



IFYE NEWS

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IFYE Program 2020: What's Next?



Alan Lambert
National Program
Director

As you have undoubtedly learned recently, the 2020 IFYE exchange program (for both inbound and outbound IFYEs) has been suspended due to the COVID-19 health concerns, both here in the USA and abroad. Our participating countries have come to the same decision for 2020 with all expressing a commitment to be part of the 2021 IFYE program.

IFYE leadership recognizes that the suspension of the 2020 program enables me to invest more energy on topics that have not had as much attention due to focus on the program itself (recruiting, orientation, training,

working with state coordinators on host families, etc.). Working together, we have identified multiple areas that will help to further grow the IFYE program.

University Involvement – Many universities offer an international experience in their academic programs. IFYE has been working with faculty and administrators at Iowa State University to develop a template enabling the IFYE program to meet “for credit” academic requirements. This year, two of the 2020 IFYEs from Iowa State would have been able to utilize the IFYE program to meet the ag-related global studies required for their academic major (<https://www.globe.iastate.edu/>). Unfortunately, this did not materialize due to the pandemic.

Additional universities (Purdue, Univ. of Nebraska, Univ. of Maryland at College Park, and Illinois State) are extremely interested in possibly incorporating IFYE as an option for their students. A template is being further refined and will be shared with these universities. As we move forward, additional universities such as Ohio State, Univ. of Illinois, Kansas State, Michigan State, Univ of Minnesota, Virginia Tech, and West Virginia will be contacted. IFYE currently has state coordinators in these states except Minnesota and West Virginia, and efforts are underway to add coordinators in those states.

In conjunction with the IFYE Program Development Committee, we will work with universities to identify

learning and behavioral objectives to include in our pre and post evaluations. Our goal is to have this template completed by mid-July 2020. I will reach out to Iowa State periodically to ensure that we are tracking together

Enhanced Job Shadowing – IFYE Executive Director Ken Gordon will introduce me to his pertinent agriculture industry contacts. This will achieve two results: introduce me as the National Program Director and initiate the job shadowing component of the IFYE program in their company. A “Job Shadowing Executive Summary” will help local, national, and international companies become more familiar with the IFYE program and the job shadowing benefits for both the company and the IFYE. If you have a contact in an ag-related business that would be a potential job shadow partner, please let me know.

Marketing IFYE to Commodity Groups – State- and nationwide commodity organizations (such as Corn Growers, Soybean Association, etc.) often are looking for ways to develop their up-and-coming leaders. Many organizations have recognized that international perspectives will be critical to the sustainability and growth of their organizations. IFYE’s goal is to provide specific experiential learning and sharing opportunities for these individuals within the broader IFYE cultural immersion emphasis. Implementing this component may provide additional IFYEs that are recommended by other organizations, and potentially funding sources to pay for the IFYE’s program fee.

Donor Quest – As a database management tool, we can enter information of all individuals who have expressed interest in the IFYE program. This will help us maintain regular and periodic contact with those persons. Quarterly contact will keep IFYE “in front of them” on a more regular basis and help in the recruiting efforts for future programs. Over 250 names of possible future IFYEs are contacted throughout the year.

Adding new countries – As IFYE develops new relationships (universities, job shadowing, commodity groups and others), numbers of outbound IFYEs are expected to grow. Developing and adding new partner countries will be critical to placing the increased number of IFYEs. Countries that are relatively new or are planned to be new in 2021 (Argentina,



Meet Elina Jogure,
2021 Latvian Country
Coordinator

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Victoria Fehrmann Warren
Association Board
President

Greetings, IFYE friends!

What a year 2020 has been! Never did we think after all the years of keeping the IFYE program active, through ups and downs of support, that we would be stopped in our tracks by a virus. Pandemics are nothing to fool around with. But we will be back in 2021, better than ever! As I said in the April 10 IFYE Update, our emphasis on “Peace through Understanding” has never been more important. We are using our time wisely now to build a better tomorrow.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the IFYE News and follow through on at least one thing in it. Here is one possible follow-up – a challenge for you! Like many, I have been using this unexpected time at home to go through closets and boxes. While doing that, I found the 11 newsletters that I wrote while I was an IFYE in Germany in 1978. The State 4-H Office sent the newsletters from the nine Missouri IFYEs to our families and friends as well as to those on the Missouri IFYE alumni list.

Reading through these newsletters not only brought back memories but gave me an idea. What if as many alumni as are able share at least one old newsletter for posting on our website? We could keep interesting news of IFYE activities going for a whole year while we are waiting for our 2021 IFYE program to be active. I know there are those who think that letters from 40 or 50 (or more) years ago are dated and no one would be interested. I don’t think that’s true. Clothing changes, music changes, politics change – however, family and farm life are timeless! As I read my newsletters, what I shared about my host family experiences sounds much like what our more recent IFYEs have shared about theirs. On the right, is a newsletter about my first host family.

If you would like to participate in the challenge, feel free to share your newsletter with me. I will work with our Digital Media Committee to prepare them for our website.

I will end this message with a very famous saying of Mother Teresa – *“Peace begins with a smile. Smile five times a day at someone you really don’t want to smile at; do it for peace.”*

12th World IFYE Conference Update

Although no date has yet been set for the conference, word has been received that it will be conducted near Klagenfurt, Austria, in the southern part of the country. Here is the link: <https://www.pitzelstaetten.at/schule/> to the facility which was built in 2019.

There are three good options to travel to the conference. They are to fly into Vienna, Graz, or Venice, and take a train to Klagenfurt. Klagenfurt has an airport but connections are not very good.

July-August 1978 - Victoria Fehrmann
Combined newsletters #1 & #2

Guten Tag!

Good day, hello from West Germany, a land of much beauty and friendly people. I hope that through my newsletters I can show you some of this beauty and friendliness. After a few days stay in Bonn, the capital city, I am now living on a dairy farm. A different experience for someone from a grain farm.

