



*Dr. Ivett Guntersdorfer*

## Introducing the new AYA Austria Director:

### A letter from Ivett Guntersdorfer

Dear AYA Salzburg alumni, colleagues, and AYA students,

It is a great honor for me to introduce myself as the new director of the AYA Austria program! After this long pause due to COVID-19, I cannot wait to finally welcome the AYA students in Salzburg this fall. And Salzburg

is waiting for them! – The streets of the city are filled with people again, students are having picnics on the banks of the Salzach, and there is laughter and optimism in the air! In this spirit, we are restarting the AYA Salzburg program.

Studying abroad has always been a transformational experience that cannot be replaced by anything else. Being present with all our senses in a different place is the real experience: Smelling the fresh air of the Alps, of the Salzach and the food at the local farmers' markets and restaurants, touching the grass and the rocks on the way to a mountain top, having actual conversations with students in the dorms and at local bars, experiencing the unique Christmas spirit on the streets of Salzburg, waiting for spring at the Mirabell Gardens, riding a bike along the river promenade. Nothing can replace these real moments!

I have been familiar with the AYA Program for a long time, and I am so impressed by its success over more than 50 years. The involvement of my colleagues and supporters of the program is exceptional, and there is a palpable friendly and supportive spirit in the community. This is an excellent basis for the coming decades of the program.

In the upcoming year, we will be exploring opportunities for extending our program offerings: the University of Salzburg and the Fachhochschule Salzburg are offering more and more areas of study; there are excellent options for service learning and internships in the city and its surroundings, and we will explore more possibilities for deep intercultural learning. I hope to create an environment in which students can connect even more with students and others from the local area, and from all over the world. Such experiences abroad, and the friendships and connections made in a foreign environment, are of immeasurable value.

It is not surprising that I harbor these views and beliefs, considering my own educational background. I studied transcultural German studies, intercultural communication and psychology at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University (LMU) in Munich. I spent two years teaching at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. This "study abroad" experience motivated me to move to the United States, where I finished my Ph.D. at the University of California, Los Angeles. Afterwards I moved back to Germany and worked for a study abroad program in Munich for some eight years. During this time, I also developed a certificate program at the Institute for Intercultural Communication at the University of Munich (LMU) and served there as a professor and interim chair.

While writing this, I realize that everything is falling into place: My German/American education, my field of transcultural German studies and directing a study abroad program in one of the most beautiful and pleasant cities in the world, where I can also engage in my favorite activities: hiking in the Alps, doing research in intercultural communication, and building programs for students. I am very excited to join the AYA Austria Program.

Guest Editor: Dr. Margy Gerber

#### **WORLD LANGUAGES AND CULTURES**

203 Shatzel Hall, Bowling Green State University  
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403

Phone 419-372-2267 and 419-372-7693 | [austria@bgsu.edu](mailto:austria@bgsu.edu)

# Going to Salzburg! AYA 2021-22

After last year's interruption due to the Corona pandemic, we are delighted that the AYA Austria program can be resumed this year!

## Meet the students of the 2021-22 group:

### UNDERGRADUATES



**Caroline Gardner**  
Servus! My name is Caroline Gardner. I'm going to be a senior this upcoming year, and I'll graduate from BGSU in May 2022 with a B.A. in international studies and German with a side focus on

teaching English. I am also a classical pianist, so when I am in Salzburg I plan on traveling around Europe to see the birthplaces of composers such as Chopin and Beethoven. I have been looking forward to returning to Austria since I studied there for a year in high school four years ago. I am very excited to live with native speakers to improve my German, and I'm hoping to find somebody to teach me how to ski or snowboard. I'm especially looking forward to the Christkindlmärkte and, of course, the food!



**Rebecca Malzer**  
I am a history major with a minor in German at BGSU. I really like German/Austrian history and so Salzburg was a perfect choice for me to study abroad. I like to play video games, write stories

and poems, read and swim. I also enjoy watching animes and listening to music. I am looking forward to travelling while abroad. I have a list of places I'm hoping to get to.



**Marianna Nuzzo**  
I am a student at the University of Delaware, enrolled at BGSU for the year. I am majoring in three languages — Spanish, German and Portuguese — and minoring in human development and

family studies. I am extremely excited to be going to Salzburg! The city is very close to Munich,

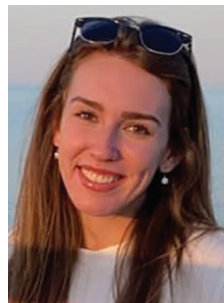
where my grandmother grew up, so I hope to learn more about where she is from as well as gain a greater knowledge of her native language. Guitar and music are two of my hobbies and I look forward to learning about Salzburg's long musical history. I am also looking forward to traveling around Europe during our breaks and practicing my Spanish or Portuguese when I can.



### Evan Oberyszyn

My name is Evan Oberyszyn, I am a third-year German Education major at BGSU. Some of the hobbies I am most noted for are solving various types of Rubik's cubes, fencing and slacklining. I hope

to improve my skills as fencer and slackliner while in Austria. Even if it weren't a requirement of my major, I would have studied abroad. I spent a week in Germany after my junior year of high school and I found the German language and culture so interesting that I have wanted to go back abroad ever since. I am looking forward to furthering my German proficiency both linguistically and culturally. I also hope to travel and learn more in both of my sports.



### Bailey Price

My name is Bailey Price, and I'm a second-year international studies major with a minor in international business at BGSU. Some of my hobbies are traveling, art, and volunteering. I

decided to study in Salzburg next spring because, like with a lot of people, the pandemic made me realize my life was pretty stagnant, and that I needed a change of scenery! I also feel like I need to step outside of my comfort zone and gain some life experience. I'm most excited to travel around Europe while I'm there, and cross off some places from my bucket list. Counting down the months!



### Giordan Romey

My name is Giordan Romey. I'm from Holland, Ohio. I am a second-year undergrad and will be studying in Salzburg spring semester. I am a film production major and a political science minor.

One of the reasons I want to study in Austria is that my sister lived in Germany for three years, and both she and my mom speak fluent German (I am working on my fluency). Some of my interests are music, film, drama, travel, politics, and some sports. I am super excited about going to Austria! I look forward to meeting everyone in the group.



### Grace Sharrow-Ducsay

My name is Grace Sharrow-Ducsay and I am a forensic science major with a minor in German at BGSU. I am a big fan of musical theatre as well as

almost all outdoor activities. In my free time I enjoy gardening, baking, and refinishing antique furniture. I decided to study in Salzburg because I've always loved to immerse myself in new cultures and populations. I'm also interested in the art that has come from Austria and I can't wait to see it in person!



### Trevor Smith

I'm Trevor Smith. I study at BGSU and have a double major in German and computer science and minors in general science and a not yet determined second field. I have a lot of different

interests and hobbies, including space and rockets, trains, and weather, especially tornadoes and thunderstorms. I am also an avid videographer. But firstly, I am into my Catholic faith, which influences



who I am. I decided to study abroad in Salzburg mainly because I've been learning German for the past 6 years, but I've never been to Europe, much less to any German-speaking country. I'm hoping this semester abroad will give me an opportunity to increase my German skills and allow me to use German in context. During this time, I'm also hoping to be able to visit multiple different countries in Europe, including Italy and Germany, and to ride at least one high speed train during my stay.



**Emma Rae Sprow**

I'm Emma Sprow, a world language education major, specializing in German, at BGSU.

My major requires study abroad, and Salzburg is the choice for German language

study. However, I visited Salzburg as a high school student and fell in love with the city. I have been itching to go back ever since and am so excited to be able to get to know the city and its history better. I really enjoy traveling and learning about new cultures as well as teaching my son, Asher, about different cultures. I'm very excited to be able to travel to other places throughout Europe and immerse myself in their culture!



**Patrick Sweeney**

I'm Patrick Sweeney, a German and geology double major at the University of Delaware. Now in my senior year, I've been studying German on and off since I was a freshman in high school. I've

been to Europe several times, most recently in 2017 when I studied abroad in Leipzig, Germany. I'm excited to study in Salzburg because of the rich culture and history. I love hiking, camping, reading, and playing chess.

*View from the roof cafe at Unipark*



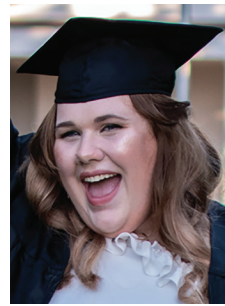
**GRADUATES**



**Rachel Harris**

I am returning to Salzburg as a graduate student, having spent spring semester 2018 in Salzburg as an undergraduate. I graduated from BGSU in 2019 with degrees in International Studies

and German and am now working on an M.A. degree in European Studies. I cannot wait to go back to Salzburg and increase my language skills, as well as be back where so many of my dreams came true! I'm also looking forward to traveling more in Europe.



**Shelbie Christine Richardson**

My name is Shelbie Richardson. I recently graduated with a German major and a history minor from Wofford College in South Carolina. So I'm definitely new to

Ohio and BGSU! I decided to study in Salzburg as a graduate student to have the study abroad experience that I couldn't have as an undergrad due to COVID-19 and also for the central location of Austria within Europe. I enjoy crafts and traveling. I'm excited to meet everyone in the program and to get started in October!



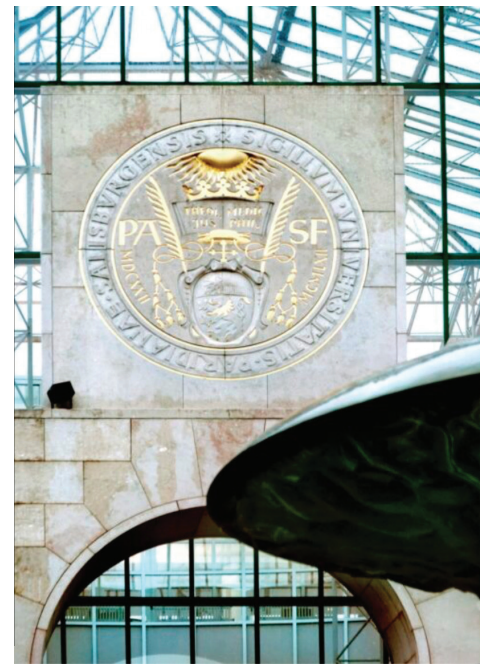
**Nicolas Schofield**

My name is Nick Schofield, and I am pursuing an MA in German from BGSU. As an undergraduate I studied history and international studies at the University of Idaho. In my free time

away from academic reading and general studies, I enjoy reading novels, playing chess and volleyball, and tending to my houseplants. I chose to study in Salzburg to emerge myself in the German language with the goal of fluency in mind. I also chose the program out of a love for live classical music, which I expect to hear plenty of in the birthplace of Mozart!

**Not included:**

**Frankie Moore** (sp. 2022)



*Universität Salzburg*

**The following undergraduate students received stipends from the AYA scholarship funds to study in Salzburg in 2021-22:**

- Caroline Gardner
- Rebecca Malzer
- Frankie Moore
- Evan Oberyszyn
- Bailey Price
- Giordan Romey
- Grace Sharrow-Ducsay
- Trevor Smith
- Emma Sprow



## Four AYA alumni awarded Fulbright US Teaching Assistantships (USTA) for 2021-22

Every year Austria and Germany each award approximately 140 teaching assistantship grants to American college graduates. This fall, four BGSU graduates who studied in Salzburg will be returning to Europe to teach English in Austrian and German secondary schools. Congratulations to all!

**Codey Albers** (AYA 2015-16) was selected for a teaching assistantship in 2020-21 but due to the pandemic he was forced to defer to this year. He will be teaching at the Ludwig-Frank-Gymnasium in Mannheim, Germany. After graduating from BGSU, he moved to Boston, where he taught middle school STEM classes and ran after-school academic programs.

