

SUPPLEMENT: CAMPUS WITHOUT BORDERS

Photo: Babette Spohnheuer



CAPS IN THE AIR!

Caps in the air and a broad smile on their faces: this is what real joy looks like. Still, the Afghan graduates in the RUB Master's degree programme "Management and Economics" had been assigned a concrete and serious task. They are supposed to establish Bachelor's degree programmes in economics at their universities at home. Having completed their degree in the last semester, the twenty-six men and two women from Afghanistan met at the graduation ceremony at the end of September. The English-language Master's degree programme is provided by the Faculty of Management & Economics in collaboration with the Institute of Development Research and Development Policy (IEE) and is financed by the Ministry of Higher Education in Afghanistan and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

"We are grateful and happy that we had the chance to study at one of the best universities in Europe. We will never forget our time at the RUB. Now, we are about to embark on a new stage of life," says Kawoon Azizi. He is one of the 28 graduates honoured at the graduation ceremony by Prof Obaidullah Obaid, the Afghan Minister for Higher Education, Dr Philipp Ackermann, Head of the Task Force Afghanistan-Pakistan at the Foreign Office, and Dr Dorothea Rüländ, Secretary General at the DAAD. "In 2005, the programme was a wishful thought on the whiteboard. Today, we have 91 participants and alumni," says Prof Wilhelm Löwenstein, Vice-Rector Planning, Structure and Finance and Managing Director of the IEE.

Following the celebration, the "Towers of Knowledge" collection returned to Bochum – an exhibition of photos documenting the historical development of Afghanistan: due to the turmoil of the last 30 years, due to destruction, plundering and people fleeing into exile, the knowledge of Afghanistan's history and development has to a great extent been lost among the younger generation of Afghans. 11,000 schools throughout the country respectively host one part of the five-part exhibition that features photos focusing on the identity and history of Afghanistan from 1747 to 1873. The exhibition, which had taken place in Bochum to mark the first graduation ceremony of Afghan students, has now returned.

Tabea Steinbauer

ON SPEAKING TERMS WITH OTHER CULTURES

The LSI celebrates its 40th anniversary

The very first Russian language course was offered at the LSI-Russicum in 1973. Since then, the Landesspracheninstitut (LSI) at the RUB has helped more than 40,000 people acquire the necessary language skills to live and work abroad. On the 30th of September, the institute commemorated "40 years of LSI" with an anniversary celebration.

"Intercultural understanding". The German language has coined the perfect term for this phenomenon: "Völker-Verständigung" – literally "understanding between peoples" – describes the state of being on speaking terms with other nations, linguistically and culturally. Motivated by more than just higher education-related considerations, the wish to achieve intercultural understanding was the driving force behind the inception of the LSI in Bochum 40 years ago. Founded by Johannes Rau, the then-Minister of Science and later Federal President of Germany, under the name of "Lehrinstitut für die russische Sprache" (Teaching Institute for the Russian Language), the Russicum was the first institute and thus the direct precursor of the LSI. It had dedicated itself to communicating Russian language skills that would be applicable in practice. A child of the policy of détente at a time when it was nigh impossible to actively acquire and apply Russian and to interact with people in the then Soviet Union, the Russicum constituted a unique island. In it, people from all walks of life – from diplomats and business executives to students – gained the necessary linguistic know-how that would enable them to live and work in the USSR. Today, the Russicum's alumni circle boasts 17,000 members. In the 1980s, similar institutes for Chinese, Japanese and Arabic were established, all which were eventually incorporated into the Landesspracheninstitut in 1993. Since 2007, the LSI has been part of



Rector Prof Elmar Weiler retires Dr Jochen Pleines, LSI director of many years (on the left), and welcomes the new executive director Dr Klaus Waschik (on the right) on board

the Ruhr-Universität, where it constitutes a central building block for contemporary, highly-efficient language teaching by providing immersion courses and is one of the main pillars underpinning the RUB's international profile.

