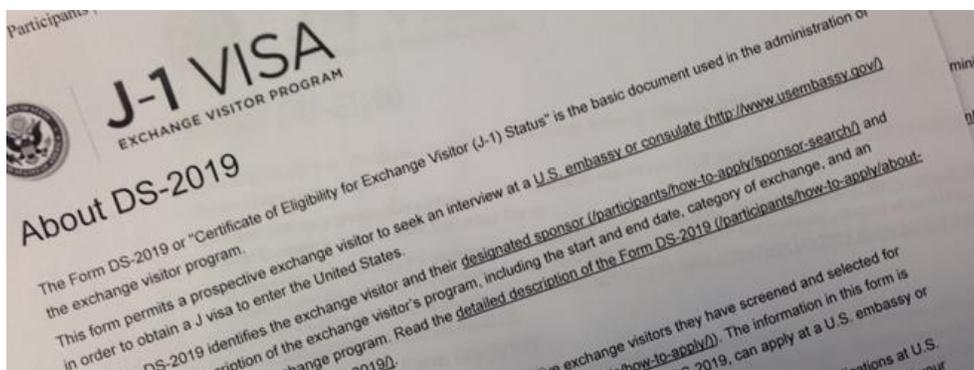


Report – Internship in Indianapolis, USA

Pre-organization - Visa

After I had my interviews with the company I was interning for (almost six months in advance), I had to find a suitable sponsor company. This sponsor company is very important and necessary for getting your visa or, to say it in another way, to get the essential forms which you need for the visa application. The visa that I needed for a six-month, paid internship is called *J1 Visa*.

I started to inform myself about different program sponsors. I ended up with *Intrax*. I compared it with other sponsors but costs and service were the best at *Intrax*. Therefore, I applied at *Intrax*. They have different requirements you must meet. For instance, you need a resume, speak English at an advanced level and have an internship offer from a U.S. host company. After I applied successfully at *Intrax*, they helped me to get the very important *DS-2019 form* as well as other documents which I needed for the embassy and finally for my *J1 Visa*. The main U.S. embassy is located in Frankfurt am Main. I went there and received my *J1 Visa*. They have very strict regulation at the embassy. For example, you are not allowed to bring a backpack, bag, purse, or electronic devices. Therefore, the best way is to bring only the documents which you need for the *J1* application and nothing else! Aside, the ongoing support of *Intrax* was awesome. I never had troubles or difficulties with them during the whole time. I always felt well looked after at *Intrax*. Thus, I can highly recommend *Intrax* as a program sponsor. Do not forget that the sponsor program did not include a health insurance. They recommend you some, but in the end, you must organize and pay it additionally by yourself. In total, I paid \$1,200 for the program plus the insurance which I took out with *ADAC*.



My home for the next 6 months – Indianapolis, Indiana

Indianapolis is the capital and largest city of the U.S. state Indiana and is in the heart of the Midwest. Around 855,000 inhabitants live there and the city is growing and growing. *Indy* as the people in Indianapolis call their city is famous for the *Indianapolis 500* which is an automobile race held annually at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

The city is divided in six main cultural districts. This include Broad Ripple Village, Canal and White River State Park, Fountain Square, Indiana Avenue, Mass Ave, and Wholesale. All of these neighborhoods have their own flair, atmosphere and cultural institutions. The clustering of



different neighborhoods was designated in 1999. Besides that, *Indy* has multiple museums, theaters, and the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. *Indy* offers a varied range of cultural, social and sports events. The most popular sports are baseball, basketball and for sure football! The *Colts* are *Indy's* national football team. The home of *Colts* is the Lucas Oil Stadium which is right in downtown and was built in 2005. The stadium also hosted Super Bowl XLVI in 2012. It has a capacity of approx. 70,000 visitors.



Organization of housing

I had already started searching for housing when I was in Germany. I wanted to be sure that I had a room or apartment in Indianapolis before I arrived. I was searching on different internet platforms like craigslist.com or roommates.com. It turned out that it was difficult to find a room close to downtown with nice people at an affordable price. However, these requirements were important for me. First, I wanted to have roommates because it is much easier getting to know new people. Moreover, you have the chance to discover foreign cultures more intensively if you are living together with local people. Second, Indianapolis has a poor public transportation system. That means if you live outside of Indianapolis it is hard to get from one place to another without a car. Therefore, it was very important for me to find a room within the center. Last, I had a certain price limit which I would not exceed.

After a long research on the internet without finding the right housing for me I decided to write an email to my host company and asked if somebody in the office knows someone who has a free room for six months. Luckily, it worked out well and I got a contact from one of the employees from my host company. Once we skyped and texted to get to know each other better my roommates agreed. They were three local people from Indianapolis with the same age and interests as me. The house was only 2 miles from my office, brand new, furnished and I only paid \$500 per month including utilities. It was perfect!