**Zoë Oswald** (AYA 2018-19) will be a teaching assistant in English in the historic town of Spittal an der Drau in Carinthia/Austria. She will teach at two schools, the Bundesrealgymnasium Zernostraße and the Bundesgymnasium Porcia. She will live in Villach.

**Jack Riegler** (AYA 2017-18) will be assisting in English instruction at two schools in Vienna, the BernoulliGymnasium and the Technologisches Gewerbemuseum (TGM) Höhere Technische Bundeslehr- und Versuchsanstalt, which offers students who have completed the eighth grade a technically oriented path to the Matura.

**Alexa York** (Summer 2018) will teach in Bitterfeld-Wolfen, Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany not far from Leipzig. She will be teaching students aged 11-19 at the Europagymnasium Walther Rathenau. Alexa studied music and hopes to volunteer at the nearby music school.

**Two other AYA alumni are returning to Austria and Germany this fall, not as Fulbright TAs, but rather in positions they found on their own:**

**Molly Closson** (AYA 2014-15) will return to Salzburg in the fall to work as a full-time resident assistant at the Internationale Schule, where she will supervise students, teach physical education, and plan weekend excursions and trips with the students. After graduating from BGSU in 2018, Molly taught high school German for three years, while earning an M.A. in kinesiology. In Salzburg she will also teach German online through the World of Learning Institute.

**Shaydon Ramey** (AYA sp. 2014, 2017-18) was a Fulbright teaching assistant in Wittenberg, Germany for two years (2015-2017) before returning to Salzburg in the fall of 2017 to begin his dual M.A. degrees in German and Spanish at BGSU, which he finished in 2020. This past school year he taught Spanish at Notre Dame Academy in Toledo. This fall Shaydon will be returning to Germany, where he has been accepted into the Lehramt (teacher training) program in English and Spanish, at the Universität Halle-Wittenberg. The degree will qualify him to teach on the Gymnasium level at German schools.



Codey Albers



Zoë Oswald



Jack Riegler



Alexa York



Molly Closson



Shaydon Ramey

## Symposium: Austrian-American Studies and the Future of Study Abroad in Austria

Salzburg, June 9-11, 2022

Co-organized by the University of Redlands Salzburg Program, BGSU's AYA Austria program and the University of Portland Salzburg Program and co-sponsored by the Botstiber Institute for Austrian-American Studies, the symposium will bring together faculty and coordinators of American study abroad programs in Austria to explore ways of modernizing and refining our curricular and co-curricular activities. By engaging more deeply with Austrian-American studies in a collaborative way, we can help ensure the continued relevance of study abroad in Austria to the educational and professional goals of American university students.

Seminar sessions and workshops will deal with a wide range of perspectives on Austrian-American relations (e.g. history, cultural studies, philosophy, language, migration, cultural crossover among others) and address the central question: What can the field of Austrian-American studies contribute to the educational experiences of American students in Austria?

More information at [AASabroad@gmail.com](mailto:AASabroad@gmail.com) and [katherine\\_baber@redlands.edu](mailto:katherine_baber@redlands.edu)





# News from the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group



**By Brett Porter (AYA 1983-84)**

AYA Salzburg Alumni Group Coordinator

On behalf of the AYA Salzburg Alumni Board, I would like to thank our fellow alumni for their continued support, especially during these past months. All things considered, I think we have had a great year – despite COVID-19!

We held our first online alumni “Roundtable” with AYA alumni in various fields, who spoke about their careers and what they had gained personally and professionally by studying in Salzburg. They gave advice and tips to the participating students, who also had the opportunity to ask the alumni questions. We will be hosting more such events in the future.

We have also created a database of names, bios and contact information from all past issues of the AYA Newsletter. Membership on our Facebook site (nearly 500 members) continues to grow as we utilize our database to further locate and actively engage more and more alumni.

I am also happy to share that last year’s end-of-year fundraiser exceeded all expectations due to the continued generosity of so many of our alumni and friends. We realized significant growth in all three scholarship funds. Special thanks to all who contributed! And a shout out to honorary board member Dr. Brian Pavlac, who suggested the timing and Krampus theme for the fundraiser, and to Lonie Moore for working so closely with the Alumni Office to help set things up and keep track of the donations. (See Lonie’s report.) We are pleased to announce that the Joseph L. Gray III German Scholarship for incoming Ohio freshmen planning to major in German has been added to our **Giving Page**. The fund was established in honor of Dr. Gray, who taught and was chair of GREAL during a career spanning over thirty years at BGSU.

Our group continues to work closely with BGSU’s Office of Admissions to reach out to Ohio high schools and nationwide to recruit prospective students to the AYA program and to BGSU’s language programs. As the COVID-19 pandemic gradually subsides, we hope to recruit in person at the high school level.

The BGSU Alumni Office has also approved the use of our new AYA logo (see above) for branding on t-shirts, mugs, and other promotional items. Thank you, Lisa Lipcaman, for lending your creative vision and organizational skills to this effort! Money earned from the sale of these items will support the AYA scholarship funds and AYA Alumni Group activities. If you have any ideas for other items we could brand with our AYA Salzburg logo, please let us know.

More good news: Dr. Phil Peek, Chair of the Department of World Languages and Cultures, recently approved our budget request to cover many of our group’s 2021 operating expenses, including the costs for printing the Newsletter and food expenses for the annual reunion. We hope to establish our own alumni-controlled operating fund in the future.

Once again, thanks to everyone for your ongoing support of the AYA program!

**You can contact us at: [ayasalzburgalumnigroup@gmail.com](mailto:ayasalzburgalumnigroup@gmail.com)**

# Report on AYA Scholarship Donations 2020

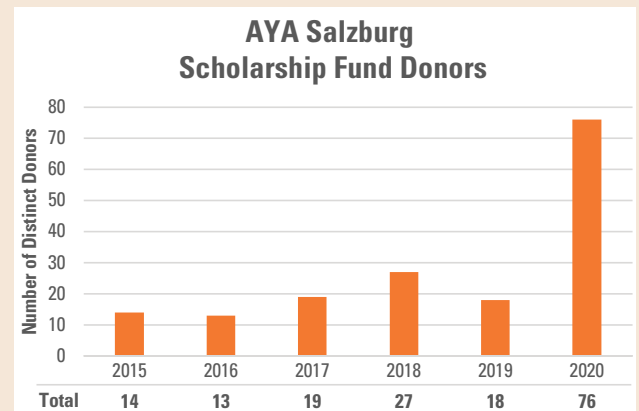


**By Lonie Moore**

(AYA Su 2003, 2003-04)  
Fundraising & Scholarships  
Coordinator, AYA Salzburg  
Alumni Group

One of the many ways the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group actively supports the Salzburg program is by tying our fundraising efforts to the three endowed Salzburg scholarship funds (Shllaku, Foell, Koepke) and the newly added Gray German scholarship fund. Our focus lies on the endowment funds because they will provide financial support in perpetuity. The scholarships are paid only out of investment earnings, never out of the principal. Therefore every donation will have a lasting impact on future generations of AYA students.

Alumni engagement has increased greatly over the past 18 months. Even though – or because – the AYA Austria program closed during the COVID-pandemic, our AYA Salzburg alumni stepped up to support the program in a **BiG** way!



During calendar year 2020, we had 76 distinct alumni donors, which was a 320% increase over calendar year 2019. In 2020 we had 52 first-time donors, which was more than double the number of first-time donors over the previous five calendar years combined. Altogether, the first time donors and the “returning” donors contributed over \$30,000 to the scholarship funds.

The fundraising campaign we held in December 2020 centered around our newly branded AYA Salzburg custom lapel pin shown to the right. We made the decision to give out the AYA Salzburg lapel pins to anyone who had given \$100 cumulatively throughout the calendar year, as well as to those who donated in December. The December campaign was a huge success. We awarded the Salzburg lapel pin to 52 donors in total!



We thank you for the very generous support of the AYA scholarships.

# SUPPORTING THE AYA AUSTRIA PROGRAM

## DESCRIPTIONS OF AYA SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

The oldest, the **Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship Fund**, was founded in 1998 by former students of Dr. Shllaku to support undergraduate BGSU students in all majors. Endowed in 2003, the fund provides an annual spendable amount to award as scholarships. Since 1998 close to 100 BGSU students have received a Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship award for study in Salzburg. Ordinarily, four BGSU students are supported each year. The amount available for distribution for 2021-2022 was approximately \$13,000.

The **Foell International Travel Award Fund** was created by Darrell W. and Sally M. Foell in memory of his mother, Margaret Kaesmann Foell. The endowed fund supports students for study with BGSU's AYA Austria program and is based on merit. It awards scholarships up to \$1,500. The funds distributed in 2021-2002 totaled approximately \$4,700.

The newest AYA scholarship fund, the **Galen and Katja Koepke Study Abroad Scholarship**, was established by the Koepkes in 2016. The endowed fund supports BGSU undergraduate and graduate students. The first scholarship was awarded for the academic year 2016-17. It awards scholarships up to \$1,500. For 2021-22, approximately \$2,700 were available for distribution.

## HOW TO DONATE

**If you would like to contribute to one or more of these funds, it is easy to do:**

Each scholarship fund has a number:

- Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship – #301383
- Foell International Travel Award – #301814
- Galen and Katja Koepke Study Abroad – #302504

You can donate **by check**:

Include the name and number of the fund to which you want to donate and mail to:

BGSU Foundation, Inc.  
1851 N. Research Dr.  
Bowling Green, OH 43403

Or you can donate **online**:

Go to [bgsu.edu/give](https://bgsu.edu/give). The page **Support BGSU Students** (in bright orange) will come up. In the upper right-hand corner (in small white print) you'll see: **Other Funds**. Click on this to get the form to fill out. When asked to name the fund you want to donate to, type in the number. The software program takes you step by step through the process. It's quite easy.

## DONORS

The Department of World Languages and Cultures gratefully acknowledges the donors to the three AYA Austria scholarship funds.

### Donors (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021)

#### Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship Fund

Amy Craft Ahrens  
Sandra Allard  
Eugene Aufderhaar  
Daniel Betzel  
Michael Bowden  
Anna Bradley  
Emily Freeman Brown  
Heather Burke  
Tara Campbell  
Amy Kirner Chamberlain  
David Day  
Kathleen Dobson  
Leslie Eckstein  
Beverly Everett  
Margy Gerber  
Julie Griffin  
Christina Guenther  
Mark Gustafson  
Larry Hansgen  
Geoffrey Howes

Suzette Johnson  
Alison Kemp  
Dawn Klana  
Kendra Kumar  
Bruce Kwiatkowski  
Edgar Landgraf  
Lindsay Leguillon  
Jennica Magers  
Dominick Marrone  
Daniel McMackin  
Karlyn McPike  
Lonie Moore  
Rita Myers-Wieringa  
David Olan  
Brian Pavlac  
Debra Peters  
Barry Porter  
Brett Porter  
Shaydon Ramey  
Vickie Sherwood  
Paula Sliefert  
Larry Snavley  
Jill Sommer  
Linda VanBlaricom  
David Warren  
William Weis  
Amy Wexler  
William Whitesmith  
Catherine Zenone

#### Foell International Travel Grant Fund

Mary Backus  
Katherine Best  
Galen Brahier  
Renee Buker  
Karen Coffman  
Andrew Foell  
Darrell Foell  
Kristie Foell  
Christina Guenther  
Geoffrey Howes  
Michelle Jacksier  
Kimberly Jacobs  
Lisa Lipcamon  
Eric Meek  
Thomas Miller  
Lonie Moore  
Hannah Olson  
Willem Paul  
Ann Pittman  
Sheilah Rosen  
John Schutze

#### Koepke Study Abroad Scholarship Fund

Galen Brahier  
Helen Cafferty  
Randall Cottrell  
Dana Deal  
Margy Gerber  
Julian Gillilan  
Christina Guenther  
Geoffrey Howes  
Galen Koepke  
Robert Meehan  
Lonie Moore  
John Navin  
James Singh



# ALUMNI NEWS 2021

We received some 80 responses from AYA Salzburg and summer program alumni. The responding alumni are spread across the country from North to South and East to West; some are living in Europe, two reported from Asia: Japan and South Korea. This time, two former exchange students from the University of Salzburg, who studied at BGSU in 1987-88, responded to the questionnaire.