I want you to meet my host family, the Deneckes. Herr Denecke is a 49-year-old dairy farmer. As farmers always seem to be at home, he is very busy. Frau Denecke is a very busy 45-year-old farm wife. The Deneckes have three daughters, so I feel very much at home. It seems like girls even run in my host families! Heinricke is 17, a student of Home Economics or Hauswirtschaft. Kerstin and Cornelia, twins, are 16. They are both students and like to have fun! And they are very eager to help me with my German. Finally, there is Oma. Oma is 80 years old and still very active. It’s nice to have a grandmother living with you. The adults don’t speak much English at all, so until the girls were out of school (end of June) I had to work hard at my German to be able to communicate with them. We made it work though! Smiles and hand gestures helped a lot!

Of course, on a dairy farm, the cows must be milked two times a day. But here, we go *to* the cows to milk. Every morning at 7 a.m. and every evening at 5:30 p.m. we load up the wagon with feed, buckets, three milkers, and a large 400-liter tank (about 105 gallons). Then out to the fields to milk the cows. The cows come to a large feeding wagon where they are held fast during the milking. With 24 cows, this takes almost 2 hours. My host family told me that with 24 milk cows, they had the most of anyone in the village. It is a rather large number for a small farm in Germany. Then, when the milking is done, all is brought back and cleaned to be ready for the next time. The milk is kept in a 2,000-liter tank to cool until the milk truck comes for it every other day.

And then sometimes the cows must be moved to a different field. Then we must *“paß auf”* – watch out that none wander into the crop fields. In this part of Germany, the fields are all quite small and four different farmers may own fields standing side by side. So, we don’t want our cows in someone else’s field.

My experience helping move the cows between fields didn’t work so well. I was given the task to stand by the gate to keep the cows from going in the wrong direction. Unfortunately, the cows didn’t understand my English, so they did exactly what they weren’t supposed to do! Luckily, Frau Denecke was paying attention and came back to rescue me. Really, she was probably trying to rescue the cows from any potential cars coming down the road. But I felt rescued. And no cows got in any other farmer’s field.

Although there is always something to do, the people take time out in the afternoon to share coffee with family, friends, or relatives. Or perhaps in the evening we may have a dance or visit a neighbor or have a small party. Of course, everyone knows everyone else, and the farmers can always compare notes about the way things are going (or the weather).

Focus on Strength and Growth for 2021

Sometimes in life you have to make a difficult, but right, decision. That's what came from our special IFYE Board meeting in early April. The decision to suspend the program for 2020 came after much discussion, but the unanimous vote was clear, there was too much risk involved for our participants, host families and the Association to proceed. Safety has been, and always will be, our first priority in delivering the IFYE experience.



Ken Gordon
Executive Director

Although our exchange program is suspended for 2020, work continues to solidify and grow IFYE. We are continuing our efforts for government grants, commodity association support and support from foundations that have missions which align with IFYE. I have been working together with a few of our IFYE Board members to better align our fundraising strategies so that we reach our goal of meeting IFYE's financial needs year after year.

You, as an IFYE alumni, can help us with one of the fundraising strategies we will soon be announcing. It focuses on gathering information from your professional experience. For example, during my career before IFYE, I worked for Indiana Farm Bureau, Ciba, Novartis, Syngenta, Ashland, Inc. and Momentive Corp. It may look like I couldn't hold a

job, but three of the names in that list are gone from mergers. Over my 25 years with those organizations, I had the opportunity to work and get to know many people. I'm sure you also met many people during your career paths. That is the opportunity where you can help by providing direction and contact information that may open doors for IFYE. You will soon hear more about this opportunity.

As we move through 2020, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that much of what has been accomplished over the past couple of years would not have been possible without those IFYEs who stepped up in late 2017 and early 2018 to participate in our Organizational Capacity Campaign. This year will mark the completion of the pledge agreements that indicated your support. You have my sincere thanks and my pledge to continue to focus my efforts to keep IFYE strong and growing.

We have made strong connections and inroads with USDA, and I look forward to expanding those connections this year and next. Over the years, IFYE has provided a strong leadership foundation to those who have had the experience. It is found in research I have reviewed, that a strong cultural understanding gained by engaging with others in another country, is what truly delivers the foundation for future leadership.

Some may now believe that cultural understanding can be achieved by engaging others only through social media. I may be called "old fashioned," but I believe in the strength of the personal interaction that IFYE delivers. Although it can be argued that social media interaction can enhance relationships, it is the personal cultural interaction that makes the difference in building relationships. Research supports this, and it is the value proposition of the IFYE experience. I will continue to carry this message forward to all those I reach in our efforts to successfully grow the Association.

Member Toolkit - Information Is Now Online To Help You Promote IFYE

Many of you have asked for materials that can be used to help market IFYE at local events. Items you can use to help tell the IFYE story are now located in the Member Portal on the IFYE website.

Items in the toolkit include: IFYE Talking Points, IFYE Frequently Asked Questions, Code of Conduct (for exchangees), sample News Releases, our Participant Brochure, the Memorandum of Understanding between USDA and IFYE, and Sample Letters to use in seeking support from commodity associations and universities.

Please take a few minutes to log into the Member Portal on the IFYE website and review the materials developed for you to use in promoting IFYE. This portal is open to all life members and annual-paid members. Just log in to the website's Member area and you will find the IFYE Marketing Toolkit. If you are unable to log in, please contact us through https://ifyeusa.org/about/contact_us.html to let us know you need help logging in or setting up your member login.

To log in, go to ifyeusa.org

- Scroll down the home page below the blue map and Click on "Member Login."
- Type in your username (**ALL CAPS** – first name followed by period and then last name).
- Add your password.
- You will find the Member Toolkit about 2/3 of the way down the table of contents for this portal. Click on that to find all the items in this toolkit. They are set to read online but at the top of each page, there is an area to click to download the item to your computer or other electronic device.

(Continued from page 1)

Uruguay, Slovenia, Latvia, Poland, Costa Rica, Philippines) shall receive specialized assistance. Recent contacts in The Netherlands, New Zealand, Botswana, Brazil, Tanzania, and Vietnam will be further developed. We will need to be mindful of domestic and international infrastructure to support such growth.

