

Augustin Michel

On Saturday, June 23rd, I left Montpellier at 4am to go to Berlin for a volunteer week organized by the AWC of Berlin. We were a total of 12 teens from everywhere in Europe and the USA. This trip gave me the opportunity to help people, learn about German history and meet new friends and discover their cultures.

This week was actually the first time I volunteered to help people. We volunteered at many different places, from churches to the Ronald McDonald House. We volunteered with an organization called Serve the City. Christina, the person who engaged us in the volunteering events during the week, was very inspiring because she helped people just to help. This showed me that I can help people without expecting something in return.

Over the week, I had the opportunity to learn about German history. The first day we had a tour with Martin through Berlin. As we walked through the city, he showed us different landmarks pointing out their influence and significance that they have had on the city. We also heard from a Holocaust survivor. She told us about her life and the things that she faced and endured. The Graffiti Tour permitted a different perspective of German history, an artistic one. The DDR Museum (along with the Walking Tour) was definitely my favorite way to learn about German history. The museum was interactive, so it made it easier to understand.

During this trip, I met new people and experienced new cultures through food and music. The first meal, I started by tasting food from my host family's roots. Throughout the week we ate food from different countries. One night we even

heard Arab music while cooking Lebanese food. We were all from different places so it was cool to here about how it is in other countries.

The highlight of the week for me was when we went to the American Church to give food to people. It was amazing to see how some people were so grateful to be given a box of strawberries. Some people did not seem needy because of the clothes that they wore, but that just shows that we don't actually know what is happening is everybody's life.

This week also showed me how proud I am of my roots. I am proud of Lebanon, because I saw people actually enjoying Lebanese food. I am proud of France because I was there during the World Cup and we were the best. I am proud of my US heritage because I saw with the AWC how Americans like to help others.

Overall, this week was a first for me, a first volunteering and a first discovering so many cultures at once. This week permitted me to see things in a new light. I felt like I was part of something that was making a difference.