## 1969-1970

**Director Ursula Lawson** (Ohio University)

**Deborah Kavasch** lives in Turlock, California. She holds a doctorate in music composition from the University of California, San Diego and is professor of music theory and composition at California State University Stanislaus. She recently composed the music for a highly acclaimed youth opera based on five Aesop's tales (see feature article). She is currently working on a second commissioned opera based on Edgar Allen Poe's poem "Annabel Lee." She uses German both privately and professionally. Salzburg memory: "Going to the movies at the Mozart Kino and having the BEST Würstel before the shows."

E-mail: dkavasch@csustan.edu

**Karen May** lives in Nanuet, New York and is a retired IT professional. Since retirement she and her husband travel extensively; they recently spent a month in Hawaii. She is engaged in Soul Collage, an exploration of self through collage, journaling and community, and in Couples Coaching Couples, a peer coaching structure for relationships. Salzburg memory: "The 'frische Luft.' I will always remember walking into my room, which I shared with Erni, and the room was frigid since she had opened the window to air it out. Learned so many things from my lovely roommate." Karen is in contact with Joyce (Long) Stewart and Bonnie (Johnson) Lavinder.

E-mail: karenleemay@optonline.net

**Joyce (Long) Stewart** lives in Nashville, Tennessee. She is a retired Montessori teacher. Many years ago she returned to Austria and visited her Salzburg roommate. She hopes to travel to Austria again soon. Salzburg memories: "I remember sitting in the bar/lounge listening to music of the times and drinking rum and coke. I also remember the lovely lady behind the counter of our favorite bakery. Important private moments were sitting in the library and studying German literature."

Joyce is in contact with Karen May and Bonnie (Johnson) Lavinder.

E-mail: joyces2000@yahoo.com

## 1970-1971

**Director Herbert Gauerke**

**Steve Harris** (fall semester), a member of "Die Gruppe," which established the Dzidra Shllaku Scholarship Fund, is a trained tax lawyer, but has long pursued his love of music. He lists his profession as singer-songwriter and music publisher. In 2020 he released *Come on Home*, an album of original compositions. He is currently working on a gospel music album, *Angel Band*, with a targeted release in autumn 2021. Last September he and his wife Ann moved from their Chesapeake Bay home to Virginia Beach.

E-mail: steve@stevemusic.com

**Karlyn (Korsgaard) McPike** lives with her husband in Edgerton, Ohio. A retired high school teacher, she taught German for 30 years and now leads tours to Europe. A COVID-19 survivor, she spent 8 days in an ICU in Nov./Dec. 2020. Fit again, she was able to travel to Iowa for the high school graduation of her eldest grandson. "Glad to report that all my grandkids greet me with 'Ich liebe dich, Oma.'" "Have been reminiscing with my Austrian roommate, Dagmar, and Deb Peters about our adventures 50 years ago." Karlyn is in touch with Debra (Sendelbach) Peters, John Thrash and David Swartz.

E-mail: mcpikek@edgertonchurch.com

## 1971-72

**Director Paul Krauss** (Ohio University)

**Trent Boggess** lives in Laconia, New Hampshire. He has a doctorate in economics from the University of Kansas and taught and worked as an administrator at Plymouth State University for 38 years before his retirement. He is in contact with Dwight Decker from his group.

E-mail: trentb@plymouth.edu

**Dave Schrader** lives in Hermosa Beach, California. He holds a doctorate in computer science from Purdue University and worked in his field until his retirement. He stayed busy during the pandemic doing a massive family genealogy, running an analytics team for the Libertarian Party candidate Jo Jorgensen last election cycle, and doing lots of sports analytics projects with university students. "I also 'got into' the Civil War and over the past seven years have put together 13 talks for the four LA area Civil War Roundtables. So retirement has been fun." Salzburg memories: "Somewhere I have an audio tape of one of our jam sessions at Billrothheim, with Ron [Inkrott] playing his guitar and singing the 'Salzburg Blues,' which I think was a mixture of German and English. Another highlight was the scavenger hunt we put together for the girls which required that they run around town to all our favorite places to gather the clues." Dave is in contact with Kathy (Collins) and Dwight Decker, Bob Boymere, Janet Braun and Jim Comstock.

E-mail: drdaveschrader@gmail.com



The 1971-72 AYA group, directed by Paul Krauss

# ALUMNI NEWS 2021 continued

## 1972-1973

### Director John Stickler

**Kathleen (Foreman) Dobson** lives in Fredericksburg, Ohio. She is retired after teaching German for 30 years. She enjoys gardening and visiting family; she has 3 “wonderful” grandchildren. She and her husband are grateful for surviving the pandemic and having been vaccinated. Salzburg memories: “I remember Frau Dr. Fleischhacker’s class. We learned so much, and she was a true life force. And lots of sing-a-longs at the dorm! Kathy is in contact with Rita Myers-Wieringa, Beth (Holthaus) Fogelson and Kari (Strasser) Pokorny.  
E-mail: kdkdobson4@gmail.com

**Karen (Strasser) Pokorny** lives in Denver, Colorado. Before retiring, Karen was an IT director at a national company. “Fortunately, my husband was a HS German teacher who did an annual GAAP exchange. As soon as I retired, I began chaperoning month-long excursions to lower Bavaria. My German got better quickly!” Salzburg memory: “Music everywhere.” Kari is in contact with Rita Myers-Wieringa, Beth (Holthaus) Fogelson and Kathy (Foreman) Dobson.  
E-mail: kpokorny@me.com

## 1973-1974

### Director Barry Thomas (Ohio University)

**Deb File** lives in Lima, Ohio, where, until her retirement, she taught German at Shawnee High School for 35 years. After the year in Salzburg, Deb stayed on in Austria and taught English in Bad Ischl for three years before returning to BGSU to finish her B.A. and earn her M.A. in German. She taught for three years in the Finger Lakes area of New York before moving to Lima. AYA memories: “Sheilah [Rosen] and I recently reminisced about our trip to Greece. I mostly remember the people, both Austrians and Americans. Mick [Hessenauer] kept us entertained.” In addition to Sheilah Rosen, Deb is in contact with Vicki (Teats) Sherwood, Dave Griswold and Mike Hessenauer.  
E-mail: dfile@bright.net

**Sheilah Rosen** lives in Mayfield Heights, Ohio. She holds a Master’s in speech and communication from New York University. She worked in the administration of NYU Langone Health for 25 years, the last 11 years as Manager of the Office of the Dean and CEO. Sheilah is in touch with Vicki Teats and Deb File.  
E-mail: sdotrosen@gmail.com

## 1974-1975

### Director Boris Matthews

**Beverly Everett** lives in Severn, Maryland. Soon after completing her M.A. in German at BGSU, she joined the Department of Defense, where she worked until her retirement. “I spend most of my time on medical issues and being my mother’s caregiver/advocate – she’s in assisted living. We both survived COVID-19 and the lockdown of Mom’s facility. I couldn’t go into her room for 13 months, so I was very grateful when I could finally give her a big hug.” “Living in Salzburg opened my eyes to a different people and culture from my small northwest Ohio town. Talk about a broadening experience!” Bev is in contact with Gayle Godek, Mindy Willer, Kevin Settlege and Ruta Zemaitis.  
E-Mail: bke4@verizon.net

**Jane (Crist) Linden** lives in Troy, Ohio. She has been a stay-at-home mom and caretaker for her autistic son. Even now that her husband is retired, they “are fairly area bound.” “The year I spent in Salzburg has remained a bright spot that I often think of. I’m thankful my parents encouraged me to participate since it was such an enriching experience. Being able to meet President and Mrs. Ford during their stop in Salzburg was a high point. But the whole range of experiences with the group during the year was the most important.” Jane would love to hear from others in her group.  
E-mail: linden\_family@hotmail.com

**Sue (Rall) McWhorter** lives in Roswell, Georgia. Last September she retired after 41 years flying with Pan Am and Delta Airlines as an international flight attendant. She views her language skills as crucial for the long international flights between European cities and the United States. Now she has more time to participate in area tennis leagues and for her passion for training service dogs. “Without a doubt, my Academic Year Abroad was one of the best decisions of my life!”  
E-mail: sue.mcwhorter@gmail.com

## 1976-1977

### Director Margy Gerber

**Suzan (Corbacioglu) Arrer** lives in Adnet, Austria (near Salzburg). Suzan earned an M.A. in TESL from Ohio State University. For many years she worked as an administrator and lecturer in English at the Fachhochschule (University of Applied Sciences) in Salzburg. She spent the academic year 2018-19 in Tirana, Albania, where

she taught English at the university. In fall 2019 she began a teaching assignment for the State Department in Kazakhstan, only to be evacuated in mid-March 2020 because of COVID-19. She would like to receive another assignment when the pandemic has ebbed. For the last 2 years she has been writing a monthly English-language column, complete with English-German vocabulary lists, for the *Salzburger Nachrichten*. “It’s a nice thing to do on the side and I have a choice of topics,” for example, the history of the Empire State Building (May 2021). Suzan is in contact with Gayle Godek and Brian Pavlac, whom she hopes to see when she returns to Ohio on a visit.  
E-mail: sarrer@aon.at

## THE ENGLISH COLUMN

Suzan Arrer



*Suzan’s column in the Salzburger Nachrichten*

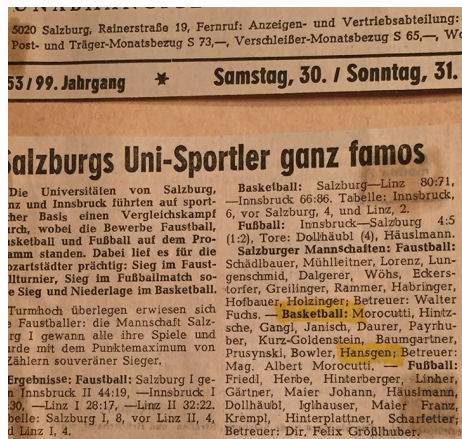
**Gayle Godek** lives in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. In addition to her M.A. in German from BGSU, she has an MBA from Cleveland State University and works in communications for a metropolitan planning organization that covers Northeast Ohio. Salzburg memories: “The snowball fight in Haus Wartenberg and the trout/carp dinner with fish Josef Achleitner’s stepfather caught, lighting the candles on the Christmas tree, which then caught on fire; the awful sunburn from an Untersberg hike; the Pfingsten trips (and Dr. Gutmann’s problem getting his passport stamped, so that he was in the GDR illegally after midnight the first day).” Gayle is in contact with Erika Janke, Sue Arrer, Brian Pavlac, Diana Akridge, Corinne McVay, Jeanine Waisala.  
E-mail: glgodek3@yahoo.com

**Larry Hansgen** lives in Dayton, Ohio, where he has been a radio announcer at WHIO Radio for the last 40 years. He credits this longevity to his employer for providing stability in an otherwise volatile industry, but also “to the lessons of learning to adapt to new things, new ideas and new people that I brought back with me from Salzburg.” Salzburg memories: “I was playing for the University of Salzburg basketball team. Along with the soccer and Faustball team we were to travel by bus to a competition in Innsbruck. I showed up at the bus without my passport, not realizing the direct route to Innsbruck was through Germany. I sprinted across the Stadtsbrücke to the Schwarzes Rössl to get my passport and made



it back in time. I knew the bus would not wait, because I was not that great a player! The team played well, and I did, too, and upon returning I was surprised to see my name in the newspaper in a story about the games in Innsbruck." Larry is in contact with Jim Singh, Suzan Arrer and recently Dawn Preising.

