

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **NAME**

I am currently a German Studies and xxx double major at Colby College in Waterville, Maine, but I hail from a small town in xxx. From the very beginning, my parents have exerted the greatest influence over my intellectual development. Both hold college degrees, and books litter our home. Love for language and the written word has always been one of the strongest connections between me and my parents. Even though we know it is considered socially inappropriate, we almost always read at the table, and novels or newspapers are the most common items on the menu.

In addition to the fortune of having such an academically supportive family, I was also lucky enough to go through an excellent public school system before coming to Colby and attended a middle school that allowed me to begin learning German in the seventh grade. I then had many wonderful teachers in high school, but Frau XXX, my German teacher for four years, still stands out in my mind above the rest. She was fair, grounded, and patient, and I owe much of the success I have experienced as a student of German in college to her teaching. Frau XXX was also the first person to introduce me to Germanic culture. Every year she organized a one month exchange program to a Gymnasium in XXX through her own personal contacts and of her own accord. I had such a great experience living with a host family and making close German friends that I decided years before graduating high school that I wanted to become a German major in college.

I can vividly remember a particular day trip to XXX. While my fellow students sat at a nearby waffle stand, I proved unable to pull myself away from the ruins. I climbed every tower and walked through every archway, tracing the crumbling stone with my fingertips. I knew then that I wanted to live in Germany someday because I wanted to learn more about the people whose history still lingered in the air and whose villages dotted an ancient landscape of green forests and farmlands. From September of xxx to August of xxx, I realized my dream by becoming a student in xxx, Germany. As fulfilling as my year in xxx was, the city's sprawl made me yearn for more intimate interaction with the German-speaking populace.

It is my understanding that many recipients of an Austrian Fulbright award teach in smaller localities, an opportunity I would relish. Living in a smaller setting will allow me to interact on a more personal level with members of the German-speaking community, and I can think of no person more crucial to or involved in a town than a teacher. In my role as a volunteer tour guide for my college, I act as a teacher on a weekly basis. I love the thrill of

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communicating knowledge to other people and watching my enthusiasm for Colby reflected in their eyes. As a teaching assistant in Austria, I look forward to being able to engage the students in discussions about American culture, perhaps presenting them with viewpoints they have never encountered before. In turn, I hope to learn much more about Austrian culture, which heretofore I have experienced primarily through literature. If permitted, I will keep a public blog on my experiences as a resident of Austria so that anyone interested can learn what it is like to live in an Austrian community through my daily offerings of prose, photographs, and even video.

During high school, I briefly worked as a tutor through the National Honor Society and found that the role of teacher came naturally to me. I have always had a gift for syntax, and I discovered that I really enjoy explaining language. My enthusiasm must show, since even the advanced students of German on my study abroad program came to me for the clarification of grammatical concepts. In college, I am acquiring further experience in constructive criticism from taking creative writing classes. I love being able to help other students improve on their work, and the workshops for my fiction and poetry courses have taught me to do so in a precise, yet positive manner.

When I return to the states after completing my teaching assistantship, I plan on attending graduate school to pursue a Ph.D. in XXX. I have already been accepted by XXX XXX program and hope to one day become a professor. I believe that my participation in the Austrian Fulbright Program will hone my skills as an educator, enabling me to better communicate my enthusiasm for a subject in such a way that captures the interest and imagination of my listeners, while at the same time allowing me to gain firsthand experience with one of the Germanic cultures I will be studying for many years to come.