The anniversary celebration on the 30th of September was frequented by many high-profile visitors, among them Vladimir Grinin, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Germany, and Dr Ernst-Jörg von Studnitz, Chairman of the German-Russian forum "Deutsch-Russisches Forum e.V." and former German ambassador in Moscow. Helmut Dockter, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Science in North Rhine-Westphalia, Carina Gödecke, President of the Landtag in North Rhine-Westphalia, senior representatives of the European Space Agency ESA (the LSI provides routinely Russian lessons to astronauts) and many distinguished German and international politicians as well as business and media executives likewise took part in the celebration that was housed on the Institute's premises.

Tradition and innovation: these two keywords characterise the LSI today, and the Institute is now focusing on the field of new media and learning technologies. Its plans for the future are reflected in the recent managerial changes: Dr Jochen Pleines retires from his post as executive director after 22 years. The vacancy is filled by Dr Dr h.c. Klaus Waschik, to date managing director at the Lotman Institute for Russian Culture at the RUB and, between 2002 and 2005, the representative of the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia responsible for science and high education-exchange with the Russian Federation. Waschik also heads the coordination office of the University Alliance Metropolis Ruhr (UAMR) in Moscow, which has dedicated itself to promoting academia and research exchange between the three universities of the Ruhr Area (TU Dortmund, RUB, University of Duisburg-Essen) and Russia. Jens Wylkop

Information: www.lsi-bochum.de

Photo: Tobias Schindelen

Photo: Spohnheuer

FINISH YOUR STUDIES IN FOREIGN LANDS

A new trend: writing your final thesis abroad

Studying abroad? Has long become standard. Internship abroad? Nothing unusual, either. Writing one's bachelor or master thesis abroad, however, and spending up to six months in Chile or Russia for that purpose – that is (still) something out of the ordinary. Stefania Parnici interviewed four RUB students who are doing exactly that. She asked them the following three questions: (1) What gave you the idea of writing your final thesis abroad? (2) Which aspects about your stay abroad did you find particularly exciting, which ones did you find difficult? (3) What does that mean for you and your future?

Eva (Master International Humanitarian Action) is writing her master thesis on "Women working in humanitarian assistance – a study on factors that support and hinder women taking leadership roles within UN agencies" at the Columbia University in New York (three months).

(1) Following the Erasmus Mundus programme, an exchange has been established between our Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict and the School of International and Public Affairs at the Columbia University. Considering the subject matter of my thesis, spending some time abroad was the logical choice. I had previ-



In the centre of society: Sandra with the students of a village school in the Atacama Desert

views and personal observations in addition to literary analysis. The American research method of approaching a subject through interviews has appealed to me a lot. I wholeheartedly recommend writing the final thesis abroad, as it enhances the depth of content and ensures a broader perspective. Moreover, it may have surprising results: I was offered an internship at the UN.

Sandra (Master of Education Mathematics, Spanish and German as Second Language/Intercultural Pedagogics as additional qualification) is writing her master thesis

taught in some "desert schools". I had previous experiences with exchange programmes abroad: I spent six months at a university in Mexico and did a five-month internship at a German school in Chile.

(2) As I was already familiar with the country and its people, I had no problems to settle in. Still, travelling across a distance of 100 km in the desert in order to visit small provincial schools and indigenous villages with a population of perhaps some 50 people was an entirely new experience. The villages were difficult to get to, and transport and the organisation of the visits were complicated. What I did like a lot was the assistance on the part of the university. My guest lecturer took good care of me, we met up almost every week to discuss the progress of my thesis. The lecturer's discipline was sociology, he was able to give me useful advice and bibliography lists regarding empirical research that my Master of Education degree had not provided.

(3) I think its significance for me is purely personal. Visiting village schools with six students and one teacher, located 100 km from the next large village, was a unique experience.

Ibrahim (Master IT Security/Information Technology) wrote his master thesis "Hardware/Software-Codesign for Lattice-Based Cryptography on Reconfigurable Hardware" at the Southern Federal University in Taganrog, Russia. He organised his five-month residence himself.

