at innogy. Overall, it was quite a fantastic summer full of learning and traveling experiences.



### German Studies and Excursions

During the first month, we all participated in an intensive German studies program at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum (RUB). Since some of the Fellows already spoke German, the classes were divided into two levels: introductory (where I was placed) and intermediate. In the intro class, we learned basics such as how to introduce ourselves, numbers, dates/

seasons/months, time, and food items, among many other things. (I was quite proud of the fact that I could understand what the Mensa/cafeteria lady and the supermarket cashier were saying to me by the end of the program). The classes were usually three hours per day, three or four days a week, so in the afternoons we often went on organized excursions around the Ruhr area. Some of my favorites were the visit to the State Parliament of North-Rhine Westphalia in Düsseldorf (where we got to sit in a parliamentary discussion and met with some of the politicians; I learned a lot about the German political structure as well as the election process that day), the tour of the BILD newspaper publishing house and the BVB stadium, the Ruhrverband excursion where we visited a water treatment plant, and the visit to an underground mine (we went 1500m deep into the ground!). I enjoyed many of the visits and I think they were very proficient in providing information about the Ruhr area's history and developments. In addition, we had the opportunity to sit down with BP Europa's CEO as well as National Bank's CEO for dinners and discussions. One of the most memorable experiences during this month was the Meeting of the Mind, where students from the RuhrFellowship Program, the REACH program, as well as the RISE program met up for a guided tour of the Zollverein Mine Museum and attended a symphony orchestra concert afterwards. I am





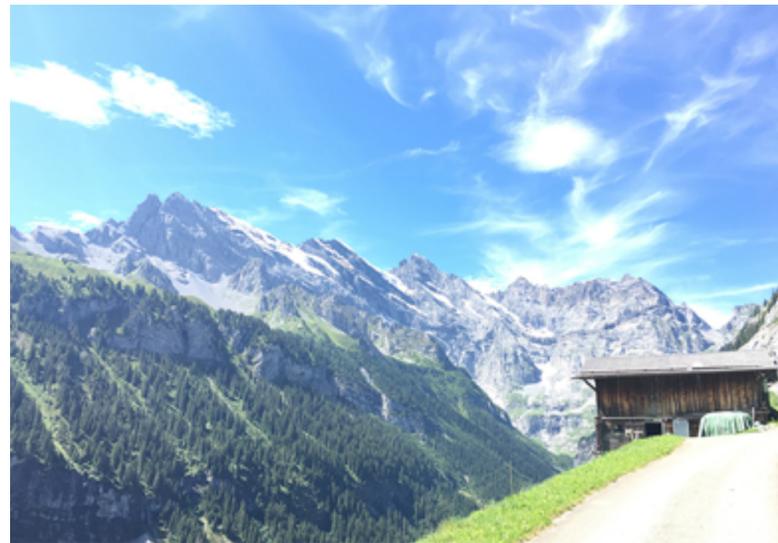
really glad for the opportunity to meet with other students from the U.S. spending the summer in the Ruhr area, and the chance to travel with some of them on the weekends.

#### Buddies!

This year, each one of the fellows was assigned a German student (called a “buddy”) from RUB to help us with traveling and navigating life in a foreign country. My buddy Nadja actually picked me (along with some other fellows) up from the Düsseldorf airport. The buddies would help us with many of the travel questions and sometimes even traveled with us. Nadja and I actually went to Cologne and Düsseldorf together (though both times it was raining), where we bought some delicious German tea and other items. During Extraschicht (a local festival), the program coordinator Anika met up with us and saw some magic tricks by an actor on stilts, and was subsequently gifted a balloon heart by him. We also had a picnic by a lake with some of the buddies and students from Virginia Tech. I really like the buddies, who were great friends to us and looked after us in case we had any questions.