State Coordinators – Further training and support of existing state coordinators will also help them recruit and select IFYEs and host families. Veteran state coordinators can be a valuable resource to new coordinators. Additional state coordinators will be needed as the IFYE program continues to grow. You can help by volunteering as a state coordinator or state contact.

Country Handbooks – 2019 marked the first year a substantive country handbook supported the outbound IFYEs. Updates have been completed with input from the 2019 IFYEs and additional country handbooks will be developed as we add more countries. Recent IFYEs will be asked to contribute appropriate content.

Continued contact with selected 2020 IFYEs – Following notification that the 2020 IFYE program is suspended, more

than half of the eleven 2020 IFYEs expressed a strong desire for possible 2021 exchange program participation. The group had met for their first orientation conference call, and though the program suspension was disappointing, many are keeping IFYE in their future plans.

2019 IFYE presentations – Since the COVID-19 situation has substantially reduced the number of speaking opportunities for the returned 2019 IFYEs, they are being asked to write short articles and include appropriate photos on a monthly basis. These will count toward their required 25 presentations. We will use this for IFYE’s social media as well as marketing material. Of course, they also need your help in further developing their verbal presentations and setting up those speaking engagements when public meetings are again allowed. Additional use of electronic technology to share their experiences can exponentially increase their reach across state lines and into previously untapped audiences.

Please contact me anytime to share suggestions or to have questions answered on the above areas.

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IFYE Experience Shifts Participant’s Focus to Global Citizenship

Barbara Bierman Batie*

A Google search led Virginia 4-H’er Jessica Braxton to apply for the IFYE program and that experience paved the way to her current career – teaching internationally.

Braxton grew up going to 4-H camp. Those experiences led her to become a teen leader and later an adult volunteer, all in Louisa County, Virginia.



A special host family. Jessica’s host parents in this family, Kati and Jarkko, are IFYE alumni who met the year they were IFYEs. Jessica notes their children Anti and Anni will be future IFYEs for sure!

While searching for a study abroad experience, she found 4-H had programs all over the world and that IFYE would connect her to some of those. In 2014, she applied for and was selected to be an IFYE to Finland for three months.

Braxton noted it is hard to pinpoint highlights as the whole IFYE experience was a highlight. “There’s something alluring about the Finnish culture. There’s not a lot of complexity or fancy pleasantries about people coming together and being family; yet it is what I enjoyed the most about being in Finland – FAMILY.”

Naturally, the student teacher enjoyed the opportunity to see the functionality of Finnish classrooms at different grade levels.

Although she admits to having some mild culture shock at first, language was never an issue. “Admittedly, the Finnish language is very difficult. Although I was not able to learn more than hello, thank you, and good-bye before arriving, I did not struggle as much as one would have thought. Finnish people study English from the third grade through graduation; so where I didn’t speak Finnish, it was OK as they spoke English.”

She noted that when she left to come home, “The beautiful land and kind people inhabiting the spaces left a permanent impression on me.”

She went on to complete her studies at Grand Canyon University in Arizona where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. “I realize now I should have studied international education, but we live and learn,” she chuckled.

Because of her international experience, her focus shifted from that of a small community to a global community. “I want to make myself a better person, a better global citizen.”

With that goal in mind, she knew she didn’t want to begin her teaching career in the United States. “IFYE ignited a flame for exploring other cultures,” she said.

Ironically, it was another Google search that led Braxton to China. She looked up international teaching experiences and a number of international teaching websites appeared such as [Teach Away](https://www.teachaway.com/) (https://www.teachaway.com/), [Teaching Nomad](https://www.teachingnomad.com/) (https://www.teachingnomad.com/), and [Teach Anywhere](https://www.teachanywhere.com/) (https://www.teachanywhere.com/). “My first choice was Singapore, but they said no. Then, I looked at South Korea. They said yes, but the position was only teaching English. Then, out of nowhere, China was on the table.”

The position that opened for her two years ago involved teaching in a dual language classroom at an academy in Shanghai, China. Jessica and a Chinese coteacher work together to teach multiple subjects. “This offered the best experience using the certification I had,” Braxton said.

They cover everything from math to social studies each day. Along the way, the students are immersed in both languages. “I teach first grade just like in a classroom in the United States. The difference is [that] a bilingual setting provides additional language skills. This takes them from an intermediate level to true bilingual level.”

It is evident Braxton is passionate about her role in the classroom. “I can’t articulate the joy I have with my class this year. I really want to see youth all over the world succeed and do their best while also being a good neighbor to people from all over the world. I think about how everyone needs someone; this is true within a family, a company or a school. But, in the larger picture, countries need other countries too. If future world leaders can learn to have a good global mindset as youth, then perhaps the world will have less conflict.”



Pajama Days are international. Jessica joins her coteacher, Mrs. Judy, and a group of students in dressing up for their spirit week leading up to the Chinese New Year holiday.

Braxton was able to come back to the United States earlier this year during the Chinese New Year holiday, noting the Chinese take a month off to observe this special time together.

Unfortunately, the spread of the Coronavirus has impacted the Chinese school year, just as it has schools throughout the world. “We are still distance learning here and this will continue. I had hoped to have three more weeks with my students as the national schools go until halfway through

June, but we will see.”



Magnifying glass – Teaching STEM principles is part of the daily routine for Jessica in the dual language program at Kids to Kids Academy in Shanghai, China. Here she explores the wonders found with a magnifying glass with Iverson, a kindergarten student.

The urge to explore continues and Braxton is interviewing for a new position. Whether that will be in China or elsewhere remains to be seen. “I’m interviewing for a position in Middle East schools; but with the virus, I may stay in China. The school year is very much up in the air,” she concluded. “Wherever I land this time, I would like to stay for three years.”