(1) I've always wanted to visit Russia, because I find the language and culture very interesting. A fellow student of mine, who spent one semester in Australia, suggested I'd write my final thesis in Russia.

(2) My first impressions were just what I'd expected. I soon realised that language presented no barrier: I was able to communicate with others in Russian or in English or in a mix of both. However, I encountered several problems, especially with the bureaucracy. Enrolling at the host university took more than two months. The tutors can't be commended, either, since information exchange with my tutor was almost non-existent – with the exception of a few lectures. I had to solve problems by communicating by email with the tutors in Germany, which slowed me down considerably.

(3) I have improved my Russian language skills, of course. Unfortunately, I can't yet tell whether my residence abroad will be in any way relevant for my future career. Based on my experience, I can recommend writing one's thesis abroad only if the collaboration with the host university is well established – in the best-case scenario, it should be one



Skyline included: Eva is writing her master thesis in New York

ously spent a year at a US high school and one semester in Spain.

(2) I love how open and hospitable Americans are. It wasn't hard to feel at home there, and I made some great friends. Moreover, Americans are excellent networkers, which helped me with my research and opened several doors that would have otherwise remained closed.

(3) I am very grateful that I had the chance to write my final thesis in close vicinity to my research field – the United Nations. My thesis has certainly benefited from it, as I was able to include numerous inter-

"La educación intercultural bilingüe en la región de Antofagasta" in Chile. She will spend four and a half months at the Universidad Católica del Norte Antofagasta, one of the RUB's partner universities.

(1) My bachelor thesis dealt with bilingual schooling in Paraguay. Since this subject matter can be researched with regard to many different countries and languages, I came up with the idea of investigating what it is like in the north of Chile. There, Kunza (unlike Guauraní in Paraguay) is actually a dead language; however, in order to promote indigenous cultures, it is still being



East-South-East: Ibrahim in Taganrog in south Russia

FUNDING OF EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES

Students who wish to write their bachelor or master thesis abroad may apply for financial support through grant programmes such as PROMOS. The programme is backed by the DAAD and finances residences abroad with partial scholarships and travel allowances. "You can apply for financial backing for a period of up to six months, both in and outside Europe," explains Uta Baier, the liaison officer in the International

Office responsible for handling applications of RUB students wishing to spend time abroad. "Often, it is students who had already been abroad and have established contacts at a university in another country who are interested." Students who had never before been abroad benefit from a residence abroad, too: "Once you work full time, going abroad will become much more difficult," says Uta Baier. "There are other rea-

sons why this form of academic exchange is so attractive: you will improve your foreign language proficiency and may gain access to a global job."

Finding a tutor at the RUB is the first concrete step that interested students have to take: "This is most relevant, and often, it is the teachers who suggest you should write your thesis abroad, because they have contacts to colleagues or because writing



Photo: International Office

Uta Baier (International Office) assists RUB students who wish to go abroad

of the RUB's partner universities – and only if you can be sure you will be taken good care of once there. I consider this factor to be the most important one.

Stephan (Master Mechanical Engineering) wrote his master thesis "Modeling the coupled evolution of phase fractions and plastic strains in shape memory alloys based on probabilistic concepts" in Berkeley. He organised his residence (four months) himself.

(1) I've long wished to go abroad. I wanted to free myself from the daily routine in Germany and to try out another way of life, meet new people. I'd never before spent such a long time abroad, and it was the first time I travelled to the USA – a country I'd always been interested in.

(2) The first unforgettable impression was the journey from the San Francisco Air-

I loved how friendly and open the people were, and I loved the infrastructure: everything is bigger, mightier and more interesting than what you are used to. I didn't really encounter any problems. I very much enjoyed the new situation at the university, the interaction with my professor and with other members of staff. The only drawback was that I didn't receive quite as much support as I'd had in Germany.