#### Internship at innogy

innogy is one of the largest energy companies in Germany. Coming in, I really didn’t know much



about the energy industry. I am really happy to say that during my one-month internship, I learned a lot about the German energy industry. My coworkers were very patient in explaining to me how each of the following players functioned and interacted with each other in this industry: the energy producers, the grid operators, the energy distributors, the government, as well as the consumers. I worked in the Innovation Team along with one other Fellow, and our project team was a group of five. Every day we had a morning team call, where we said how we were doing that day; every other Friday we would have team breakfast, and every Tuesday we would do the “Sea of Feelings,” where we placed magnets representing each person on a whiteboard full of emotions drawn out. These were pretty cool team building skills that I hadn’t considered before. My project consisted of devising customer journeys and defining user stories, researching and testing for different hypotheses associated with customer behavior, analyzing cost factors associated with the overall project, and constructing business models and writing business case. I learned a lot about the agile workflow as well as the initial stage of planning for a new project. I also learned a lot about the different and vital factors to research before starting on a new project. This internship was a great experience in learning the process before



beginning a new start-up. Every day we had lunch with our coworkers where we discussed politics, cultural differences, and many other things. In addition, our team had a “Christmas in July” party at a private island owned by innogy. We rowed some boats and had some barbeque, and played some basketball which was eventually turned to soccer by two of our coworkers’ children. We also attended one of our coworkers, Niko’s wedding! (It was a civil wedding where couples would sign the legal documents, accompanied by a small celebration). During our last week, our manager Matthias invited us to his home for a German barbeque (it was delicious!). I had a great time during my internship, both for its educational element as well as the warm welcome and friendship from our coworkers.

#### Traveling and the EuroCup

I traveled quite a bit on the weekends and after the program. During the two months period, I was able to visit 7 countries and 12+ different cities. The central location of the Ruhr area in Europe as well as the train system made it very easy to travel to different cities and countries. By train I could reach most of the popular surrounding destinations, such as Brussels, Amsterdam, and Berlin in less than 5 hours. I was very excited to see some of the famous paintings and architecture in



person for the first time – it is one thing to read about them in a history textbook, but another thing to see them in person.

By chance we were in Germany/Europe during the Euro Cup games. I was able to go to public viewings with some of the other Fellows and witness the sheer excitement, energy, and passion of German soccer fans. After a Germany win, fans would cruise down the streets, honking and waving German flags in happiness; on the street we could see people proudly displaying their German flag in support of their team. Something about that energy was contagious – it drew in those like me who didn’t follow soccer that much before and transformed us into fans whose eyes were glued to the screen during the game.

Overall it was a great summer! I met some really awesome people from the program, from work, from RUB, and from the kind strangers who would point me in the direction when I was lost. I learned a lot about the Ruhr area as well as the German energy industry through company excursions and my internship, and I had the chance to travel Europe with some of the Fellows. It was a really unique opportunity and I couldn’t have thought of a better way to spend my sophomore summer!

## Phase 2 | Praktika und Partnerunternehmen

Wir danken ganz herzlich allen Unternehmen, die sich für das Programm engagiert und Praktikumsplätze zur Verfügung gestellt haben.

Vier Wochen lang haben sie den Studierenden die Unternehmenslandschaft im Ruhrgebiet nähergebracht, ihnen zahlreiche spannende Einblicke und Gespräche ermöglicht und damit zu einer Verbesserung des Images der Region über deren Grenzen hinaus beigetragen.

Des Weiteren danken wir allen anderen Beteiligten, die das Programm mit viel Herzblut unterstützt haben. Dies gilt im Besonderen auch für die Kolleginnen und Kollegen der UA Ruhr, die für die Realisierung des akademischen Teils verantwortlich waren.