E-mail: larry.hansgen@cmgohio.com



Larry's name in the Salzburg newspaper

**Brian Pavlac** holds a Ph.D. in history from Notre Dame University and has just retired after 28 years teaching history at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He is returning to the Cleveland area, where he grew up. "To lighten the move, I sold for a pittance most of the books I collected over the years, except those on German history--hoping to be inspired to write more in retirement." An interview with Brian, as the first honorary member of the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group, appeared in the 2020 AYA Newsletter. Brian is in contact with Suzan Arrer and Gayle Godek. E-mail: bap@bapavlac.com

**James Singh** now lives alternately in Naples, Florida and in Salzburg after a successful career in international investment banking in Asia. He was a founding partner of the Asian Multi Strategy hedge fund based in Hong Kong. Salzburg memories: "I played with the volleyball club in Salzburg and traveled the region with local friends. I met the woman there whom I would ultimately marry and have a family with. I am lifelong friends with my roommate from Schwarzes Rössl (we see each other every holiday and have traveled together with spouses)."

Jim is in contact with Larry Hansgen.

E-mail: jesingh@gmail.com

## 1977-1978

**Director Helmut Gutmann**

**Kathy Best** lives in Bowling Green. After teaching German at the University of Toledo for many years, she retired last fall. Kathy is a board member of the Salzburg Alumni Group. In July 2020 she moved into a new condo with her cat Tully and has since adopted two kittens, one with only three feet, named Dreyfuss. Salzburg memories: Kathy has fond memories of Bärenwirt. She is in contact with Jan (Brozic) Kinch, Gayle Godek, Bev Everett, Leslie (Kosel) Eckstein, Susan Hoehing.

E-mail: thebestkathy@yahoo.com

## 1978-1979

**Directors Joseph L. Gray/Helmut Gutmann**

**Ruta (Zemaitis) Bloomfield** lives in Santa Clarita, California. A harpsichordist, Ruta has a doctorate in musical arts from Claremont Graduate University and is an associate professor of music at The Master's University. Her family has hosted international exchange students over many years, and her two daughters each studied for a semester abroad at Oxford resp. in Israel. "My grandchildren (ages 7, 5, 3, 1) are the four shining lights in my personal constellation." Salzburg memories: "Walking along Hellbrunner Allee to and from the Uni." "AYA in Salzburg was one of the most impactful events in my life."

E-mail: kenandruta@sbcglobal.net

**Beverly Everett** (grad, see undergrad year 1974-75)

**Gayle Godek** (grad, see undergrad year 1976-77)

**Brian Pavlac** (grad, see undergrad year 1976-77)

**Chris Zerull** lives in Twinsburg, Ohio. He has a degree in accounting and is currently the business manager of Valley Christian Academy. He and his wife Donna have a grown daughter, Abby, who was recently married. Over his 40-year career in accounting Chris served as controller of three different publicly traded companies, the last of which was a large automotive company with operations in many countries including Germany and Austria. Salzburg memories: "I have many great memories of my year abroad, but the best part was the fun group of people that were part of the 78-79 group. I lived in Schwarzes Rössl so I walked through the center of Salzburg every day on the way to class and will never forget those views." Chris is in contact with Gayle Godek, Ruta (Zemaitis) Bloomfield and Jeanine Waisala. E-mail: chris.zerull@gmail.com



Wedding of Chris Zerull's daughter Abby

## 1980-1981

**Director Margy Gerber**

**Sandy (McCartney) Allard** lives in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. She moved from a position in business to IT and works on the German system of SAP (Systeme Anwendungen Produkte). She has access to the German code but works mainly in its English configuration. "I always find at least one German or Austrian I can converse with a bit. Most are very impressed by how I speak..." Salzburg memories: "The city, the Salzach, the Festung, Hellbrunn Allee and the spectacular view of the mountains! I think our Thanksgiving dinner was one of the most memorable times--the German 'Saturday Night Live' rendition by members of the group!" Sandy is in touch with Linda VanBlaricon (aka Mutti), Marta Fischer, Jessica (Eberhardt) Rathke, Rhonda Westerhaus and many others via Facebook, zoom and Homecoming reunions. E-mail: allard.sandra9@gmail.com

**Kathy Best** (grad, see undergrad 1977-78)

**Jan (Brozic) Kinch** (grad) lives in Edinboro, Pennsylvania. She has a Ph.D. in English from BGSU and until her retirement in 2016 was a professor of English at Edinboro University. Jan had lived and worked in Austria before joining the AYA program as a graduate student. Salzburg memory: "Just daily living in Salzburg with the BGSU group was so fabulous." "Austria is definitely in my blood forever!" Jan would love to hear from others in the group and suggests a repeat of the group's zoom chat from May 2020, this time with the "guys" too. She is in contact with Margy Gerber, Kathy Best, Eric Hise, Manfred Brockmann. E-mail: jcbkinch@aol.com

# ALUMNI NEWS 2021 *continued*



*Terri (Butler) Melick*

**Terri (Butler) Melick** lives in Twinsburg, Ohio. She studied German and business at BGSU and has worked in management at Kaufman Container Co. for 36+ years, where she was

recently promoted to vice-president, vendor relations. Because of COVID-19 she worked at home for 15 months and now is in the office only one day a week. For her autistic son, this home office situation is "his utopia." Salzburg memories: "Hiking up the Untersberg, started in Austria and came down in Germany. The views were spectacular! Another great time was riding bicycles to Berchtesgaden with many in our group! The wonderful adventures are too numerous to list. Best year of my life." "With the AYA Salzburg FB page I am in contact with so many from my group and all the other years' participants. It is a great way to keep in touch with everyone."

E-mail: [tmelick@kaufmancontainer.com](mailto:tmelick@kaufmancontainer.com)

**Ellen (Manning) Nagy** is now living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin after retiring from Heidelberg College, where she was an assistant professor of German and an administrator. She holds a Ph.D. in German from Ohio State University. "The pandemic allowed me to retool and I'm working as a personal trainer and nutrition coach. A complete 360, but loads of fun. Training for Ironman Wisconsin in September so most of my life is in the pool, on the bike, or running." Her daughter Hanna, who lives in Arizona, recently had a baby girl, Natalie. Ellen's first grandchild. Her son Simon is in California. Salzburg memory: "Met my husband."

E-mail: [nagy.ellen@gmail.com](mailto:nagy.ellen@gmail.com)

**Linda VanBlaricom** (grad) lives in Bowling Green. She has an M.A. in German from BGSU and taught German at Bowling Green High School for 30 years. She often teaches German as an adjunct instructor at BGSU and is a board member of the Salzburg Alumni Group. Salzburg memories: "Traveling during the breaks was a luxury I had never experienced before. The Wanderlust hasn't stopped since."

E-mail: [lindav@bgsu.edu](mailto:lindav@bgsu.edu)

**Rhonda (Hitt) Westerhaus** lives in Pratt, Kansas, where she recently retired after teaching for 26 years at Pratt Community College. Rhonda is a board member of the Salzburg Alumni Group and prepared the "Salzburg Sweethearts" feature

below. "I enjoy our six grandchildren, travel, reading and entertaining with my husband, family and friends, especially those friends from 1980-81!" Salzburg memories: "Being the first couple to ever be in the program together was so special! I especially remember our trip to East Germany and being amazed that there was no graffiti in Berlin!" Rhonda is in contact with many from the 1980-81 group.

E-mail: [omaopa215@gmail.com](mailto:omaopa215@gmail.com)

## 1981-1982

### Director Helmut Gutmann

**Gene Aufderhaar** lives in Bluffton, Ohio. He continues to teach German at nearby Van Wert High school „with retirement in the not-too-distant future." Gene is on the board of the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group. Salzburg memories: "I remember meditative, explorational Sunday afternoon strolls (map in hand, early on) through the Altstadt, or over and around the Kapuzinerberg, handily just a stone's throw from Schwarzes Rössl." He is in contact with members of both his undergrad and grad (84-85) years. "It has been great also to make new acquaintances – like-minded Salzburg souls from the 2018 50-year reunion a.o.– and to serve in the Alumni Group."

E-mail: [eaufder@gmail.com](mailto:eaufder@gmail.com)

## 1983-1984

### Director John Erikson

**Terry Kuney** lives in Powell, Ohio. He has a bachelor's degree in computer science from BGSU and works as an IT manager for the Huntington National Bank in Columbus. His wife Anne and he have two children. Salzburg memories: "Several road trips with others in the group, and one particular trip to Italy in a small car with Ellen Manning, Gerrie McManamon and Brett Porter. Fun trip, happy the car made it through the mountains." Terry is friends with two members of the 1981-82 group: Matt Garrow and Reiner Mueller.

E-mail: [tkuney60@gmail.com](mailto:tkuney60@gmail.com)

**Ellen (Manning) Nagy** (grad, see 1980-81)

**Brett Porter** lives in Dublin, Ohio. He is a registered nurse and uses German on a regular basis with older German patients. Due to the COVID-19 crisis he and his wife Kate were forced to postpone their trip to various European countries, but are looking forward to travelling again in 2022. Brett is coordinator of the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group (see his report). Salzburg

memory: "Listening to the sound of the church bells and counting the number of chimes to know the time." He is in regular contact with Margy Gerber, Lonie Moore, and other founding members of the Alumni Group.

E-mail: [bporter8@columbus.rr.com](mailto:bporter8@columbus.rr.com)

## 1984-1985

### Director Klaus Schmidt

**Gene Aufderhaar** (grad, see 1981-82)



*Provost Laurie McLary*

**Laurie McLary** has moved from Oregon, where she was full professor of German and associate dean at the University of Portland, to Roanoke, Virginia, where she has been appointed provost of

Hollins University. Hollins' announcement of her appointment can be read at: <https://www.hollins.edu/news/hollins-names-laura-a-mclary-ph-d-as-the-universitys-new-provost/> Laurie's important discovery in Salzburg was the poetry of the Austrian (Salzburg) poet Georg Trakl, who became an important focus of her research, along with other Austrian writers.

E-mail: [laurie.mclary@me.com](mailto:laurie.mclary@me.com)

**Tim Moehlman** lives in Lodi, Italy, where he works as a research chemist. He stayed on in Salzburg for a second year in 1985-86 and finished his studies with an M.A. in German. He afterwards lived and worked in Munich for five years before going on to Italy. "I've settled into domestic life with a foodblogger partner [his Sicilian partner, Alessandro] and Cookie, our Dachshund." AYA memory: "During the last days of the semester break, Karl Ehlers, Suzanne Herwig and I still had two days left on our Interrail passes. We took the night train from Salzburg to Paris, had lunch and came back to Salzburg that evening." Tim is in contact with Amy (Thompson) Wexler, Dan Zarembo, Eva (Schott) McMasters and Patty Conlon.