(3) I'd certainly recommend writing the final thesis abroad. I even regret not having done so with my bachelor thesis. As an engineer, it proves useful for my future career: I now find it easier to speak English. My experience has clearly shown that, having spent a period of time abroad, you will be able to face new challenges and to adjust to new surroundings and new conditions. The trip has also helped me along on a personal level: in the USA, I met many people



A green oasis: Stephan in front of the University of California

port to Berkeley: on the huge highways, past skyscrapers and across the giant Bay Bridge with a fantastic view across the Bay Area.

from different nations and cultures all over the world. I am now much more open when meeting strangers.

the thesis abroad makes sense considering the subject matter. The tutor abroad plays a crucial part, as he or she provides a job and may help to gain access to labs and libraries. This is very important, because the tutor is your contact person abroad." The International Office helps students prepare for their residence abroad – starting six months prior to leaving for the respective country – and provides information about additional

funding programmes that are available for the host country.

Last but not least, Uta Baier advises not to shy away from the project one wishes to embark upon. "It is very important to have the courage to try, to apply for a grant programme. Many students think it's not worth trying. I can only advise everyone to give it a go." Stefania Parnici

Info: <http://international.rub.de>

EXPLORING MY ROOTS

Erika Niino's first days at Osaka University

RUBENS international presents the partner universities of the RUB in loose order. This time, it features the University of Osaka. The university is introduced to us first-hand: Erika Niino has been in Japan since September and is going to stay there for one year. The 24-year-old studies Mechanical Engineering at the RUB.

I have never before lived in Japan, even though that's where my parents originally come from. That's why I wanted to spend my exchange year there. Once in Japan, I wished to not only expand my cultural horizons, but also deepen my professional expertise. The University of Osaka covers all disciplines so that I was able to apply for the "solar energy" programme as part of my Mechanical Engineering degree. The preparations took a lot of effort: preparing to go abroad, I compiled and worked my way through five different to-do lists – and yet, new tasks kept piling up. I wouldn't recommend it to anyone to contract an eye infection, in addition to managing the exam load and holding an assistant teacher position, whilst preparing the move, the farewell party and the exchange year. All that happened during my final month in Germany. This experience taught me never to pour all my energies into time-consuming organisation, because if something unexpected comes up (which happened often enough), you will wake up, panicking, at 4am and start drawing up your schedule for the next three days.

Health check for all

In contrast to this, the preparations in Japan were very relaxed. On arriving in the student hall, we exchange students were handed instructions detailing, for example, how to register at the registry office and to open a bank account. It was very helpful even to



Erika Niino takes in the panorama of the Suita Campus from the Convention Center



In need of assistance? The people at the Toyonaka Center are happy to help

students with no or hardly any Japanese language skills.

Most of us ended up in "Tsukumo-dai", a dormitory surrounded by nature. Here, you enjoy the luxury of going for a run or a walk in the park, which also contains a lake, whilst living in the metropolis of Osaka. At the same time, the trams heading downtown are within a walking distance. At first, they may seem rather confusing due to serving such a wide range of routes. However, there's no need to worry, as the locals are very friendly and helpful.

The orientation days at the university were marked by helpful tutors and well-

structured lectures. After several professors had welcomed us with introductory speeches, the tutors showed us around the campus, pointing out various cafés and delicacies, the stops of inner-campus shuttle busses and the contact point for exchange students. The campus also houses a health care centre where we will soon be undergoing a health check. Annual health checks are pretty much standards at Japanese universities and schools. Finally, the tutor showed us the location where an information event regarding the use of mobile phones in Japan is going to take place. The tutors are members of a student initiative that organises leisure

time activities for exchange students. Consequently, information about extracurricular activities and the activities themselves are easy to come by.

I felt very much at home after only a few days. Therefore, I feel sure that taking part

in the exchange programme has been the right decision. I am looking forward to experiences that will make my life richer and further my personal development. I can only recommend it to everybody who is considering spending a year abroad!

PORTRAIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OSAKA

Osaka University or Handai, motto: Live Locally, Grow Globally. Officially founded in 1931 as Japan's 6th imperial university; but its roots reach back to 1838 when it was established as Tekijuku, a private "place of learning". It was renamed Osaka University in 1949.