Accenture

Accenture ist ein weltweit führendes Dienstleistungsunternehmen, das ein breites Portfolio von Services und Lösungen in den Bereichen Strategie, Consulting, Digital, Technologie und Operations anbietet. Mit umfassender Erfahrung und spezialisierten Fähigkeiten über mehr als 40 Branchen und alle Unternehmensfunktionen hinweg – gestützt auf das weltweit größte Delivery-Netzwerk

– arbeitet Accenture an der Schnittstelle von Business und Technologie, um Kunden dabei zu unterstützen, ihre Leistungsfähigkeit zu verbessern und nachhaltigen Wert für ihre Stakeholder zu schaffen. Mit rund 384.000 Mitarbeitern, die für Kunden in über 120 Ländern tätig sind, treibt Accenture Innovationen voran, um die Art und Weise, wie die Welt lebt und arbeitet, zu verbessern.



BP Europa SE

Die BP Europa SE nimmt mit einem Umsatz von mehr als 50 Milliarden Euro im Jahr 2015 (inklusive Energiesteuer) in Deutschland eine Spitzenposition unter den führenden Wirtschaftsunternehmen ein. Mit den Produkten und Dienstleistungen der Marken BP, Aral und Castrol erreicht das Unternehmen in Deutschland täglich Millionen Kunden.

Weltweit beschäftigt die BP Gruppe rund 84.000 Mitarbeiter in fast 80 Ländern und zählt damit zu den größten Konzernen der Welt. In Deutschland arbeiten mehr als 5.000 Mitarbeiter, das Tankstellengeschäft betreibt BP unter der Marke Aral und ist mit bundesweit rund 2.500 Tankstellen Marktführer. Eines von weltweit drei Kraftstoffzentren für Forschung und Entwicklung befindet sich in Bochum.

BP betreibt eines der größten Raffineriesysteme in Deutschland und auch im Schmierstoffbereich nimmt das Unternehmen eine Spitzenposition ein und ist in allen wichtigen Marktsegmenten vertreten. Zudem gehört BP beim Vertrieb von Flüssiggas, Flugkraftstoff, Schiffdiesel und Bitumen zu den führenden Anbietern.



Brenntag

Brenntag, der Weltmarktführer in der Chemiedistribution, ist mit seinem umfangreichen Produkt- und Serviceportfolio in allen bedeutenden Märkten der Welt vertreten. Vom Hauptsitz in Mülheim an der Ruhr aus betreibt Brenntag ein weltweites Netzwerk mit mehr als 530 Standorten in 74 Ländern. 2015 erzielte das Unternehmen mit mehr als 14.000 Mitarbeitern weltweit einen Umsatz von 10,3 Mrd. Euro (11,5 Mrd. US-Dollar).

Brenntag ist das Bindeglied zwischen Chemieproduzenten und der weiterverarbeitenden Industrie. Das Unternehmen unterstützt seine Kunden und Lieferanten mit maßgeschneiderten Distributionslösungen für Industrie- und Spezialchemikalien. Mit über 10.000 verschiedenen Produkten und einer Lieferantenbasis von Weltrang bietet Brenntag seinen etwa 180.000 Kunden Lösungen aus einer Hand. Dazu gehören spezifische Anwendungstechniken, ein umfassender technischer Service und Mehrwertleistungen wie Just-in-time-Lieferung, Mischungen & Formulierungen, Neuverpackung, Bestandsverwaltung und Abwicklung der Gebinderückgabe. Langjährige Erfahrung und die lokale Stärke in den einzelnen Ländern zeichnen den Weltmarktführer in der Chemiedistribution aus.



### EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND

Seit vielen Jahrzehnten sind EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND im größten Ballungsgebiet Europas aktiv. Ihr gesetzlicher Auftrag ist es, ohne wirtschaftliches Eigeninteresse für die Daseinsvorsorge aller Bürger und zum Nutzen unserer Mitglieder zu arbeiten. Beide Unternehmen arbeiten für das Wiedererstehen lebendiger, artenreicher Flusslandschaften und geben Impulse für Stadtentwicklung und Strukturwandel.