E-mail: [lodibaer@libero.it](mailto:lodibaer@libero.it)

## 1985-1986

### Directors Margy Gerber/Klaus Schmidt

**Tim Moehlman** (grad, see 1984-85)

**Amy (Thompson) Wexler** lives in Toledo, Ohio. After earning B.A. and M.A. degrees in German



and political science, Amy began a varied career abroad before returning to Ohio: "After 20+ years in Austria, Japan, and Russia I am back in the USA in a totally different career that I love: Helping Ohioans with disabilities obtain meaningful employment. Best job ever!" Salzburg memories: "The nice Thanksgiving parties we always got to have and the great faculty that accompanied us." Amy is in contact with Patty Conlon, Mark Gustafson, Judy (Lindsley) Nath, Dan Zaremba, Kathy Schwarz, a.o.  
E-mail: wexler0703@aol.com

### 1987-1988

#### Director Klaus Schmidt

**Michael Bowden** lives in Sunbury, Ohio. He works in industrial sales.

**Lori (Prueter) LaBarre** lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she works as a web developer. Salzburg memories: "Walking through the old city on the way to class and all the great views whichever way I turned!" "I have so many fond memories of my time in Salzburg. It was truly a life-changing experience that helped form who I am today!"  
E-mail: llabarre@gmail.com

**Eva (Schott) McMasters** lives in Cincinnati, Ohio, where she teaches German. She coordinates a GAPP exchange program to Dingolfing, Bavaria every other year. Salzburg memory: "At the end of the day on our outing to the Bergbauern in Großarl, we were all at a farmer's home gathered in their kitchen around their table. They were serving us some delicious, homemade Bauernbrot und Butter. Klaus Schmidt spread what seemed like an inch or two (or more!) of butter on his bread. We were all appalled! Completely unruffled by our wide eyes and gasps, Klaus simply laughed and said, 'Na, so essen die Bauern!'" "Salzburg still holds a spell over me! My obsession with Salzburg's beauty, charm and Gemütlichkeit never seems to subside, so I attempt to visit every chance I get!" Eva is in contact with many participants in the 1987-88 and 1990-91 groups.  
E-mail: schott\_e@ohlsd.org

**Amy (Thompson) Wexler** (grad, see 1985-86)

**Two Austrian exchange students** from Salzburg who spent 1987-88 in Bowling Green also returned the questionnaire. While our AYA students were in Salzburg, these Salzburg students, who later married, were at BGSU:



*Thomas and Elisabeth Riedel*

**Elisabeth (Landerl) Riedl** earned an M.A. in English while at BGSU. She is today a Gymnasiallehrerin in Kremsmünster, Oberösterreich. "We have three children, and our eldest son recently married a wonderful woman, who happens to be from Ohio. They live in Washington D.C., and we can't wait to visit them when the pandemic is over. "I have very fond memories of Bowling Green/Ohio. It was one of the best years of my life."  
E-mail: elisabethriedl@eduhi.at

**Thomas Riedl** earned an M.A. in German Studies while at BGSU. He and his future wife Elisabeth both graduated with M.A. degrees in the summer of 1988. Thomas is now the headmaster of a grammar school in Linz. He writes about his studies at BGSU: "I learned more about the GDR from Margy Gerber at that time than I had in my studies before in Austria. Thanks again for that."  
E-mail: thomasjosef.riedl@gmail.com

### 1988-1989

#### Director Margy Gerber

**Thomas Miller** lives in Westfield, Indiana. He works in international banking and is foreign exchange managing director at PNC Bank. In 2020 he published a novel (Krimi), *An Oktoberfest Death*, the action of which takes place mostly in Munich. It is available on Amazon and at www.thomasjmillerauthor.com. Salzburg memory: „I donated blood at the Plasmaspende on a regular basis to support my experiences in Salzburg." Tom is in contact with Laurie (Smith) Camargo, Debbie (Hutchison) Coit, Carmen Stahnke.  
E-mail: thomas.j.miller@att.net

### 1989-1990

#### Director Geoffrey Howes

**Denise (Swartz) Friend** lives in Middleburg Heights, Ohio. She has an M.A. in TESL from the University of Toledo and taught ESL in intensive English programs and adult education for 23 years before transitioning to working as a program

data specialist in an Ohio Aspire (adult education program) at the Cuyahoga County Public Library two years ago. She and her husband have three adult children. Salzburg memories: "Running along the Salzach River, hiking, traveling around Europe, attending classical music concerts in the Hohensalzburg Fortress, and meeting wonderful people. A classmate and I climbed up and down the Untersberg and I will never forget being surrounded by such beauty." Denise is in contact with Jill Sommer, Julie Giffin, Dom Marrone, Jane Fu and Patty Conlon.  
E-mail: mdfriend3@sbcglobal.net



*Denise (Swartz) Friend*

**Jill Sommer** lives in Cleveland Heights, Ohio. She has an M.A. in translation from Kent State University and has been a freelance German to English translator for some 26 years. She recently picked up a new skill and part-time job when fellow AYA alum Maura Callahan contacted her about moderating aeronautic and aerospace engineering online QA (Quality Assurance) training sessions in German for her company. Salzburg memory: "Being in constant awe that I was living in such a beautiful city." Jill is in contact via Facebook with "just about everyone" from the 1989-90 program. The group had a zoom chat some months ago with most of the group. She encourages everyone to come to the AYA Homecoming reunions at BGSU.  
E-mail: gertoeng@jill-sommer.com

### 1990-91

#### Director Klaus Schmidt

**Eva (Schott) McMasters** (grad, see 1987-88)

# ALUMNI NEWS 2021 *continued*

## 1991-1992

### Director Margy Gerber

**Virginia Cooper** lives in Oakland, California. She holds an M.A. in translation from Kent State University. She still does occasional freelance translation from German to English, but she is currently working as a high school special education teacher. Salzburg memory: "I remember hiking in the Alps with a few others from the group. We stayed overnight without having brought along camping gear. It was the coldest night in my life!" Virginia is in contact with Dom Marrone.

**Paula Siefert** (grad) lives in Maple Grove, Minnesota and works at the Toro Company, where she is senior manager in business development. Paula ordinarily travels frequently for the company, but the COVID-19 pandemic grounded her. So she turned to home improvements: "new roof, new windows, new blinds, new garage door, new water softener, new gutters, house trim painted, new doorbell, driveway resealed [...]. Whew – I have attempted to be productive. BUT I'm ready to get back to traveling the world." Her Salzburg friendships remain today, especially with Dom Marrone and Tammy Kümmler-Barabash. E-mail: paula\_sliefert@yahoo.com

## 1992-93

### Director Christina Guenther



*James and Suzanne Bernhardt at Stieglbräu*

**James Bernhardt** lives in Stow, Ohio with his wife Suzanne and their three children. He has a J.D. from the University of Akron and works as a public defender for the Summit County Legal Defender's Office. He and his family are active in the Akron German Family Society and James

volunteers with the Cuyahoga Falls Oktoberfest committee. Salzburg memories: "I took my wife and kids to Salzburg in 2019. Of course, we had Gulaschsuppe and Bosnas, toured the Stiegl Bräuerei, visited the Festung and the Untersberg, and had breakfast at Cafe Tomaselli. The best was when my wife and son were talking to a souvenir vendor and needed a translation. I explained what my wife and son were asking. Suddenly she called other vendors and shopkeepers over and they asked where I learned my German. After I explained my time with AYA, I became the "Ami aus Soizbuag" and made a bunch of new friends. Salzburg will always be a part of me because of AYA. If the program ever wants to exchange a lawyer to teach American law to the Austrians, sign me up." His son Francis, who starts college in the fall, hopes to study in Austria or Germany. James is in contact with Todd Warmington and Bill Weisenburger. E-mail: jbernhardt@neo.rr.com

**Brian Pfaltzgraff** (grad) lives in Waverly, Iowa and is professor of music performance and chair of the music department at Wartburg College there. He and his wife Carita are having to deal with being "empty nesters" since their two sons (18 and 22), having graduated from high school resp. college, are no longer living at home. Question about using German: "Yes! Got dragooned into teaching a 100-level language and culture course during May Term 2021. Salzburg memory: "Kaffeepause with the Bosnian Hausmeister from the Hotel Traube. Thirty years on, and we still prefer Bosnian coffee." Brian is in touch with Patrick Miller, Christina Guenther and Margy Gerber. E-mail: brian.pfaltzgraff@wartburg.edu

**Todd Warmington** lives in Concord Township, Ohio. He has an M.A. in finance and international management from Case Western Reserve and Central European University. His life today: "Raising chickens, a tortoise, and a son on the shores of Lake Erie." Salzburg memory: "Upon landing in Munich and hailing a taxi to the station to take the train to Salzburg, I realized I had a lot to learn in this language after telling my cab driver to 'be quiet' instead of 'be careful' as he put my bags in the taxi. He didn't speak to me the whole ride." Todd is in contact with Bill Weisenburger, James Bernhardt, Alex Montenegro.

## 1993-1994

### Director Geoffrey Howes

**Kevin Kane** (grad) lives in Tours, France. He has dual M.A. degrees in French and German from BGSU and for some years was the resident director of the AYA French program. Kevin is creating a thematic tourism company 'en France': "We will do small group tours to, say, a series of Gothic cathedrals, Renaissance châteaux, or sites of The Great War of 1914–18." Salzburg memories: "Schnecken von der Wiener Bäckerei, Café Fürst, Augustinerbräu ...." E-mail: kanek@hotmail.fr

## 1994-1995

### Director Margy Gerber

**James Bernhardt** (grad, see 1992-93)



*Sophie Billings will follow the family tradition, note the Universität Salzburg cookie in her hand*

**Sarah Billings** lives in Zionsville, Indiana and is employed as a grant writer. She is currently working on her master's degree in philanthropic studies at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis. Sarah's daughter Sophie, who has just graduated high school, is planning to spend her sophomore year in Salzburg with the AYA program, thus continuing a family tradition: Besides Sarah, her older sister, Amy, went on the AYA program (1991-92) and their father was a Fulbright Chair in Law at Universität Salzburg in 2007-2008! Salzburg memories: "I had no classes on Friday, so I always jumped on a train to somewhere! As a poor student with little extra money, I chose to travel east. It was so much cheaper at that time to go anywhere east of Germany, so I explored Hungary, Poland, and the



Czech Republic extensively. One cannot duplicate that experience today!"

E-mail: sgbillings2000@yahoo.com

### 1995-1996

#### Director Margy Gerber

**Billy Barnes** lives in Locarno, Ticino, Switzerland, where he teaches English. He is married to Anna Puzdrowski, whom he met in Salzburg. After the year in Salzburg both returned to their home universities (BGSU, the Swiss University of Freiburg), but a year later Anna joined Billy in BGSU for graduate study. The language of Ticino (Tessin) is Italian, which the family speaks most of the time; Billy speaks English with their children; Anna and Billy also use German. „We are happy here, enjoying the benefits of being two teachers, living in the heart of Europe and having two adventurous children who like to travel.“ Salzburg memories: “There are so many: the Thanksgiving skits, Thursday night Heimbar at the Weiße Traube, the KHG where my future wife and I danced together for the first time, the Kombiticket for the train and skiing.”

E-mail: barnes.billy@gmail.com



*Karen (Gedeon) Hamilton and her husband Chuck*

**Karen (Gedeon) Hamilton** lives with her family in Wadsworth, Ohio. She returned to Salzburg for graduate study (1997-98) and was a Fulbright teaching assistant in Tirol (1999-2000). After teaching high school German for seven years, she became an exchange student area representative for the International Student Exchange, which allows her occasionally to travel abroad. Karen and her husband Chuck have four children, the oldest of whom, Jake (15) is avidly learning German with the College Credit Plus online program offered by Wright State. Salzburg memories: “... our Thanksgiving and Christmas get-togethers, the Christkindlmarkt, skiing, ice skating on the Leopoldskroner Weiher and biking down the

Hellbrunnerallee, going to the Eisriesenwelt, the Berlin trip and so many other things, but I also love the friends I made. After all these years I still miss and long for Salzburg and the mountains of Austria! Karen is in contact with Peter Doerschler, Jennifer Schaeffer, Greg Miller, John Franz, Kari Stonehouse among others.

E-mail: karenlynn25@hotmail.com

**Greg Miller** lives in Placentia, California, where he teaches 3rd grade at a K-8 school. Grades 3-5 are departmentalized at his school, “so I teach math and coding/robotics to all three 3rd grade classes – that and a little PE.” Hybrid teaching during the pandemic was “awful.” Greg is looking forward to the return of inclass teaching. Salzburg memory: “I played on my dorm’s soccer team.” Greg is in touch with Mark Mooradian, Luc Strybol and several others on Facebook.

E-mail: gmiller5020@yahoo.com

### 1996-97

#### Director Klaus Schmidt

**Tanya (Galgano) Stevenson** lives in Rockaway, New Jersey, where she teaches German and is an instructional coach. “I continue to use the German I learned via immersion and my classes on a daily basis. I get to share my passion for learning everyday with students and other teachers.” She is married and has three children. Salzburg memory: “I will never forget the first night in the dorm, where I was preparing dinner and listening to other students speaking – I was in shock that the dialect was so different than the Hochdeutsch I had learned! I had to learn quickly in order to communicate with my new friends in German.”