The University of Osaka is one of the most renowned state universities in Japan. The departments, graduate schools, research institutes, libraries and clinics are spread across the north of the Osaka Prefecture: Suita Campus, Toyonaka Campus and Minoh Campus. With its number of students amounting to 25,000, it hosts 2,000 international students per annum, five of whom are RUB students from different degree programmes. They spend one or two semesters in Osaka as part of the joint exchange programme that was launched in 2010. The RUB students have the option of participating in so-called

short-term programmes, which focus on English-language courses, research projects or Japanese language, culture and regional-studies courses, depending on the discipline (OUSSEP, Maple, FrontierLab or iExPO programme).

The academic year in Osaka begins in April with the spring semester (which runs until the end of September) and finishes in March of the following year with the fall semester (which begins in October of the previous year). The next application deadline for the exchange programme in the WS 2014-15 and/or the SS 2015 is January 15, 2014. Submissions: <http://international.rub.de/ausland/aktuelles/ausl00260.html.de>. **More information on Osaka University:** www.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/index.html, **on the short-term programmes:** www.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/international/inbound/exchange_program.

Jonna Haensel-Neumann



Idyllic retreat in a vibrant metropolis: Toyonaka Campus Lake



The staff at the Suita Bureau handle all administrative matters

A PASSION FOR THINKING

Graham Priest is a guest of the Department of Philosophy

When he saw the Ruhr-Universität campus for the first time, Graham Priest noted the buildings. "Architects in the 1960s and 70s had a love affair with concrete. It's not everyone's taste," says the philosopher, "but a university is about people rather than about buildings." The Australian Humboldt Prize winner has been a guest of Prof Heinrich Wansing at the Department of Philosophy since July.

Priest did not have to say goodbye to his native country Australia prior to coming to Bochum, as he has been living in the Manhattan district of New York for five years, where he works at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Now, Priest has swapped the Big Apple for concrete for six months. During his visit to the philosophers in Bochum, he will be working on problems in logic, especially logical paradoxes. He is particularly interested in paradoxes like the "liar paradox": 'this sentence is false'. If that sentence is true, it is false; and if it is false it is true. So is it true or false? Philosophers have been poring over this and similar problems for centuries. "It is a



Is Graham Priest going to solve the so-called liar paradox during his stay in Bochum?

very old field, but you can still discover new aspects," says Priest, explaining his fascination with the problem. Nobody has come to a satisfying and final conclusion as yet.

This may perhaps change following Priest's residence in Bochum. His approach to the issue is simple but controversial: to achieve a unification of things that contradict each other. To date, he has published more than 150 essays on this and related subjects, some of which discuss early Buddhist logic – a school of thought that also found itself immersed in apparently irreconcilable contradictions. This is something Priest discusses in lectures all across the world: in New York, Bochum, Kyoto.

Priest actually holds a PhD in maths. "However,

as a young man I fell in love with philosophy," says the guest professor. He is no stranger to complex theoretical and highly abstract lines of thought – indeed, he finds enjoyment in them. Priest has a passion for thinking. There are questions that he will answer only after thinking them over for quite a while, his expression serious, his manner absorbed and pensive.

Making the most of it

Studying languages, on the other hand, is clearly something he doesn't enjoy quite as much: "In order to prepare for my residence in Germany, I wanted to learn German. Now, I speak very basic German," explains Priest. Ordering a coffee works just fine; elaborating a logical problem in detail, however, remains a challenge. "Still, German is so much easier to learn than Japanese," remarks Priest good-humouredly, and he doesn't consider himself and his ability to learn German an entirely hopeless case.

Whilst living in Germany, he will certainly have time to practise – Bochum is not

Manhattan, after all. "It is very small and quiet," as Priest describes his new temporary home. "It's okay for six months – and I will get a lot of work done." There's one thing he's missing already. "I love opera, and I am missing the Metropolitan Opera very much." He goes there several times a month – and the subway system of Manhattan makes everything very accessible.