Die EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT wurde im Dezember 1899 als erster deutscher Wasserwirtschaftsverband gegründet. Zusammen mit dem 1926 gegründeten LIPPEVERBAND arbeiten beide Verbände seit mehr als 85 Jahren unter dem Dach einer einheitlichen Organisationsstruktur. Zusammen sind sie der größte Abwasserentsorger und Betreiber von Kläranlagen in Deutschland.

EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT und LIPPEVERBAND übernehmen im größten Ballungsgebiet Europas zwischen Dortmund und Duisburg und der nördlich angrenzenden Lipperegion vielfältige Aufgaben: Abwasserreinigung, Pflege und Unterhaltung von Gewässern, naturnahe Umgestaltung offener Abwasserkanäle, Schutz vor Hochwasser, Regelung des Wasserabflusses und Bewirtschaftung von Grund- und Regenwasser. Die EMSCHERGENOSSENSCHAFT betreibt hier vier Groß-Kläranlagen sowie 128 Pumpwerke und betreut rund 340 Kilometer Gewässerläufe, davon über 310 Kilometer als geschlossene Abwasserkanäle.

Der LIPPEVERBAND betreibt rund um die Lippe 50 Kläranlagen, 148 Pumpwerke und betreut knapp 400 Kilometer Wasserläufe sowie 127 Kilometer geschlossene Abwasserkanäle.



### Evonik Industries AG

Evonik ist ein weltweit führendes Unternehmen der Spezialchemie. Profitables Wachstum, Effizienz und Werte sind die Elemente unserer Strategie zur nachhaltigen Steigerung des Unternehmenswertes. Rund 80 Prozent des Umsatzes erwirtschaften wir aus führenden Marktpositionen, die wir konsequent ausbauen. Dabei konzentrieren wir uns auf wachstumsstarke Megatrends – vor allem Gesundheit, Ernährung, Ressourceneffizienz und Globalisierung.

Evonik erzielte 2015 mit mehr als 33.500 Mitarbeitern einen Umsatz von rund 13,5 Milliarden

Euro und ein operatives Ergebnis (bereinigtes EBITDA) von 2,47 Milliarden Euro. Überzeugender Beleg unseres globalen Geschäfts ist ein Umsatzanteil außerhalb Deutschlands von 82 Prozent.

#### **"Exploring opportunities. Growing together."**

Als Arbeitgeber bietet Evonik eine große Vielfalt an erstklassigen Perspektiven – sei es in der kreativen Spitzenforschung, im internationalen Management oder in der Produktion vor Ort. Entdecken Sie eine Welt voller Möglichkeiten bei Evonik. Wir freuen uns auf Sie!



### GELSENWASSER AG

1887 im Ruhrgebiet gegründet, um die Montanindustrie und die Menschen der Region mit Wasser zu versorgen, ist GELSENWASSER heute eines der größten deutschen Wasserversorgungsunternehmen. Weitere Schwerpunkte sind Abwasserentsorgung, Energieversorgung – insbesondere Erdgas – sowie Dienstleistungen rund um Wasser und Energie in mehr als 70 Städten und Gemeinden. Unsere Kunden sind Haushalte und Kommunen, Versorgungs sowie Industrieunternehmen. Zudem gibt es Kooperationen mit rund 30 Versorgungsunternehmen, die Trinkwasser oder Erdgas für ihre Kunden erhalten.

Die Zusammenarbeit mit den Kommunen ist partnerschaftlich. Das Ergebnis dieser oft langjährigen Beziehung: eine höhere Effizienz, Entlastung der öffentlichen Haushalte und somit Stabilität bei den Gebühren. Dieser Ansatz hat sich sowohl in Deutschland als auch im Ausland bewährt, wo GELSENWASSER sich langfristig in der Tschechischen Republik und Polen engagiert.

Trinkwasser ist unser Kerngeschäft. Geliefert werden jährlich rund 228 Millionen Kubikmeter Wasser an Haushalte, Versorgungsunternehmen und Industrie. Insgesamt versorgen wir vom Niederrhein bis nach Ostwestfalen 2,4 Millionen Bürger mit Trinkwasser. In der privatisierten Abwasserentsorgung arbeiten erfolgreiche GELSENWASSER-Beteiligungen in Bremen, Dresden, Emmerich am Rhein, Gelsenkirchen, Herne und Höxter.