E-mail: tgstevenson@gmail.com

### 1997-1998

#### Director Christina Guenther

**Karen (Gideon) Hamilton** (grad, see 1995-96)

**Robert Meehan** (fall) (grad) is now living in Silver Springs, Florida. He has two M.A. degrees: in Spanish from BGSU and in ESL and Linguistics from the University of Illinois, Chicago. Before his retirement he taught ESL in Arab countries for more than 20 years. The pandemic curtailed his travel plans. Instead, he sought out special cuisines, visited (with mask) Florida art museums and antique shops.” A Salzburg memory: “Going to the marionette opera theater for Mozart’s Zauberflöte.” Robert is in contact with Carla Schober Herman.

E-Mail: robroymeehan@yahoo.com

### 1998-1999

#### Director Geoffrey Howes

**Billy Barnes** (grad, see 1995-96)

### 1999-2000

#### Director Kristie Foell



*Christian Kelso visiting with Kristie Foell in Bowling Green*

**Christian Kelso** lives in Dallas, Texas, where he works as an attorney. He holds a Master of Laws (Tax) degree from Southern Methodist University. He was recently in Bowling Green for the very first time: “During the pandemic, I took my family on a road trip from Dallas to Michigan’s Upper Peninsula and toured the Midwest while we were at it. I had never been to Ohio before, much less to Bowling Green, but I was able to make it there and even had lunch with Dr. Foell – socially distanced, of course. It was so great to see BGSU for the first time, over 20 years after my AYA ended. Thanks to Dr. Foell for making me feel welcome!” Salzburg memories: „A significant portion of my year involved Jörg Haider and his ultra-right political party. That experience has very much influenced my thoughts on the current American political climate.” Christian is in contact with many participants in his group.

E-mail: ckelso@christiankelso.com

**Kendra Thompson-Kumar** lives in Windsor, Canada, with her husband and two teenage children. She works at the University of Windsor as the program coordinator for FishCAST, a NSERC-CREATE program. Salzburg memories: “That feeling of dread and panic I felt during the Krampuslauf in the Getreidegasse! I also remember being distracted constantly by the view of the Festung Hohensalzburg during class.” Kendra is in touch with Mandy (Kohorst) Hemming, Adele (Funk) Kelleher, Adam Galea, Michelle Redding and Christian Kelso.

E-mail: kendraamber@yahoo.com



# ALUMNI NEWS 2021 *continued*

## Summer 2000

**Libby (Heineman) Dulaney** (see 2004-05)

## 2000-2001

**Director Christina Guenther**

**Lisa Heinrich** lives in Copley, Ohio. She has a Master of Music degree from Cleveland State University and has just finished her first year as a doctoral student in music education at Kent State University.

E-mail: heinrich.lisa@gmail.com

## 2001-2002

**Director Edgar Landgraf**

**Kirsten Kunkle** has moved with her husband and baby girl from Delaware to Sandusky, Ohio. She has a doctorate in musical arts from the University of Michigan in voice performance and is the co-founder and artistic director of the Wilmington Concert Opera in Delaware, which she now co-runs remotely. Kirsten has delved back into Native American song and chamber music with Intermountain Opera Bozeman; she has also been singing new music and had the opportunity to create new operatic roles working directly with composers. In addition to singing, she has begun libretto and musical theatre book and lyrics writing, as well as poetry. Salzburg memories: "... all of my trips around Europe, NaWi Feste, amazing courses with phenomenal faculty, hiking the Alps, the Döner kebabs at Ata's, performing for Thanksgiving, my parents and boyfriend (now husband) visiting. Truly, my AYA year was among the best in my life." Kirsten is in contact with Eric Marquez, Tracey (Leroux) Jarrett, Jennifer (Snyder) Yoak, Justin Luedy, Ursula (Wein) Prosen and others.

E-mail: kirstenckunkle@gmail.com

## Summer 2003

**Lonie Moore** (see 2003-2004)

## 2003-2004

**Director Edgar Landgraf**

**Lonie Moore** lives in Delaware, Ohio. He earned an M.S. in statistics at West Virginia University and an MBA at Xavier University. His planned relocation from Cincinnati to New York City with his company Dai Ichi Life was postponed due to COVID-19. He accepted instead a position with Nationwide Financial in Columbus. In 2020 he became engaged to Sue Kavaya, who, originally from Western Kenya, came to the USA on a Fulbright scholarship to study at Yale University. She is presently a doctoral student at Indiana

University. Last November they welcomed a baby girl to the world. Lonie is the fundraising and scholarships coordinator of the AYA Salzburg Alumni Group (see his report). Salzburg memory: "Studying Kunstgeschichte with Frau Klein and then traveling to the Uffizi Gallery in Florence to see many of the same works that we had just learned about!" Lonie is in contact with most of his group via Facebook.

E-mail: lonie.moore@gmail.com



*Lonie Moore with Sue Kavaya and their daughter Zuri*

## 2004-05

**Director: Theodore Rippey**

**Eddy Enriquez Arana** (grad) lives in Washington, D.C. He has dual M.A. degrees in German and Spanish and is professor of both languages at Montgomery College in Maryland. Salzburg memories: "The great cultural programming, trips, and academic freedom to explore and thrive!" He is in contact with Dr. Howes and Dr. Guenther.

E-mail: earana532@gmail.com



*Libby Dulaney*

**Libby (Heineman)**

**Dulaney** lives in Pemberville, Ohio. Libby has a master's degree in classroom technology and German from BGSU and teaches German at Eastwood High School in Troy Township. The school's proximity to

Bowling Green enables her to offer College Credit Plus courses in conjunction with BGSU. Libby recently traveled to Europe with a group of 28 students and adults. "While in Salzburg I had a parent get lost. Thankfully, because of my extensive time in Salzburg, I could easily figure out his location from his description of places around him and find him. Had he gotten lost in any other

city, I wouldn't have had a clue!" AYA contacts: "Lots of them."

E-mail: libbyrdulaney@gmail.com

## 2006-2007

**Director Kristie Foell**



*Jennica Magers at her promotion to Captain*

**Jennica Magers** (grad) lives in Ginoza-san, Okinawa, Japan, where she is an Air Defense artillery officer. She joined the military in 2015 after competing her M.A. in German at BGSU and is now serving as Operations Captain

for a Patriot Air Defense Battalion in Okinawa. Salzburg memory: A rambunctious evening with the group at a Heurige in Vienna. Jennica is in contact with Christi Stefanik, Amanda Finnan Palmer and Fred Hadding.

E-mail: jennica.g.magers.mil@mail.mil

## 2008-2009

**Director Theodore Rippey**

**Kristen Harter** lives in Lakewood, Ohio. She teaches German at Shaker Heights Middle School in Shaker Heights (suburb of Cleveland). German instruction begins there in the fifth grade (exploratory) and is continued through the 12th grade with AP and IB. Shaker Heights has the longest continual yearly exchange with a German school (Ratsgymnasium in Goslar). "We just had our 50-year celebration a couple years ago. Covid obviously threw off our streak. Boo." Kristen is in contact with Tim Cable, Dylan Martin, and Justin Kaminski.

E-mail: harter.kristen@gmail.com

**Mary Beth (Broadwater) Kollert** (grad) lives in Linz, Upper Austria. While studying in Salzburg as a grad student, she met her future husband Alex, a German living in Salzburg. In 2010 Mary Beth returned to Salzburg from Bowling Green after completing her M.A. to teach in the Fulbright/USTA program. Since 2012 she has been working for an ecumenical Christian organization, Campus für Christus, an affiliate of CRU, a ministry for students that is also at BGSU. She now works remotely from Linz at the regional level to coach and train staff members from across Europe. Salzburg memories: "For me it was bittersweet attending the 2018 AYA Salzburg 50-year

celebration because I had just moved to Linz a month or two earlier. Salzburg had been my home since 2008. Moving to Linz, where my husband got a job, was a big step of pulling up roots that I didn't know had grown." Invitation: "If ever a fellow BG alum or current student should be in Linz, I would host them and welcome them wholeheartedly." She is in contact with Tim Cable and Dylan Martin.  
E-mail: mary\_broad24@hotmail.com

**Dylan Martin** (grad) lives in Berlin, Germany, where he arrived in 2019 just before the pandemic broke out. He has two M.A. degrees: in German from BGSU and in translation studies from Kent State. Dylan is currently working as a video game localization project manager at Altagram, which handles "translations for everything from small indie games/apps to big AAA titles." "I get to use German every day. If I had a nickel for each word of German I speak every day, I'd probably still owe a lot on my student loans, but it was worth it." Salzburg memory: "A German friend visited me once in Salzburg. She spoke very little English. We went into a shop, and she asked the cashier a question in English. The cashier instantly responded in English with a thick Austrian accent. There was confusion all around. The thought of two native speakers of German trying to speak English with each other cracks me up to this day." E-mail: dylan.l.martin85@gmail.com

### 2009-2010

#### Director Christina Guenther

**April (Reiter) Hemphill** (grad) lives in New Jersey, where she works for the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in Princeton. She works on the AP, CLEP, and PRAXIS German exams, developing and coordinating the development of items and exams, coordinating scoring and committee work, and liaising with clients to develop the exams. She uses German in her job and also with her family. Salzburg memories: "... a tour of the Dom from an unofficial tour guide (retiree with lots of knowledge), riding my bike along the Salzach in the snow. One I keep coming back to this year is dropping my giant room key down a grate in the Linzer Gasse." E-mail: april.reiter@gmail.com

**Andrea (Weatherman) Kikkert** (grad) lives in Farmville, Virginia. In addition to her Master's in German from BGSU, she holds a Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. She is a visiting assistant professor of modern languages at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia. Andrea is in contact

with April (Reiter) Hemphill.  
E-mail: andrea\_weatherman@yahoo.com

### 2010-2011

#### Director Kristie Foell

**Kristen Oviatt** (grad) lives in Dallas, Texas. She has dual M.A. degrees in German and History from BGSU and teaches German and European history at Grapevine High School in the Dallas area. Salzburg memory: "On our first day in Salzburg, we celebrated my birthday at a restaurant and had a delightful dinner and dessert. It was a great way to start a year abroad!" Kristen is in contact with most of her group. "They're pretty great!" E-mail: knoviatt@gmail.com

### 2011-2012

#### Director Edgar Landgraf

**Kristen Harter** (grad, fall, see 2008-09)

**Kasarah (Menegon) Boiter** (grad) lives in Lexington, South Carolina. She has an M.A. in German from BGSU. Kasarah teaches middle school German (6th, 7th and 8th grades) and is also a chorus teacher.  
E-mail: kasmenegon@yahoo.com

**Alexandra (McColum) Spradlin** lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, where she teaches high school English and most recently also German. She started a German program at her school this year. Alexandra has an M.Ed. (curriculum & instruction) from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.  
E-mail: anmccollum@gmail.com

### 2012-2013

#### Director Stefan Fritsch

**Dana Deal** (grad) lives in Jacksonville, Florida, where she previously taught German at the University of North Florida. In November 2019, she was promoted to the Dean's Office in the College of Arts and Sciences at the university and last February she started a new position there as office manager of career discoveries in the Career Services department. Dana is working on a second master's degree in learning design and technology. "My dad and I attended the 50th reunion in Salzburg. We made great memories there and it was something we couldn't stop talking about. We wanted to go back to Europe sometime after the pandemic, unfortunately my dad passed away in December 2020." Salzburg memories: "I enjoyed everything that Salzburg had to offer. From the fresh food markets to museums

and the Landestheater, it really was a wonderful experience. The program director and university professors were great to learn from and work with." Dana is in contact with Laura Hoesman.  
E-mail: dana.marie.deal@gmail.com