For anyone considering the IFYE experience, Braxton urges them to, “Get off the fence and go! Being comfortable is overrated and you don’t grow from being comfortable. My biggest fear was that it was not a real thing or company because no one had ever mentioned IFYE while I was a youngster in 4-H. Once I understood it was a real thing, I was eager and grateful to be chosen.”

IFYE has taught her to be very flexible in social settings, she said. “I believe in being gracious because I need grace. Even when being handed the short end of a stick, I am grateful I was given the stick at all.”

The impact IFYE had on her life is immeasurable, notes Braxton. “IFYE has forever caused me to think mindfully about cultural differences and rather than be turned off from them, I should watch, listen, learn and try to understand.

“Diversity is one of the most beautiful aspects of life; so really and truly, there has to be some difference to have beauty. Being an IFYE is an exclusive club that not many people belong to. I hope the organization will live on and continue to impact the lives of those who are called to be a part of this club.”

**Editor’s note: Batie, a freelance journalist, was a 1980 IFYE from Nebraska to West Germany. She is currently Secretary for the IFYE Association of the USA, Inc. Board of Directors, as well as for the Nebraska IFYE Alumni Association.*

2020 Individuals Selected for IFYE Program

Due to the unfortunate global COVID-19 health concerns, the following eleven individuals selected and placed for the 2020 IFYE program will not be able to fulfill their plans for a unique and potentially life-changing experience this year. Nonetheless, we would like you to learn more about these talented and dynamic young adults. As of this writing, more than half of this group are looking forward to participating in the 2021 IFYE program. The 11 selected 2020 IFYEs have varied backgrounds, goals, and experiences. We wish them success as they move forward with plans to be part of the IFYE exchange program in 2021 and/or further their careers and other goals in another manner.



EMILY ANNEXSTAD
(Minnesota to Argentina)

Current Status/Future Goals: A senior studying Animal Science and Agricultural Communication & Marketing at the University of Minnesota. After graduation, I hope to work in the agricultural communication and marketing field.

Previous International Experiences: After doing a short-term study abroad in Norway last spring, I knew that I wanted more experiences abroad.

Your Ag-related experiences: I grew up on my family's dairy farm near St. Peter, Minnesota. My childhood experiences in 4-H and FFA helped me discover my love of agriculture and sharing it with others. During college at the Univ. of MN, I also served in leadership roles in the Gopher Dairy Club, Beta of Clovia Sorority (Agriculture), and the National Agri-Marketing Association.

How IFYE fits your goals: IFYE is the perfect way for me to combine my love of agriculture with my curiosity to learn while abroad.

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**BETH NOEL**  
(California to Germany)

**Current Status/Future Goals:** I am currently attending California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo as an agricultural science major with an emphasis in animal science with a dairy industries minor. On campus, I currently serve as President of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) Ambassadors and Second Vice President of Sigma Alpha's Kappa Chapter.

After graduation in 2021, I will attend the one-year Master's and Credential program at Cal Poly since I decided that I want to pursue a career as a high school agriculture teacher.

**Previous International Experiences:** Last summer, I studied language and culture in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico. I fell in love with the culture and my host family.

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JOELI KOENIG
(Iowa to Luxembourg)

Current Status/Future Goals: I am currently a junior at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. There, I study Animal Science with a Pre-Veterinary emphasis.

I plan on attending veterinary school after obtaining my undergraduate degree.

Your Ag-related experiences: My interest in agriculture developed during school at Iowa State as I never grew up on a farm or raised animals.

How IFYE fits your goals: Through classes, I have gained an interest and newfound respect for the agricultural community in Iowa and the United States; IFYE is allowing me the chance to experience and appreciate agriculture in Luxembourg.

I am extremely thankful for the families that are willing to bring me into their homes and treat me as one of their own. Those bonds that will be formed are something that I am looking forward to. I have always wanted to experience and learn about the ways of agriculture in a foreign country. I believe that this experience will help me learn more, not only about just another culture, but about myself as an individual by challenging the ways I think and act.

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**ADAM BITTNER**  
*(Pennsylvania to Estonia & Argentina)*

**Current Status/Future Goals:** I am a junior studying Global Resource Systems and Spanish at Iowa State University, and am pursuing a career abroad after graduation.

I've always been globally focused, and love being presented with new challenges that push me outside my comfort zone. For over a year, I've been managing an international trading company based out of the United States and Algeria with two friends from college, and plan on using my IFYE experience to improve my soft skills and knowledge of Spanish language and customs. Overall, I really enjoy meeting people from different backgrounds and learning about their customs and traditions. The more diverse, the better.

**Previous International Experiences:** I am interested in sustainable agriculture practices as a means to combat climate change and have farmers spearhead innovations. In 2019, I embarked on a gap semester that took me to a remote 100,000-acre cattle ranch in the foothills of Northern Patagonia, Argentina. There, I learned about energy usage, sourcing much of my own food, bioremediation to safely dispose of human waste, and that the hardest decisions teach you the most.

**Your Ag-related experiences:** I grew up without an agricultural background but discovered my passion for farming in high school working on a small Black Angus cattle farm in York, Pennsylvania.

**How IFYE fits your goals:** As the world becomes increasingly globalized, it's important for our generation to be adaptable and prepared to tackle new obstacles. The connections that I will make during this exchange will expand my international network and give me lasting friendships. I'm confident that IFYE will give me the resources and skills required to set myself apart as an innovator and leader after college.

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KELSEY PHILLIPS
(Nebraska to Austria)

Current Status/Future Goals: I am currently a senior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln studying Animal Science.

Once I am finished with college, I hope to continue growing my beef cow herd and work with a major bull stud company traveling the world applying reproductive technologies to improve beef production efficiency.

I have had many opportunities to grow as a person and develop my leadership skills. I am passionate about sharing what life on a ranch is like with others who may have no rural connection and sharing my story. I've always valued the importance of giving back to others and love to volunteer in my community and participate in various philanthropies at the university.