GELSENWASSER bietet Kommunen und Betrieben das gesamte Know-how in den Bereichen Wasser, Abwasser und Energie auch als Dienstleistungen an. Mit größtmöglicher Flexibilität werden die Konzepte auf den konkreten Bedarf vor Ort maßgeschneidert.



### HOCHTIEF Aktiengesellschaft

HOCHTIEF gehört zu den bedeutendsten Hoch- und Infrastruktur-Baukonzernen der Welt. Der Schwerpunkt der Aktivitäten liegt auf komplexen Projekten in den Bereichen Verkehrs-, Energie-, soziale und urbane Infrastruktur sowie im Bergbau. Hier bringt das Unternehmen seine in mehr als 140 Jahren gewonnenen Kompetenzen im Entwickeln, Finanzieren, Bauen und Betreiben ein. Mit zirka 44.000 Mitarbeitern und Umsatzerlösen von mehr als 21 Mrd. Euro im Geschäftsjahr 2015 ist der Konzern mit Sitz in Essen auf allen wichtigen Märkten der Welt präsent:

Die kompetenten Mitarbeiter schaffen Werte für Kunden, Aktionäre und HOCHTIEF gleichermaßen. Mit innovativen, einzigartigen Lösungen und seiner Projekt- und Ingenieurkompetenz differenziert sich HOCHTIEF vom Wettbewerb. So erhöht der Konzern die Kundenzufriedenheit, sichert nachhaltiges Wachstum und steigert die Profitabilität des Unternehmens. Für seinen langfristigen Erfolg fördert HOCHTIEF das Zusammenspiel von Ökonomie, Ökologie und Sozialem. HOCHTIEF ist wegen seines Engagements um Nachhaltigkeit seit 2006 in den Dow Jones Sustainability Indizes vertreten.



### innogy

Die innogy SE ist ein etabliertes europäisches Energieunternehmen. Mit seinen drei Geschäftsfeldern Netz & Infrastruktur, Vertrieb und Erneuerbare Energien adressiert es die Anforderungen einer modernen dekarbonisierten, dezentralen und digitalen Energiewelt. Im Zentrum der Aktivitäten von innogy steht, bestehenden und potenziellen Kunden innovative und nachhaltige Produkte und Dienstleistungen anzubieten, mit denen sie Energie effizienter nutzen und ihre Lebensqualität steigern können. Die wichtigsten Märkte sind Deutschland, Großbritannien, die Niederlande und Belgien sowie einige Länder in Zentralost- und Südosteuropa, insbesondere Tschechien, Ungarn und Polen. Bei der Stromerzeugung aus erneuerbaren Energien ist das Unternehmen auch außerhalb dieser Regionen aktiv, z.B. in Spanien und Italien. innogy ist eine Tochtergesellschaft der RWE AG und ist am 1. April 2016 operativ an den Start gegangen. Der Markenname innogy ist eine Symbiose aus den Begriffen Innovation, Energy und Technology.



### KPMG

KPMG ist ein Firmennetzwerk mit mehr als 174.000 Mitarbeitern in 155 Ländern. Auch in Deutschland gehört KPMG zu den führenden Wirtschaftsprüfungs- und Beratungsunternehmen und ist mit rund 9.800 Mitarbeitern an mehr als 20 Standorten präsent.

#### Unsere Leistungen sind in die Geschäftsbereiche Audit, Tax, Consulting und Deal Advisory gegliedert

Im Mittelpunkt von Audit steht die Prüfung von Konzern- und Jahresabschlüssen. Tax steht für die steuerberatende Tätigkeit von KPMG. Die Bereiche Consulting und Deal Advisory bündeln unser hohes fachliches Know-how zu betriebswirtschaftlichen, regulatorischen und transaktionsorientierten Themen.