### Summer 2013

**Bruce Kwiatkowski** (also summers 2014-16) lives in Amberg, Bavaria. He has a doctorate in history from the University of Toledo. Bruce teaches German for the U.S. military in Germany, presently at the U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria at Vilseck. The program is part of the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC). A Salzburg memory: "Cooking Wiener Schnitzel in Haus Merian with the other BGSU students in summer 2014." E-mail: bruce.kwiatkowski@utoledo.edu

### 2013-2014

#### Directors Christina Guenther (fall) and Geoffrey Howes (spring)

**Shaydon Ramey** (spring) lives in Bowling Green. Having finished his dual M.A. degrees in German and Spanish, he taught Spanish at Notre Dame Academy in Toledo this past year. Shaydon will soon be leaving for Germany, where he has been accepted at Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg to study English and Spanish (auf Lehramt) with the goal of becoming a Gymnasium-level teacher in Germany. Shaydon is an active member of the Salzburg Alumni Group. Salzburg memory: "I loved sitting at the café on top of Unipark. It was a relaxing place to work if you were alone, but more often than not, you would run into someone you knew: a professor, a classmate, someone else from the program." Shaydon is in contact with Emily (Skorupski) Brancel, Lorena Haberern and Dan Otto from 2013-2014 and "nearly everyone" from 2017-18, esp. Julian Gillilan.  
E-mail: shaydonramey@gmail.com

**Jacqueline Tomlin** (grad, fall) lives in Georgetown, Ohio. She has dual M.A. degrees in German and history from BGSU. Jacqueline works as a closing agent for a title company. "Funnily enough, I've run into people at a closing who will speak German to each other if they're trying to be discreet! You truly never know when knowing German will come in handy!" Salzburg memory: "Our snowshoeing adventure in the Alps definitely stands out. It was absolutely beautiful and something I will never forget." Jacqueline is in close contact with Ann (Jennings) Haack and Dan Otto.  
E-mail: jtomlin001@gmail.com

# ALUMNI NEWS 2021 *continued*

**Noël Welch** is currently living in Daejeon, South Korea, where she teaches English in two Korean elementary schools. She has a B.A. in German and art from BGSU.

E-mail: noelwelch14@gmail.com

**Bill Whitesmith** now lives in State College, Pennsylvania, where he has a position as administrative support assistant at Penn State University. The work currently involves supporting the university's German graduate students. (See interview with Geoff Howes.) Bill holds dual M.A.s in history and German. He is in contact with Noël Welch and Emily (Skorupski) Brancel.

E-mail: wwsmith@bgsu.edu

## Summer 2014

**Jacob Weinmann** (see 2014-15)

## 2014-2015

**Director Christina Guenther**

**Molly Closson** lives in Weston, Ohio. She has recently completed an M.A. in kinesiology in an online program at Georgia Southern University. After teaching German at Tinora High School in Defiance, Ohio for three years, she will return to Salzburg this fall to work as a full-time resident assistant at the Internationale Schule (see Fulbright section). Salzburg memory: "My favorite memory is going to Gusswerk, a brewery in Salzburg. About once a month, my friends and I would go there, and we became friends with the manager. We taught him a new English word, and then he gave us a quiz in German that we had to pass."

E-mail: mollyrc22@gmail.com

**Margaret (Selzer) Leimkühler** (spring) lives in West Bend, Wisconsin. She has a B.A. in Spanish and German from BGSU. Margaret is study abroad program coordinator at Concordia University Wisconsin and Concordia University Ann Arbor. Concordia too was prevented from sending students abroad by the pandemic. "I am



*Café Glüxfall in Salzburg*

optimistically planning my first trip back to Austria with our university partnership team and hoping to send a student for winter semester to Steyr." An AYA memory: "Sliding down the brewery slide." She is in touch with Anna Piotti.

E-mail: margaret.rose2920@gmail.com

**Jacob Weinmann** lives in Grand Rapids, Ohio.

He has a B.A. in political science and German from BGSU. Jacob is currently a full-time MBA student in BGSU's Schmidhorst College of Business. He expects to graduate in December 2021 after supplemental studies in supply chain management. Post-graduation aspirations include working in Germany, in the Düsseldorf or Bremen areas. Salzburg memory: "The delicious Flammkuchen served in Cafe Glüxfall!" Jacob is in touch with Molly Shea, Jared Pendleton, Madeline Brennan, Zachary Stein, Molly Closson and others.

E-mail: Jcbwnmnn@gmail.com

## 2016-2017

**Director Stefan Fritsch**

**Andrea Danziger** lives in Washington, D.C., where, after a two-year term with the Peace Corps in Mongolia, she works on the Syria Response Management Team of USAID (see interview with Geoff Howes). Andrea has a B.A. in political science and German from BGSU.

E-mail: andreaJDanziger@gmail.com

**Bill Whitesmith** (grad, see 2013-14)

## 2017-18

**Director Kristie Foell**

**Nathan Ireland** lives in Salzburg, where he works at Lindt & Sprüngli.

E-mail: nathanielireland@gmail.com

**Shaydon Ramney** (grad, see 2013-14)

## Summer 2018

**Michael Edward Arcangeletti** (see 2018-19)

## 2018-19

**Director Christina Guenther**

**Michael Edward Arcangeletti** (grad) lives in East Brunswick, New Jersey. He has a M.Ed. from Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in German from BGSU. He now teaches German in the East Brunswick Public Schools. The district starts foreign languages in grade 6 – "and it's not just exploratory." Students are in level one in grade 6, and 2 in grade 7. "By the time I get them in grade 8 for German 3, they can already hold pretty decent conversations." The district encourages students to stick with the same language from grades 6-12. The German program is the second most popular language and growing. Salzburg memories: "... a dinner at Dr. Guenther's, where we made Schnitzel assembly-line style. Coming together as a group and working together while following a German recipe felt very rewarding. Another fond memory is Dr. Guenther teaching us 'Danket danket dem Herrn' to sing at our Thanksgiving celebration. Later when we met as a group we often broke into song, and during the pandemic we even texted the lyrics back and forth on Thanksgiving." Michael is in contact with Everett King, Monona Martin, Taylor Lenze, Calli Randolph and Alexis Robbins.

E-mail: marcang@bgsu.edu

*Café Tomaselli*



*Ellin Iselin*

## Reunion Announcement for AYA 1986-87

### Has it been 35 years since Salzburg?

Ellin Iselin is organizing a virtual reunion of the 1986-87 group and is looking for members of the group. Contact: ellin\_iselin@hotmail.com



# CREATIVITY AT WORK! The youth opera *The Race*

Dr. **Deborah Kavasch** (AYA 1969-70), professor of music theory and composition at California State University Stanislaus, and the librettist Linda Bunney-Sarhad have written a highly successful youth opera, *The Race*. A mashup of five Aesop's fables, the opera centers on the race between *The Tortoise and the Hare*, which provides the backbone of the story as it intersects with *The Bear and the Bees*, *The Hares and the Frogs*, *The Fox and the Grapes*, and *The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*. The "human" figure Aesop, dressed in a white gown, comments on the fables' morals and introduces the cast at the beginning of the opera.



*Deborah Kavasch at a staging of The Race*

The opera was originally commissioned by Opera Modesto as a youth training opera for their 2020 Summer Opera Institute for teens. It was conceived as a stage production and as a teaching tool. However, in response to the theater closings due to COVID-19, production focus shifted from the stage to the screen and *The Race* was produced as a film.

The cast, featuring 19 Central Valley (California) 11–19-year-olds acting in multiple roles, rehearsed almost entirely on Zoom. Filming took place outdoors on location in Central Valley orchards, fields, vineyards and by the Tuolumne River.

The costuming of the singer-animals is humorously rudimentary. Rabbit ears mark the Hare, who is dressed in jogging clothes and running shoes, while a backpack serves as the shell of the Tortoise. The Bees chasing the Bear, identified by a furry winter hat, are dressed as musketeers, called Buzzketeers, and brandish rapiers for stingers.

*The Race* has won over 70 awards at international film festivals, including Best Family Film (Cannes Film Festival), Best Musical Film (Los Angeles Film Awards, Rome International Film Festival), Best Original Score (London Independent Film Awards), Best Screenplay (New York Movie Awards, Toronto Independent Film Festival).

*The Race* was originally commissioned as a teaching tool; however, the film project will have pedagogical impact well beyond training its young performers. Ultimately, *The Race* will be subtitled in English, captioned in 20 languages (including German), have American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, be accompanied by a multilingual graphic novel, and be made available as a tool for English as a Second Language and literacy programs locally and internationally.

*The Race* trailer can be seen at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JR1WY54jNo>



*Deborah Kavasch conducting, Aesop in white commenting.*



*The Hare and the Tortoise at the challenge*



*The Bear is being chased by the Bees.*



*The frightened Hare and a Frog watch the race.*





Hannes Baumgartner  
ca. 2000

# HERR BAUMGARTNER HAS RETIRED!

Known to 'generations' of AYA Salzburg students enrolled in Mittelstufe II, Hannes Baumgartner has retired from the DaF (Deutsch als Fremdsprache) program after 40 years. For many years he also taught (and will continue to teach!) Freies Schreiben as an AYA course. He has written a letter to his former AYA students in which he describes how he became a DaF instructor and his pleasure working with international students. We have decided to print his letter as he wrote it, in German. It didn't seem right that Herr Baumgartner should suddenly speak English! Let's see what his former students remember!

## Ein Brief an Studierende des Bowling Green Programms

Meinen ersten DaF-Kurs habe ich im Sommer 1980 gehalten. Das war für mich ein Sprung ins kalte Wasser. Ich war in der letzten Phase meines Studiums und hatte mich bei den Internationalen Ferienkursen Salzburg (IFK) um einen Sommer-Job beworben. Ich hatte eigentlich an Büro-Arbeit gedacht und war ganz überrascht, als ich das Angebot bekam, einen dreiwöchigen Kurs in Zell am See als Lehrer zu übernehmen. Ich wollte das Angebot nicht ablehnen, aber ich war sehr unsicher und nervös, denn eigentlich war ich nach Interesse und Studium ein Literatur-Mensch und hatte wenig Ahnung von Fremdsprachendidaktik."

Ich habe also zugesagt, und diese Entscheidung hat meinen ganzen weiteren Berufsweg bestimmt. In diesem Sommer 1980 habe ich nämlich entdeckt, wie viel Freude es mir macht, mit Menschen aus aller Welt zu arbeiten und ihnen die deutsche Sprache näherzubringen. Als ich nach meinem Studienabschluss vor der Wahl stand, an einer Schule österreichische Kinder und Jugendliche zu unterrichten oder bei IFK weiterzumachen, habe ich für den zwar unsicheren, aber für mich viel reizvolleren DaF-Bereich entschieden. Mir war dabei auch klar, dass ich noch sehr viel dazulernen musste, um ein kompetenter Sprachlehrer zu werden. In den folgenden Jahren habe ich daher jede Gelegenheit genutzt, um mich weiterzubilden.

Bei den Sommerkursen in Zell am See hatte ich auch meine erste Begegnung mit Studierenden des Austauschprogramms der BGSU. Einige Freundschaften, die damals entstanden sind, bestehen heute noch und haben auch zu gegenseitigen Besuchen geführt. Im Jahr 1984 konnte ich in der Nachfolge meiner geschätzten Kollegin und Mentorin Hedwig Fleischhacker einen DaF-Kurs an der Universität übernehmen. Von da an hatte ich regelmäßig Studierende des BGSU AYA Programms in meinen Klassen. Es ist keine Übertreibung, wenn ich sage, dass der Name ‚Bowling Green‘ aufgrund der Qualität des Programms und der Leistungen seiner Studierenden einen ganz besonderen Klang hatte. Eine wichtige

Rolle spielten dabei die Programm-Direktor\_innen. Ich lernte zuerst Margy Gerber und Klaus Schmidt kennen, und im Lauf der Jahre eine Reihe weiterer außergewöhnlicher Persönlichkeiten, mit denen die Zusammenarbeit wunderbar funktionierte.