My host company – Miebach Consulting Inc.

Miebach Consulting is an international company offering consulting and engineering services in the field of supply chain and logistics. The service portfolio of Miebach Consulting includes design and implementation of: Supply Chain Structures, Material Handling Engineering, Information Processes and People & Organization related initiatives. Founded in 1973, in Frankfurt, Germany by Dr. Joachim Miebach, the company commands a leadership position in supply chain & logistics consulting, in Asia, Europe, North and South America. The Indianapolis office is the biggest in North America and consists of 25 employees.

During my internship at Miebach I had the possibility to support and be an active team member of several supply chain and logistics consulting projects in various industries. One of my projects I worked on a network optimization project for a large grocery chain in the western U.S. I was responsible for data consolidation, data analysis, preparation of presentations as well as the organization of weekly calls with the client. Moreover, I traveled to the client in California for a kick-off meeting with my project team. It was great that Miebach enabled me the chance to travel to multiple clients within the U.S. and offered me the possibility to be a part of the project team in meetings on-site. Besides project work and traveling, I also developed a Microsoft Excel database that clearly cataloged and structured pertinent suppliers as well as project references data. All projects made extensive use of Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Access.

Overall, the skills and knowledge I gained at Miebach were very beneficial and helpful for my professional career as well as for my personal life. I was not only able to earn professional skills I also learned a lot about a different culture, working environment and working behavior. I have really enjoyed the American management and leading structure: flat hierarchies, direct communication and for sure no complications regarding '*siezen*' and '*duzen*'. You always say '*you*' and the first name. For me personally, it makes working so much easier and less complicated. Another matter I liked at Miebach was the strong team work, professional as well as private. We went out often on Fridays after work for some drinks. Furthermore, we had a

great Christmas Party with the whole North American office where all the new employees (including me) had to prepare a little game/ show for the others. It was very fun.

Actually, I have only had good experiences with Miebach. I always felt welcome and was well received by the whole team. Therefore, the internship has improved and met all my expectations.

I could also improve my language skills in English. Especially, calls and meetings with clients, writing of documents and emails as well as conversations during my daily life where everything around me was in English, helped me to expand my vocabulary and strengthen my grammar. Now, I am also able to understand various accents from different regions within the U.S. Of course, it is necessary to have already an advanced level in English, even though Miebach Consulting is a German company almost everyone in the office was American and spoke English.

Living in the U.S.

It is known that living in a foreign country is different than living in your home country. For sure the U.S. is not a completely different world in comparison to Europe. However, there are a few differences I would like to point out.

Do you think Germany is bureaucratic? Then you have never been in the U.S. As I mentioned at the beginning, the visa and program sponsor applications were a lot of paper work. Arriving in the U.S., you must continue by applying for a *Social Security Number* which allows you to work and earn salary in the U.S. It is not complicated but it is again a great deal of paperwork. Not only for you also for your host company. However, it is worthwhile. Once you set up all paper work, applications and for sure an American bank account everything has been really smooth and in my case without complications.

Another thing that gives you much more flexibility are the open hours of groceries, stores, malls, restaurants, and cafes which are open seven days a week. And that is definitely something I will miss in Germany. Many stores and groceries are also opened after 10 PM. Furthermore, driving a car is so much cheaper in the U.S. than in Germany. You pay approx.

\$1.95 per gallon. One gallon is 3.78 liters. Therefore, we are paying three times more for fuel in Germany than in the U.S.!

Most parts of the U.S. except for huge cities such as New York City, Chicago or San Francisco have a very poor public transportation system. At this point I realized what a great transportation system and infrastructure we have in Germany. For instance, Indianapolis which has more than 850,000 inhabitants does not have a train or subway system within the city. There are only buses which are definitely not the best. But – the greatest of the U.S. transportation is *Uber* which is a big tech company and specialized in transportation services. Instead of taxis which are hardly ever available *Uber* is absolute market leader and available almost everywhere in the U.S. You download the App on your cell phone, enter your payment methods and that is it. If you need a ride you open the App (your current location is already known through the App) and type in your destination address. The *Uber* App will process the payment. It is a great system which unfortunately is not allowed in Germany.

All in all, the experiences I gained in the U.S. were amazing and interesting at the same time. Starting with my housing and my awesome roommates who have shown me many things in Indianapolis and with those I spent a lot of my leisure time as well as discovered American culture and cities. Up to my working experiences and travels - I did before, during and after my internship - which extended my horizon and my view of the U.S.

The U.S. is a huge, diverse, interesting and self-confident country with very polite, easy going and communicative people. I can highly recommend an abroad working experience in a city like Indianapolis. It is not that famous or huge, less touristic and you are feeling more to be a part of a real American city/ community. The Midwest area was the perfect location for such an experience.