Für wesentliche Branchen unserer Wirtschaft haben wir eine geschäftsbereichsübergreifende Spezialisierung vorgenommen. Hier laufen die Erfahrungen unserer Experten weltweit zusammen und tragen zusätzlich zur Beratungsqualität bei.



### NATIONAL-BANK AG

Die NATIONAL-BANK ist eine der bundesweit führenden konzernfreien Regionalbanken für anspruchsvolle Privat- und Firmenkunden sowie mittelständische institutionelle Investoren. Die Aktien der Bank sind nicht börsennotiert. Das Institut finanziert sich nahezu ausschließlich durch Eigenkapital und Einlagen. Bei den rund 5.200 Anteilseignern entfallen 46 Prozent des Grundkapitals auf institutionelle und 54 Prozent auf private Investoren.

1921 in Berlin gegründet, ist die Bank seit 1922 in Essen beheimatet. Das Geschäftsgebiet ist Nordrhein-Westfalen, auch wenn der regionale Fokus auf den Regionen an Rhein und Ruhr sowie im Bergischen Land und Münsterland liegt.



### RAG Aktiengesellschaft

Die RAG betreibt den sozialverträglichen Auslauf des deutschen Steinkohlenbergbaus. Dies ist kein Selbstläufer: Kein Bergmann fällt ins Bergfreie, die Mannschaft muss bis zum letzten Tag auch an neuen Arbeitsplätzen motiviert und die Arbeitssicherheit auf bestem Niveau gehalten werden. Gleichzeitig gilt es, alle Lieferverpflichtungen einzuhalten. Mit der RAG Montan Immobilien geben wir darüber hinaus dem Strukturwandel in den Bergbauregionen durch die Nachnutzung bergbaulicher Infrastruktur neue Impulse, beispielsweise zur Erzeugung erneuerbarer Energien. Wir denken und handeln über den Tag hinaus, nachhaltig und mit Blick auf kommende Generationen – wirtschaftlich, ökologisch und sozial.

Der Steinkohlenbergbau hat das Ruhrgebiet mehr als 150 Jahre lang geprägt. Wenn bis Ende 2018 die letzten noch aktiven Bergwerke die Kohlenförderung einstellen, endet ein Kapitel Industriegeschichte – nicht jedoch die Arbeit der RAG. Auf das Unternehmen kommen dauerhaft wichtige Aufgaben zu. Diese sogenannten Ewigkeitsaufgaben tragen dazu bei, den Wasserhaushalt in der Region unter und über Tage zu regulieren. Zu den Ewigkeitsaufgaben zählen die Grubenwasserhaltung, der Betrieb von Polderanlagen und das Grundwassermanagement. Oberstes Gebot sind dabei für die RAG der Trinkwasser- und der Umweltschutz. Gleichzeitig entwickelt das Unternehmen ehemalige Bergbauflächen weiter, so dass sie zukünftig Raum für Wohn- und Gewerbegebiete oder für Photovoltaik und Windkraftanlagen bieten.



### Ruhrverband

#### Der Ruhrverband – ein operatives Unternehmen der Wasserwirtschaft

Der Ruhrverband ist ein öffentlich-rechtliches Wasserwirtschaftsunternehmen ohne Gewinnerzielungsabsichten. Sowohl beim Betrieb seiner Talsperren, die die Wasserversorgung von 4,6 Millionen Menschen sicherstellen, als auch bei der Abwasserreinigung für 60 Städte und Gemeinden im Einzugsgebiet von Ruhr und Lenne stehen Mensch und Umwelt im Zentrum seines Handelns, ohne dabei das Gebot der Wirtschaftlichkeit zu vernachlässigen. Die Ruhr und ihre Nebenflüsse werden unabhängig von politischen Verwaltungsgrenzen als Einheit betrachtet und bewirtschaftet. Dieses Flussgebietsmanagement schafft einen fairen Ausgleich zwischen den diversen Nutzungen und Interessen an den Flüssen und Seen. Das spart Kosten und dient, wie von der Europäischen Wasserrahmenrichtlinie gefordert, dem Umweltschutz und dem Allgemeinwohl. Der Ruhrverband nimmt im 4.478 Quadratkilometer großen Flussgebiet der Ruhr folgende Aufgaben wahr:

- Wasser zur Trink- und Betriebswasserversorgung sowie zur Wasserkraftnutzung beschaffen und bereitstellen,
- Wasserabfluss regeln und ausgleichen,
- Hochwasserabfluss sichern,
- Abwässer reinigen,
- bei der Abwasserreinigung anfallende Rückstände entsorgen und verwerten,
- wasserwirtschaftliche Verhältnisse ermitteln.



### SMS group GmbH

Mit weltweit mehr als 14.000 Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern und einem Umsatz von rund 3,3 Milliarden Euro zählt die SMS group zu den größten Arbeitgebern im Anlagen- und Maschinenbau zur industriellen Verarbeitung von Stahl, Aluminium und NE-Metallen. Mit hochwertigen Anlagen und Maschinen und individuellen Servicepaketen bietet die SMS group die gesamte metallurgische Prozesskette flexibel und wirtschaftlich aus einer Hand – vom Erz bis zum fertigen Produkt.

Als typisch mittelständisch geprägtes und traditionsreiches Familienunternehmen wird in der SMS group großen Wert auf die Unternehmenskultur gelegt. Mitarbeiter aus über 40 Nationen arbeiten in einer Atmosphäre von Eigenverantwortung, Offenheit, Teamgeist und flachen Hierarchien miteinander. Und als Hochtechnologie-Unternehmen, das in vielen Märkten die Führungsposition hält, ist die Gruppe darauf angewiesen, überall die besten Köpfe für sich zu gewinnen. Denn nur mit gut ausgebildeten und hochqualifizierten Mitarbeitern kann sich die Unternehmensgruppe dauerhaft und erfolgreich im Wettbewerb behaupten. Qualifizierten Nachwuchs für den Bedarf an Fachkräften sicherzustellen, betrachtet das Unternehmen als einen wesentlichen Erfolgsfaktor für die Zukunft.



### Thyssengas GmbH

Die Thyssengas GmbH mit Sitz in Dortmund ist ein kon-zernunabhängiger Fernleitungsnetzbetreiber und zählt zu den führenden Gastransportgesellschaften in Deutschland. Das 1921 gegründete Unternehmen kann auf eine lange Tradition in zurückblicken und gilt als zukunftsweisender Pionier der Branche.

Heute betreibt die Gesellschaft ein modernes Leitungssystem von mehr als 4200 Kilometern Länge. Über dieses weitläufige Transportnetz werden jährlich bis zu 10 Milliarden Kubikmeter Gas umweltschonend zu Verteilnetzbetreibern, Industriebetrieben und Kraftwerken primär im bevölkerungsreichsten Bundesland Nordrhein-Westfalen transportiert.

Diese Infrastruktur wird künftig die Basis für den Einsatz von regenerativem Gas in der Energie- und Klimawende bilden. Die Gasinfrastruktur hat das dringend benötigte Potenzial zur Integration, Speicherung erneuerbarer Energien. So kann Thyssengas künftig mit seiner Infrastruktur und der Power to Gas Technologie als Langzeit-Stromspeicher die Energiewende möglich machen.



### Universitätsallianz Ruhr

In der Universitätsallianz Ruhr (UA Ruhr) bündeln wir – die Ruhr-Universität Bochum, die Technische Universität Dortmund und die Universität Duisburg-Essen – unsere Kompetenzen und Ressourcen, um unsere Leistungs- und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit weiter auszubauen. Unter dem Motto „gemeinsam besser“ bieten wir unseren Forscherinnen und Forschern vielfältige Möglichkeiten zur Kooperation und Vernetzung, während die Studierenden von dem großen Angebot an Bachelor- und Masterstudiengängen mit zahlreichen Spezialisierungsmöglichkeiten profitieren. Insgesamt sind bereits über hundert Kooperationen in Forschung, Lehre und Verwaltung entstanden, woraus sich eine Kultur der Zusammenarbeit mit vielfältigen persönlichen und strukturellen Verbindungen entwickelt hat.