Your Ag-related experiences: I grew up on a cow/calf operation in the heart of the Nebraska Sandhills. I have always had a passion for the beef industry and am thrilled to be given the chance to learn about agriculture outside of the United States. I have started my own beef cow herd and am a certified AI (artificial insemination) technician. I have my Beef Quality Assurance certification for both feedlot and cow/calf management as well as being certified in Pork Quality Assurance.

How IFYE fits your goals: Throughout high school and college, I have been involved in various activities and organizations that allowed me to travel across the United States, give me a new perspective on life, and spark my love for travel and adventure. As an IFYE representative, I hope to continue learning and embrace all the new challenges and experiences that come with living in a new country. Through my IFYE experience, I will gain new skills and relationships that will continue to fuel my passion and allow me to advocate for agriculture through a new perspective and better cultural understanding. I can't wait to begin this new journey and am so thankful for this opportunity!

I am looking forward to the opportunity to live in a new country, learn about the unique culture, and meet some extraordinary people. This program strives to promote peace through understanding, and I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to truly immerse myself into their livelihood and get a glimpse into the obstacles and successes that they encounter every day.

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**JANELLE HUENERS**  
*(Minnesota to Switzerland and India)*

**Current Status/Future Goals:** I am a senior studying Agricultural Education and Agricultural Communication and Marketing with a minor in Animal Science at the University of Minnesota. After graduation, I hope to become a high school agriculture teacher.

**Previous International Experiences:** In the summer of 2018, I had the opportunity to work abroad in Mexico, teaching youth of all ages in agricultural classes such as horseback riding, gardening, chickens and woodworking. This experience solidified the desire to explore agriculture on an international scale.

**Your Ag-related experiences:** I grew up on a hobby farm in Lindstrom, Minnesota where we raised everything from pigs and horses to goats and poultry. My experiences in 4-H and FFA helped me discover my love of agriculture and passion for sharing it with others. During college at the University of Minnesota, I served in leadership roles in the Agricultural Education Club, Gopher Poultry Science Club, Beta of Clovia Sorority, and the National Agri-Marketing Association.

**How IFYE fits your goals:** I see IFYE as a way for me to combine my love of agriculture with my desire to gain a broader international perspective. I am looking forward to traveling to Switzerland and India to learn about their agriculture and culture. I am also excited to share my experiences with others when I return.

I am excited to participate in IFYE in order to better myself personally and professionally. This program provides the unique opportunity to work and live in diverse agricultural landscapes that I can bring into my future classroom.

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KATHRYN SMITH
(Indiana to Slovenia)

Current Status/Future Goals: I am currently a Junior studying Agricultural Education at Purdue University with a minor in Crop Science. I am excited to hopefully participate in the IFYE 2021 international cultural exchange program. I plan to bring my knowledge from these experiences into my classroom one day.

I love to travel, learn about agriculture, and see other people’s lives and traditions. With these experiences, I hope to encourage my future students to take risks while also showing them other techniques in agriculture that other countries do.

Your Ag-related experiences: I grew up on a small family farm that raised Angus beef, dairy goats, and other small livestock. Throughout my high school career, I participated in FFA, especially competitions. Attending agricultural courses in high school helped me build my love for the industry and allowed me to see where I wanted to be in the future. My education led me to Purdue University to pursue an agricultural education degree so that I can continue learning about agriculture while teaching our future generations.

During my time at Purdue, I have been involved in a variety of organizations and clubs. I hold a leadership position in our Purdue FFA Alumni organization. Other ag-related organizations in which I am a member are the Indiana Association of Agricultural Educators (IAAE) and the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE). In addition, I am a member of the College of Education’s IGNITE program for high school students, as well as a member of Purdue Catholic Students and Purdue Catholic Women (PCW).

How IFYE fits your goals: Participating in IFYE will help me to broaden my horizons and bring my knowledge and traditions to another family while learning about their traditions. Having the opportunity to live and work with a host family will allow me to have the best type of cultural exchange anyone could ask for and with the new-found experiences I can grow in my agricultural perspective.

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**CARYN DAWSON**  
*Iowa to Austria and India*

**Current Status/Future Goals:** I study Global Resource Systems and Horticulture at Iowa State University. My overall career goal is to help smallholder farmers improve their practices and yield as well as enhance their livelihoods as farmers.

**Previous International Experiences:** Rotary to Argentina for 10 months (2016-2017), tourism and university travel course - two trips to Brazil (two weeks each in 2017 & 2018), university study abroad - four weeks to Rome in 2019

**How IFYE fits your goals:** I became interested in IFYE because the message of “Peace through Understanding” and IFYE’s value of the exchange of knowledge and culture align with my values as a person and a professional. I saw IFYE as being the right choice for me because it will help me build on my previous international experiences by allowing me an exposure of cultures I have not yet experienced. IFYE will help me grow as a global citizen and will contribute to my understanding of how the world works in relation to its resources and the importance of sustainable agriculture systems.

I hope to use this experience to give back to those who have helped me get to this point, those considering IFYE and other international opportunities and the people and farmers in the agriculture sector that continue to work to produce for their communities and families. My area of study and experiences, like IFYE, will help me work towards this goal by gaining first-hand experience of the challenges that farmers face today.

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TRACI ROSS
(Kansas to Sweden)

Current Status: I am a first-grade teacher in Wellington, Kansas.

Previous International Experiences: I have always loved traveling and learning about the world. When I was in college, I spent time in China and the Philippines working with children.

Your Ag-related experiences: I grew up in the country in western Kansas. My family has chickens, sheep, a dog, and four cats. My childhood experiences in 4-H helped me discover my love of traveling and desire to help others. In 4-H, I did a variety of projects from fiber arts to sheep. I have been blessed to be able to share my first-hand experiences with my students.

How IFYE fits your goals: Participating in IFYE will help me expand my students’ perspectives of the world. Having the chance to live and work with international host families will give me an incredible opportunity and a unique perspective on culture in other parts of the world.

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**ERIN HUCKINS**  
*(Illinois to Finland)*

**Current Status/Future Goals:** I am currently in my last semester as a senior at Iowa State University. I am enthralled about learning, whether it be in academics or in any area of life.