His friends are what the logician will miss the most, though – having dinner together and sharing the little pleasures of everyday life. "Still, a new location always opens up new opportunities, such as learning about a new culture and meeting new people," says Priest. There are ups and downs to everything, says he – always the philosopher. "It's up to you to make the most of the place where you happen to be." At Christmas, Priest will fold up his tent in Bochum and fly to his family in Australia. Until then, he is going to work a lot, will travel to the opera houses in the neighbouring cities sometimes – and, first and foremost, make the most of Bochum.

Ines Eckermann



Photo: Marion Nette

Fei He, who is doing her PhD at the Institute for Economic and Corporate History, clearly enjoys studying at the Ruhr Uni

SECOND HOME GERMANY

Fei He from China does her PhD on Germany's economic relations

"I will make it somehow," thought Fei He when, at the age of 19 years, she enrolled in German Studies at the Beijing Language and Culture University. Today, some ten years later, Fei is doing her PhD at the RUB Institute for Economic and Corporate History.

Fei was born and went to school in Changchun, a city with a population of three million people. After leaving school, she bid goodbye to the industrial town in Northeast China and ended up in the capital city Beijing. Once enrolled in German Studies, she soon realised that "the German language is rather difficult". "German grammar is the killer," says Fei, laughing. Having completed her third year at the Beijing Language and Culture University, she decided to embark on a two-year exchange programme at the University of Konstanz.

Even today, the 28-year old PhD student has fond memories of the train journey to Konstanz and of her first impression of the strange new country. "We were entirely overwhelmed. Germany is so green, the sky so blue. Utterly beautiful!" In the course of her Bachelor's degree programme "Business German and Tourism Management" in Konstanz, the Chinese student's German improved apace. "At first, it was a disaster. It wasn't until I shared a flat with German students that I had the chance to actually speak German for the first time," tells us Fei.

Interdisciplinary studies

Fei wrote her bachelor's thesis on "International Employment Strategies" at REWE in Cologne. She then knew that she wanted to do her Master's degree in Germany, as well. The only question was: where? Poring over a list of degree programmes, Fei stumbled across "B"

for Bochum and "ECUE" (Master's degree programme "European Culture and Economy"). She applied, was accepted and ended up attending lectures in political, social, cultural and economic studies at the RUB.



Fei He comes from Changchun. The city in Northeast China has a population of three million people

The aspect Fei appreciates most about the "ECUE" is its interdisciplinary approach. "I have got an insight into many different humanities," The student from China has also faced many challenges: "Reading philosophical texts and delving into socio-scientific theories was hard work. More often than not, I made very slow progress." To take a breather from her studies, Fei has been enjoying Bochum's diverse cultural events and the multifaceted university life. "The RUB is very friendly, the students are so diverse," explains the PhD student.

Fei wrote her master's thesis on "The reopening of economic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany with the People's Republic of China 1949-1978" at the Department of History. After she'd successfully completed her master's degree, her tutor, Prof Dieter Ziegler, offered her the position of research fellow at his Institute for Economic and Corporate History ("Lehrstuhl für Wirtschafts- und Unternehmensgeschichte"). Here, the ECUE

graduate is doing her PhD as part of the research project "Germany's economic relations during the Cold War", which is financed by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation. Fei He also teaches, she leads seminars on "The economic policy in the People's Re-

public of China" and "Foreign-trade policy during the Cold War". "Finding myself on the other side of the seminar room was quite exciting," as she tells us.

