

Loving Wisconsin as an exchange student

If I were to write this a month or so after I first came to Wisconsin as an exchange student last August—I couldn't have given you an answer. Coming from Germany, I didn't really know Wisconsin, what to expect and the beauty it holds. The only thing I knew about Wisconsin was that most German immigrants settled in Milwaukee and that it's known for its cheese.

In September, I went with my host family and their friends to the Oktoberfest in Heidelberg Park at the Bavarian Bierhaus Milwaukee. I remember eating Currywurst and it tasted just the same as in Germany. I was forced to dance Polka. The funny thing is, I don't do that normally. We all went to this stall where you could get a fish by throwing a ping pong ball on bottle tops, and I literally won a fish after my second throw! I was smiling for the rest of the day.

I also went to The Christkindlmarket in Oconomowoc. All the stalls had such cute things like chocolate or Christmas ornaments. I find it lovely to see all Americans celebrating their German heritage.

For me, sharing heritage with Americans feels like we are deeply connected. When high school started I was surprised to find out that you can study German. Some friends at my school even told me they wanted to go to college in Germany later. Hearing that made me very happy.

All the 9 months I've been here I got to see so many cities and did a lot of activities. My favorite season here would be Summer. In Summer I spend all day outside on Lake Keesus whether it'd

be water skiing, swimming or just tanning. The weather couldn't have been better. I had so much fun and thinking back at it makes me smile. I still remember the day we rode our bikes along Lake Michigan in Milwaukee and ate ice cream at Purple Door Ice Cream. The sun had already set, so we could see the Milwaukee skyline. In Winter the lake froze, meaning we could ice skate and play in the snow.

One thing I will never forget is the Wisconsin State Fair, you can do so many things like riding a rollercoaster or eating silly food, like fried oreos, and also buy some souvenirs. I bought socks there and it was my first purchase in the States.

I really enjoy eating at Culver's. In my opinion Culver's is unique and special because it originated in this particular state. Everytime Culver's clouds my mind I think of all the times I used to eat there with my host parents after we watched my host brother's ice hockey game. Its food is just so delicious- The cheese curds and the Turtle Sunday just hit different. I think Culver's is the perfect place where families can have quality time together, laughing and talking about everything.

I also personally love art, so when I visited the Milwaukee Art Museum, I was so excited! I appreciated all the art pieces, such as paintings, sculptures and much more. They also had a little art shop where you can draw yourself. I was so mesmerized by some paintings, I had a lot of fun.

Now that my year abroad comes to an end, I want to be able to look back at all the beautiful memories I made and be able to remember them. Coming to Wisconsin was one of the best decisions of my life.