**Previous International Experiences:** In the summer of 2019, I was fortunate to study for six weeks in Uganda, Africa. This experience was very immersive; I visited family farms each week. Being welcomed into those families and their livelihoods sparked my passion for rural agriculture and the people that make it happen. While in Uganda, I was able to experience local food and activities, as well as create memories with new friends. I often share about the openness and welcoming nature of my friends in Uganda. This is something I cherish. I hope to expand those experiences and create indelible memories with the IFYE program.

**Your Ag-related experiences:** I grew up in northern Illinois in an area where agriculture and small family farms are at the center of the town’s values. Although I was surrounded by agriculture growing up, I was not involved in any related activities. I was first introduced to agricultural practices and their vastness while studying at Iowa State.

**How IFYE fits your goals:** I love learning about agriculture in different countries and cannot wait to experience it in Finland.

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Continued from page 9



MONAE WILMORE
(Maryland to Uruguay)

Current Status/Future Goals: I am a graduating senior at the University of Maryland. My major is Animal Science with a concentration in Animal Care and Management.

My future goals include either becoming a Maryland Extension Agent or nonprofit employee. I want people to interact with their food system beyond the grocery store shelves. I also want to advocate for socially disadvantaged farmers and populations because there is a direct link between food and health.

Your Ag-related experiences: I did not grow up in a traditional agricultural space; I was born in Baltimore. My love for livestock and food production began once I entered college. I was hooked after performing ultrasound on a pregnant ewe and milking a dairy heifer. This began my passion to become a voice for agriculture.

Misc: In my free time, I love to cuddle with my adorable pit bull, Stone.

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## Nebraskan uses IFYE skills on Governor’s Trade Mission

*Barbara Bierman Batie - (Nebraska to West Germany 1980)*

There’s a saying, “Once an IFYE, always an IFYE,” as the lessons and cultural skills learned during an IFYE experience can be applied in many areas throughout life. In addition, the urge to travel and explore are always on a former IFYE’s mind.



*The Nebraska delegation in the medieval city council chambers in the Rathaus (Town Hall) in Münster. I am on the far right. The wooden chambers seen here were hidden away during World War II and returned after the war. If not for creative thinking by the City Fathers, this beautiful woodwork would have been destroyed when the building was bombed and burned.*

### Governor’s Trade Mission

When the call went out last spring seeking individuals to join our Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts on a trade mission to Germany, I wasted no time in heading to the state’s economic development website to apply.

I soon received confirmation from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED), which was organizing the trade mission, that I would be part of the delegation. Three things were key in being selected. First, as an ag producer, I would be useful when visiting the agriculture manufacturing and agribusiness firms on the trade mission. Next, I have remained fairly fluent in German, a plus for this one-country stop and finally, since DED was seeking at least one journalist to report back on the trade my freelance experience allowed them to check off another need on their list.

Delegates on the November 9-16, 2019, mission included representatives from the Nebraska Departments of Economic Development, Environment and Energy, and Agriculture. The University of Nebraska, Nebraska Farm Bureau, Omaha Public Power District, Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, and several ag and manufacturing businesses were also represented. As the lone journalist, I did not have a sponsor as most of those going. This allowed me to offer stories to a number of news outlets.

This was the Governor’s second trade mission to the European Union (EU) in the last five years and his first to Germany. With Germany the largest economy in the EU, it was important to connect with business and government leaders.

My past experiences in Germany were helpful, not only with the language, but cultural aspects as well. Trade missions are not for the faint of heart. We kept a pace that rivaled anything I experienced as an IFYE. Our days began at 6 or 6:30 a.m. and often lasted until 9 or 10 at night. Since I was also sending stories back to various publications, I was often up until midnight.

### Visiting the past

Our trip started in Berlin on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. As we drove from Tegel Airport to our hotel, I realized our route was taking us into what had been East Berlin when I was an IFYE. Then, it was an area of limited access to Westerners; my fellow IFYEs and I only visited for one afternoon on special-day visas. The Westin where we were staying on this trade mission trip was on Friedrichstrasse, one of the main thoroughfares in pre-war Berlin but on the East Berlin side during the Cold War.

It was an eerie feeling to be able to walk on the broad street, Unter den Linden, to the Brandenburg Tor (Gate) from the east. A national symbol of peace and unity, the fact that one can now come and go at will through this gate shows how much has changed in the 40 years since I was an IFYE.

I had not been in Berlin for 35 years. The short two days there allowed me to meet a German cousin my age for the first time. My maternal grandfather immigrated to the United States in 1905 at age 17 and the rest of his family remained

in Germany. While I was able to keep in contact with some of my mother's cousins over the years, our contact with the East German side was minimal.

Enter the magic of Facebook. The daughter of one of my mother's cousins reached out four years ago while doing some genealogy research. Long story short, we were finally able to spend an afternoon together the day of my arrival.

### ***The Trade Mission Visits***

Ours was a large delegation of 25. We divided into two groups alternating the makeup to fit the needs of the day so we could use our time more efficiently. While the Governor visited with members of the German Bundestag the first day, the rest of us went to Magdeburg to visit economic development officials in the German state of Lower Saxony. Among the trade mission's other strategic stops were visits to the international headquarters of: [Graepel](#) in Loeningen, [CLAAS](#) in Harsewinkel, [Bayer](#) in Leverkusen, and [Evonik](#) in Essen. Graepel and CLAAS both have their North American headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska. Bayer has facilities in Gothenburg, Waco, York, Kearney, Beaver Crossing, Gretna and Omaha, Nebraska where they conduct everything from biotech research to detasseling. The Bayer officials appreciated the fact that this farmer had been to half of those Nebraska facilities.

Graepel manufactures perforated metals. Among their products are clean air intakes for CLAAS combines and John Deere tractors, as well as metal catwalks, stairways and steps, gratings, and platforms to name a few more products.