What happens after the PhD is done? Is she going back to China? Fei refuses to commit herself. "China has become foreign to me," she says. Whenever she visits China, she and her friends no longer find common ground. "The way we imagine our life and its existential structures, our worries – they differ fundamentally," says the PhD student. "I haven't gained any work experience in China, haven't learned about the societal dynamics there. I've been living in Germany since I was 22 years old. I've spent the most important stage of my life in Germany and I'm more familiar with the German society than with the Chinese." As a PhD student fluent in both German and Chinese, she is sought-after in both countries. We will see where Fei He from Changchun will end up in future. *Lisa Bischof*

ABOUT US

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Looking back on a great summer, the 14 Ruhr Fellows gathered one last time at the farewell dinner

AMBASSADORS

2013 Ruhr Fellowship Programme

Fourteen engineering and science students from the Ivy League Universities Harvard, Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania spent this summer in the Ruhr Area by way of the Ruhr Fellowship Programme.

It was the second time that the Initiativkreis Ruhr, a consortium of 69 leading companies of the region, and the UAMR (University Alliance Metropolis Ruhr) decided to give talented students from elite US universities an insight into the research and corporate landscape between Düsseldorf and Dortmund. In June, the Ruhr Fellows attended a summer school at the three UAMR universities, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, TU Dortmund University and the University of Duisburg-Essen. The academic programme was mainly organised by the Ruhr-Universität Bochum. In July, the students gained practical experience in selected partner companies of the Initiativkreis Ruhr.

Going underground

During the first four weeks of the programme, the students got to know the Ruhr Area, the three universities, several supporting companies of the Initiativkreis Ruhr and cultural sites in the region. An intensive German language course introduced them to the German language. While visiting the engineering departments of the three universities, the Ruhr Fellows got a feeling for what it must be like to study and research here. During visits to companies, the students learned more about some of the most important enterprises locat-

ed in the region. As coal mines in Germany are scheduled to close by 2018, the Ruhr Fellows learned about RAG's plans for renewable energy and sustainable uses for former mining areas.

Cultural programme

The summer school also included a cultural programme. The students visited Germany's biggest football stadium, the Signal Iduna Park in Dortmund, home of Borussia Dortmund, one of Germany's most successful football clubs. They entered the changing rooms where the players gather before and after a match and were even allowed to sit down on the coach's bench on the sideline of the field. In a series of three cultural seminars given by experts from the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, the Ruhr Fellows were introduced to the history and societal foundations of the Ruhr Area and the foreign relations of Germany. The history of the Ruhr Area was also presented to the students when visiting Zeche Zollverein at the "Meeting of the Minds" conference. Together with 40 other students from abroad who are completing research internships at the UAMR, they toured this former coal mine and UNESCO World Heritage Site. After a currywurst dinner, the group was treated to a performance of the Ruhr Piano Festival at the Essen Philharmonies.

In July, the fourteen students carried out internships with companies of the Initiativkreis Ruhr. This year's internship places and supervision of the fellows were provided by Evonik Industries, Vaillant Group, Siemens, BP Europa, HOCHTIT-



Just relaxing

ed in the region. At Thyssen Krupp Steel Europe AG, they experienced first-hand how steel is manufactured, heat-treated and later formed. Evonik provided a tour through the ChemSite in Marl, the chemical and plastics cluster in the Ruhr Area and the central point of contact for all issues and topics to do with chemistry and its value chains. Three employees, who are currently completing a special trainee programme for young professionals at Siemens Mülheim, led the group of students through the production halls of the company and presented some of the huge turbines that are manufactured there. The highlight of the programme was the visit to the RAG mines Auguste Victoria and Prosper Haniel. More than 1,000 meters below ground, the students experienced what it feels like to work "unter Tage" (un-

EF, SMS group, Deutsche Bank, ista, TRIMET ALUMINIUM and RAG.

The aim of the Ruhr Fellowship Programme is to improve the image of the Ruhr Area and make it attractive to talented young people from outside Germany so that they acquire an interest in living and working in the region. It is the vision of the programme managers to use the contacts gained as a result of the student exchange for long-term research and economic collaborations between the Ruhr Area and the participating American universities. The Ruhr Fellows are supposed to act as ambassadors for the Ruhr Area to make it well-known at their universities in North America as a location of science and business and encourage future generations to take part in the Ruhr Fellowship Programme. *Uta Baier*