Die internationale Zusammenarbeit der UA Ruhr fördern unsere Verbindungsbüros in New York, Moskau und Sao Paulo/Rio de Janeiro. Über diese können interessierte Wissenschaftler und Wissenschaftlerinnen neue Forschungsk Kooperationen anstoßen und beim Auf- und Ausbau internationaler Kontakte auf Unterstützung zählen.



### Vaillant Group

Die Vaillant Group ist ein international tätiges Unternehmen mit Hauptsitz in Remscheid, Deutschland, das in den Bereichen Heiz-, Lüftungs- und Klimatechnik tätig ist. Als einer der weltweiten Markt- und Technologieführer entwickelt und produziert die Vaillant Group maßgeschneiderte Produkte, Systeme und erbringt Dienstleistungen für Wohnkomfort. Das Produktportfolio reicht von effizienten Heizgeräten auf Basis herkömmlicher Energieträger bis hin zu Systemlösungen zur Nutzung regenerativer Energien.

Im Geschäftsjahr 2015 erzielte das Unternehmen, das sich seit seiner Gründung 1874 in Familienbesitz befindet, mit mehr als 12.000 Mitarbeitern einen Umsatz von rund 2,4 Mrd Euro.

## Der Initiativkreis Ruhr

In der Gemeinschaft lässt sich mehr bewegen. Dieser Gedanke ist die Triebfeder des Initiativkreises Ruhr – seit mittlerweile mehr als einem Vierteljahrhundert. Rund 70 Mitgliedsunternehmen und -institutionen mit insgesamt etwa 2,25 Millionen Beschäftigten und einem globalen Umsatz von rund 630 Milliarden Euro bilden eines der stärksten regionalen Wirtschaftsbündnisse Deutschlands. Der Initiativkreis Ruhr ist ein Motor des Wandels. Seine Mitglieder verbindet das Ziel, die Entwicklung des Ruhrgebiets voranzutreiben und seine Zukunfts- und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit nachhaltig zu stärken. Wesentliche Handlungsfelder sind Wirtschaft, Bildung und Kultur. Aus diesem Antrieb heraus entstanden Leitprojekte mit Strahlkraft. Beispiele sind InnovationCity Ruhr, die TalentMetropole Ruhr und das Klavier-Festival Ruhr.

[www.i-r.de](http://www.i-r.de)

## Die Partnerunternehmen des Initiativkreises Ruhr

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# Die TalentMetropole Ruhr – 53 Städte, 53.000 Möglichkeiten

Das Ruhrgebiet hat viele Talente. Sie zu finden und zu fördern ist die Aufgabe der TalentMetropole Ruhr, der Bildungsinitiative des Initiativkreises Ruhr. Die TalentMetropole Ruhr hat sich aufgemacht, die vielfältigen Aktivitäten und Angebote unterschiedlichster Träger zu bündeln und sichtbar zu machen. Sie ist zentrale Anlaufstelle für Jugendliche auf der Suche nach Förderung und Unterstützung. Sie macht Bildungsaufstiege möglich und Vorbilder sichtbar.

Manchmal ist nur ein Anstoß in die richtige Richtung nötig, um eine Begabung zu entdecken und zu entwickeln. Die TalentMetropole Ruhr ermutigt junge Menschen dazu. Gemeinsam mit Unternehmen, Verbänden, Kammern, Hochschulen, Schulen und anderen Bildungspartnern zeigt sie Chancen auf und fördert innovative Projekte.

[www.talentmetropol Ruhr.de](http://www.talentmetropol Ruhr.de)



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