While it was a bit of "old home week" for me, the ability to bridge the language gap and share heartfelt thoughts in the native language was a definite diplomatic advantage. While touring the Graepel plant, I was with the Governor's entourage. Since the plant owners were conducting the tour for our group, I was able to ask for and was granted permission to take photos at will, which I was told isn't always the case for visitors.

At one point, the hosts whose English was excellent, were stumped when trying to explain where some metal steps shown on the assembly line would be used. I asked them what piece of equipment they would be put on. When they told me in German, I smiled. My time on German farms had paid off. I looked at the Governor and said, "They're steps for a manure spreader."

We all had a hearty laugh. During the rest of the tour, if Carlo and his brother were at a loss for an English translation, they would look at me and I gladly supplied the answer.

One of the best stops was at [Agritechnica](#), the world's largest agricultural trade fair. With exhibits spread throughout 28 buildings at The Messe in Hannover, it features 2,800 exhibitors and hosts 450,000 visitors from 130 countries. Our targeted agenda included visiting booths for Lemken, CLAAS, Fliegl, and Horsch ag products.

### ***Using free time to re-unite with IFYEs***

Once those visits were completed, we had some rare free time and I used my three hours to connect with a group of German IFYEs. In 2012, our family hosted Chiara Wagner from Germany. She, her father, and brother arranged to



*(L to R) Chiara Wagner, 2012 IFYE to Nebraska from Germany; Jean Lamplot Rustler, 1981 IFYE from Nebraska to West Germany, now living in Hatzenreuth, Germany; Barb Bierman Batie, 1980 IFYE from Nebraska to West Germany; Jürgen Borchers, IFYE from Germany to the United States and now a field salesman for Krone; and Edith Schröder, IFYE from Germany to the United States. The popular Game of Thrones series was used as a backdrop for the photo booth at the Krone farm exhibit.*

meet me. In 2018, my husband and I met Edith Schröder at the IFYE World Conference. A former German IFYE to the United States, she was able to join us, as well as Jean Lamplot Rustler and her son, Reinhard. Jean was a 1981 IFYE from Nebraska to Germany who fell in love with a host brother; in 1984, they were married and farm near Hatzenreuth, a small village on the German-Czech border.

During the rest of the afternoon, Edith had arranged for us to meet three other former IFYEs to the United States who were involved in the agriculture industry and were working at booths scattered around the vast Messe. All too soon it was time to say good-bye, but it was awesome to witness the continuing circle of IFYE friendship and hospitality.

### ***IFYEs for the future?***

There were any number of opportunities for our delegation to socialize and interact with our German counterparts. We were hosted at breakfast at Bayer and afternoon coffees at Graepel and Evonik. During an evening reception at the Industrie Club in Düsseldorf hosted by the Nebraskans, we were able to visit with and thank a host of German companies in North Rhine Westphalia for their interest in Nebraska.

It was here I was able to make contact with two different industry heads who had younger children. My ability to converse fluently in German piqued their interest and I was able to tell them about the IFYE program. Both individuals felt this program, with its emphasis on cultural immersion, was one worth looking into. Although their children are still pre-teens, we have been in contact. They want to continue the discussion for when those future IFYEs will be eligible to participate.

So, no matter where life takes you, as IFYEs always, always take advantage of opportunities to spread "Peace through Understanding." This trip was proof that the IFYE circle of friendship never ends.



IFYE Alumni who attended a gathering at the Olive Mill in Queen Creek, Arizona on February 15, 2020. Besides renewing friendships, they learned about olive production.

Attendees included (L to R): Bev Ferris Hain (India 1967), Keith Ferris (New Zealand 1969), Ron Eustice (Uruguay 1967), Margaret McAndrews Eustice (Uganda 1970), Dale Yonker (Turkey 1963), and Bonnie Schieman Burnson (Uruguay 1967). SPIFYEs Crystal Yonker and Pam Ferris also attended.

## In Memoriam

The passing of the following individuals has come to our attention since publication of the IFYE NEWS (Fall/Winter 2019).

**Anne (Beaver) Bowman** (Pennsylvania to Paraguay 1965) August 28, 2018

**Betty L (Morgan) Bruce** (Connecticut to Denmark 1961) March 13, 2020 (LM)  
**Barbara (Jacobs) Earley** (Colorado to Philippines 1967) September 16, 2019 (LM)  
**Kenneth R Hill** (Oregon to Norway 1953) March 31, 2019  
**Marian (Pike) Huey** (Michigan to Norway 1955) April 22, 2020 (LM)  
**Charles A Leist** (Maryland - Travel Seminar to Denmark/Sweden 1984) March 3, 2019  
**Thomas I Maast (Maust) II** (Pennsylvania to Finland 1975) March 7, 2020 (LM)  
**Pamela Neilson** (Utah Travel Seminar 1984) December 3, 2018  
**Earl Peace** (Montana to Austria 1950) November 18, 2019 (LM)  
**W Francis Pressly** (N Carolina to Italy 1951) November 16, 2019 (LM)  
**John R Reynolds** (California to Ireland 1957) September 22, 2019  
**L Pablo Stone** (Host Family North Carolina) November 14, 2019  
**Orville E Vorhis** (Missouri to Germany 1965) December 28, 2017  
**Marilyn J (Mowry) Walck** (Wyoming to Belgium/Luxembourg 1951) May 16, 2017  
**Paul Waugh** (SPIFYE) January 26, 2019 (LM)  
**Robert B Welby** (Friend of IFYE) May 16, 2019 (LM)  
**David S Wilson** (Oregon to Jamaica 1982) August 12, 2019

**Neva Wing** (Friend of IFYE) April 16, 2011

LM = Life Member

SPIFYE = Spouse of IFYE



## Digital Media Committee seeks Photos and Descriptions

The Digital Media committee is looking for pictures from IFYE alumni regarding their IFYE experience, USA conference(s), European conference(s) or World conference(s). Please include a brief description of where and when the picture was taken.

If your pictures aren't digital, no problem! You can scan them into a computer and then email to us or take a picture of your picture with a digital camera or your phone and then email it to us. These pictures and stories will be used on Facebook and Instagram to promote the IFYE program by showing some of the awesome adventures we've had.

Please send your pictures with a brief description to [ifye-usaDM@gmail.com](mailto:ifye-usaDM@gmail.com). If you are on Facebook, let us know and we will tag you in your pictures!

The following is a breakdown on what social media programs our Digital Media Committee currently uses and how to reach us through these programs.

Please find us on any of these digital social media platforms and like our page on Facebook, or find us in the search box and follow us on Instagram and Twitter. (NOTE: If you are on the IFYE USA homepage ([ifyeusa.org](http://ifyeusa.org)), you will find the icon for each of these at the bottom of that page. You can also enter that way for logging in to your account or creating an account.)



**Facebook (FB) = IFYE USA**

Facebook allows for longer posts or comments, multiple photos and is our widest sharing platform worldwide with 900 followers.



**Instagram (IG) = @ifyeusa**

Instagram, is used for more pictorial or short and brief posts of photos or videos. Usually we post 6 or fewer photos with captions in a post. Our IG has 151 followers currently.



**Twitter = @IFYEUSA**

Our newest platform is on Twitter. We are so new on this platform that we have 7 followers! Twitter is typically a short commentary-style platform, only allowing up to 280 characters or 1-2 photos or videos.



**IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.**  
*Peace Through Understanding*

Please check the appropriate box(es) for the support you wish to provide to the IFYE Association. Return the form and completed action(s) that you have selected to: **Pat Hutsell; 3670 N Bayou Hill Rd, Parker, CO 80134-5111**

**PLEASE COMPLETE:**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOME PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_ **CELL PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to support IFYE in 2020 with the following:  \$5,000  \$2,500

\$1,000  \$750  \$500  \$250  Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I wish to support IFYE with an annual Membership fee. \$30 for 2020 annual membership**

- If you are a **life member**, you will always be a life member and do not need to pay the \$30 annual Membership.
- **ALL life and annual members** have access to the Member area on the website.
- You can be a member with your \$30 annual membership only, but all contributions (by non-life members) above \$30 membership will count as a general donation.

I wish to become a **Life member** \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 paid in one sum \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 paid over each of the next five years

Enclosed is \$20 for the postal mailing of two IFYE NEWS and eight issues of the IFYE UPDATE published during 2020.

**PAYMENT METHOD**

I have enclosed my check # \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to "IFYE Association of the USA".

I would like to pay the above amount on a payment schedule. Please contact me. Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Please charge my credit card:** MC\_ \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_ Discover \_\_\_\_\_ Amex \_\_\_\_\_ **AMOUNT \$** \_\_\_\_\_

CARD NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

I will pay online at <http://ifyeusa.org>

Please send me (by email) access information to the IFYE website "Paid Membership area".

**My email address is:** \_\_\_\_\_

I am unable to financially support IFYE at this time. Please discreetly remove me from the *contact for donation* list.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT of IFYE**

01/2020

The IFYE Association of the USA, Inc. shall make its services, facilities, and programs available to all persons regardless of race, color, creed, gender, gender variance, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin, and the Association shall not in any way discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, gender variance, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or national origin.

<http://ifyeusa.org>

## Survey Coming Your Way – Help Needed

At the 2019 IFYE Conference in Lexington, we talked to those attending about having them participate in a survey requesting their contacts in the fields of agriculture, agri-business, commodities, education, and local, state and national elected officials. We will use this information to build a database that will help support the IFYE program.

That survey will soon be sent via email to those who attended the Kentucky Conference. A cover letter will accompany it and will have links to the survey as well as to the new Marketing Toolkit (*See page 3 for more details.*) that is under the Member Portal of the IFYE website.

We thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. If you were not able to participate in last year's conference in Kentucky, and would like to add information for IFYE to use, please send an email to me at [carolynsh7480@gmail.com](mailto:carolynsh7480@gmail.com), or Ken Gordon at [kgordon@ifyeusa.org](mailto:kgordon@ifyeusa.org) to have a survey sent to you.

Carolyn S. Hansen, Chair  
Program Development Committee

IFYE Association of the USA, Inc.  
PO Box 216  
Williamsburg, MA 01096

POSTAGE

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Moving? New 911 Address?**  
Send mailing label corrections to IFYE NEWS (return address above) OR  
[vwarner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vwarner@sbcglobal.net)



Visit: <http://ifyeusa.org>

## 2020 IFYE National Conference Early Bird Deadline Extended



Midst today's world virus concerns, the Missouri IFYE alumni are proceeding with plans for the 2020 National IFYE Conference (September 10-13). As this is being written, the Governor of Missouri has indicated a reopening of businesses will begin May 4. Branson, however, has established a beginning date of May 15.

The early-bird registration has been extended to **June 15** by the IFYE Association Board of Directors in a meeting on April 19. **Vicky Warren (IFYE USA Association Board President and Missouri Conference Planning Committee Member)** assures us that, if the conference must be cancelled due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), full refunds will be given to all those who registered.

To register, go to (<https://ifyeusa.org/news-events/2020-national-ifye-conference-registration.html>)

Some reminders and requests for help are listed below.

- Conferees are reminded that donations of hygiene products along with cool weather socks, hats and gloves will be collected and delivered to the Elevate Branson mission.
- Alumni-donated auction items will support the IFYE exchange programs.
- Cleo Kottwitz ([cdk13@socket.net](mailto:cdk13@socket.net)) wants to hear from those familiar with world religions for assistance with Sunday's Interfaith service.
- Those choosing to fly into Branson ([flyBranson.com](http://flyBranson.com)) from Denver with Frontier Airlines will find fall flights on Mondays and Fridays. Other air choices include Springfield (50 miles), Kansas City and St. Louis (both 4 hours), Boone County (Harrison, AR - 35 miles) and NW Arkansas (Bentonville - 90 miles).

Faye Worley and Delbert Frericks, Conference Co-Chairs