Für mich war es dann auch eine besondere Freude, dass ich im Rahmen des BGSU-Programms einen Kurs übernehmen durfte. Einmal in der Woche mit einer kleinen Gruppe ‚freies Schreiben‘ zu trainieren, war ein schöner Ausgleich zum Großgruppenunterricht und hat mir ermöglicht, besser auf die Bedürfnisse der einzelnen Studierenden einzugehen. Ihre kreativen Ideen und oft sehr originellen Texte haben mir auch viel Spaß gemacht.

Im Herbst 2020 ist meine aktive Laufbahn zu Ende gegangen. Ich blicke mit großer Dankbarkeit auf diese vier Jahrzehnte zurück. Ich danke allen Kollegen und Kolleginnen in Bowling Green und in Salzburg für ihre Unterstützung, Kooperation und Freundschaft. Und den ehemaligen Studierenden danke ich für die Bereicherung, die ich durch sie erlebt habe. Sie haben mir ein Stück ihrer Welt nähergebracht und ich habe so viele interessante, liebenswürdige, spezielle Menschen kennen gelernt, wie es in kaum einem anderen Beruf möglich gewesen wäre.

Was ich künftigen DaF-Lehrenden mitgeben könnte, ist nicht allzu viel: Ich glaube, wir brauchen vor allem Geduld und Respekt. Wir sollten akzeptieren, dass Leute die ungeheure Aufgabe, eine fremde Sprache zu erwerben, in unterschiedlichem Tempo und mit unterschiedlichem Erfolg bewältigen. Dafür braucht es Geduld. Und jeder Mensch verdient unseren Respekt, egal woher er kommt oder wie gut seine Testnoten sind. Und ich denke, man sollte neugierig bleiben, bereit sein weiter zu lernen, und offen für Neues sein, auch wenn man nicht jeden Modetrend mitmachen will.

Ich bin zwar schon in Pension, aber ich arbeite auch noch ein wenig. Es ist sehr angenehm, dabei

keinen Zeitdruck mehr zu haben. Langweilig wird mir jedenfalls nicht. Dafür sorgt schon mein kleiner Enkel. Außerdem habe ich noch ein neues Hobby gefunden: Ich habe immer gern Musik gehört (vor allem Jazz) und jetzt versuche ich sie auch selbst zu spielen - ich lerne Kontrabass.

Mein Lebensglück verdanke ich meiner Familie und meinem Beruf. Ich danke allen, die mich auf meinem beruflichen Weg ein Stück begleitet haben, von Herzen. Und ich bin froh, dass ich damals ins kalte Wasser gesprungen bin.



With daughter and son-in-law



Opa mit Enkel

# Upon learning that “Herr Baumgartner” had retired, several of his former students sent well-wishes and shared memories and pictures.

“We were reading a short story for Mittelstufe II. I think the story was a type of parable. As part of the lesson, he asked if there were any words that we didn’t understand. One student asked what ‘Schwanz’ meant. Pause... Broad smile. And he said (in German), ‘When the fox jumps over the fence, it’s the last thing over.’”

**Tim Moehlman** (1984-85, 1985-86)

“My favorite lesson with Professor Baumgartner was when he led our Mittelstufe II class in a discussion about what @ is called in various cultures. This was an engaging conversation because of the many cultures present in the class. In English, we call @ the ‘at sign,’ but in German, it is ‘Klammeraffe.’ Professor Baumgartner helped students translate their cultures’ name for @ into German and listed them all on the board. I remember laughing and smiling a lot during this lesson. I learned a lot from Herr Baumgartner and am thankful to him for making learning fun!”

**Lisa Heinrich** (2000-01)

My best memories of Herr Baumgartner are how kind he always was in class. German grammar was not my best subject, but he always took his time with us. He helped us to improve and was extremely helpful and pleasant. Gratuliere, Herr Baumgartner! Die besten Wünsche für Ihren Ruhestand!

**Kirsten Kunkle** (2001-02)

Ich erinnere mich noch gern an 2004/05, als ich in Mittelstufe II mit Herrn Baumgartner saß. Es war einmal, dass ich eine längere Zeit damit verbrachte, für eine Aufgabe einen Bewerbungsbrief zu schreiben (und zwar um eine Stelle als Wachmann), und schrieb einen Blödsinn, in dem ich erklärte, dass ich Ninja wäre, könnte Einbrecher mit einem Finger ausschalten, usw. Herr Baumgartner hat es vor der Klasse vorgelesen und mich belobt. Es waren solche glücklichen Momente, die mich dazu brachte, Deutsch weiter zu studieren, und schließlich auch

wieder ein zweites Mal in 2009/10 nach Salzburg zu kommen (wo ich meine jetzige Frau (April Reiter) kennenlernte!) Als ich die Einstufungsprüfung fertig schrieb (und teilweise dank Herrn Baumgartner in die Oberstufe eingestuft wurde!), und dann aus dem Hörsaal kam, sah er mich und erkannte mich sofort. Das hätte ich nie erwartet, aber so ist er: ein hervorragender und unersetzbarer Lehrer und Mensch. Ich wünsche ihm viel Glück in der Zukunft. Danke für alles! (Und ich entschuldige mich für die Fehler, die ich hier wahrscheinlich begangen habe – daran ist er nicht schuld!)”

**George Hemphill** (New England Universities in Salzburg 04/05)

“Herr Baumgartner was awesome in every sense of the word! I thought I had a good command of German until I went to study abroad in Salzburg – then it hit me just how much I didn’t know. But Herr Baumgartner inspired us to try more complex thoughts and constructions to communicate on a deeper level. He also always made us feel as though he took a genuine interest in all of us. Whoever replaces him has some big shoes to fill!”

**Kyle Greetham** (2006, 2007-08)

“Herr Baumgartner was such an amazing professor! His classes were challenging, but he was always willing to provide extra assistance and was excellent at explaining things to students who came from many countries. He was infinitely kind, funny and understanding.”

**Laura Spaulding** (2007-08)

Herr Baumgartner was the best professor in that program! I was lucky enough to have him in Freies Schreiben both as an undergrad and a grad student. We always had a lot of fun and learned a ton without feeling discouraged for making mistakes as we got creative. Happy retirement, Herr Baumgartner!

**Tiffany Wandersalot** (2007-08)

“Hannes Baumgartner was one of the best professors in Salzburg and taught German with such passion. He is a friendly person with a good sense of humor. I really enjoyed taking his class. We actually bumped into each other during the 50th reunion at the University. My dad asked Herr Baumgartner how I was in class. I don’t think I ever heard Herr Baumgartner speak English and he spoke very well. It was also great that he remembered me. Herr Baumgartner is the sort of teacher who remembers you, even if you took his class 20 years ago. I’m thankful for crossing paths and having the opportunity to learn German from him. Congrats on your retirement, Herr Baumgartner!”

**Dana Deal** (2012-13)

“I suffered from severe anxiety when I was in Salzburg. I took Mittelstufe II and also the writing class. I remember after about three months wanting to give up because I couldn’t speak as fluently as my peers. I trusted Herr Baumgartner because he was patient and kind like my grandfather. So, instead of quitting and going home to America, I decided to go to his office hours and talk with him in German. I will never forget how patient he was with me every time I would stammer or become so nervous that I would breathe heavily and couldn’t get any words out. Herr Baumgartner gave me the strength not to quit. I will never forget his kindness. Thank you, Herr Baumgartner. I hope you enjoy your retirement!”

**Celina Penn Adams** (2016-17)

I took Grundstufe II and Freies Schreiben with him. My favorite memory of Herr Baumgartner is when we learned that most drinks have masculine articles. A student inquired about ‘das Bier’ and ‘das Wasser’. Herr Baumgartner then went on to explain, ‘in unserer Kultur ist Wasser kein Getränk.’ Historically, in the Middle Ages, people didn’t drink water very often for health reasons, so water was seen as something to bathe in rather than to drink. He then said, ‘Bier ist ein Lebensmittel.’ I miss that class. I think I learned more in that class than I have in any other college course.”

**Benjamin Foell** (2017-18)

“Omg, he was the BEST! I had him for free writing and DaF! Happy Retirement, Herr Baumgartner.

**Zoe Oswald** (2018-19)



Freies Schreiben class, 2000-01



Freies Schreiben class, 2007-08



# Three Alumni Interviews

**The Newsletter wants to call attention to particularly successful AYA alumni. There are many. Some were highlighted in the past, and more will be introduced and interviewed in the future!**

The current three interviews were conducted by **Dr. Geoff Howes**, professor emeritus of German at BGSU.



*Dr. Geoff Howes*

## An Interview with Bill Whitesmith

(AYA Su 2013, Sp 2014, 2016-17)



*Bill Whitesmith*

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself.**

I grew up in Westerville, Ohio, which is a suburb of Columbus. I was fortunate to be able to study in Salzburg in the summer 2013, spring 2014, and the full school year as a graduate student in 2016-2017. I earned a B.A. in history with minors in political science and German in 2016 and then dual M.A. degrees in German and history in 2019.

**You experienced all three BGSU programs in Salzburg: summer, undergraduate and graduate. What were some of the most important lessons or experiences for you?**

One of the more important lessons that I learned during all three of my stays in Salzburg was how to adapt to the little things in life that you don't always think about. Stores having different hours, navigating cities not designed the same way that towns in America are, and not always having certain conveniences like storage space in a dorm room. Other key experiences were learning to travel internationally on my own, as well as going about day-to-day tasks in a country where English is not the primary language. The simplest thing such as buying a sandwich in a shop or a new pair of shoes can become a language lesson in a hurry.

**You recently started a job at Penn State University. What is your title, and what does your position involve?**

I was fortunate enough to be offered a position as an administrative support assistant with the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures in May 2021. Right now, my job involves helping out with the German and comparative literature graduate programs. I mostly deal with various administrative tasks now, but once school is back in session it will involve more in-person student assistance.

**How did your education in Austria and at BGSU prepare you for this position? Do you get to apply your study abroad, language training, and liberal-arts education?**

My educational and study abroad background was a great bolster to my overall application. Working with the Bowling Green German program both in the United States and in Austria was great preparation for the German department at Penn State. Many of the graduate students and faculty have international backgrounds, and my experience working with people from different parts of the world has made it easier to fit in here. In addition, as a former graduate student, it makes me more relatable to the students I'm helping, as I too faced long papers, graduate exams, and learned to navigate the other nuances of graduate school life.

**It took some time until you got a job that involves your academic preparation, but you persisted and were successful. What advice would you give to fellow alumni who have found the job search challenging?**

As generic and cheesy as this may sound, the honest answer in my case was simply not giving up. University administration is a tough field to get into, and eight months into my job search COVID-19 hit and the job market pretty much evaporated into nothing. I ended up working in customer service for a little over a year, which does teach you a lot about people, but was not quite where I wanted to be in life. Throughout that year I kept looking for job postings and applied for jobs when I could find the time and energy. An important tip I would mention about job searching, and particularly interviews, would be to always try to appear positive, as difficult as that can be in hard times, and to follow up with an interviewer.

**What is life like in State College?**

Well, with me just now getting fully vaccinated and still settling in, I haven't yet seen as much as I would like to. One thing I can say is that it is certainly not Northwest Ohio. There are plenty of rolling hills and valleys (the area is called Happy Valley!) and plenty of woods as well. It is very much a college town, though, like Bowling Green, albeit bigger.

**What is your fondest memory (or memories!) of Austria?**

One of my fondest memories was snowshoeing in the mountainous region around Salzburg. I've always been a huge fan of snowy scenery and that day did not disappoint me! Another set of favorite memories would have to be going to the Augustinerkeller in Salzburg. It was always a unique experience compared to going out to eat and drink in the States, with its long tables, decoration style, and the micro-culture that exists there. As my mother put it, it was the first time she drank a beer while Jesus and the Virgin Mary looked on. Salzburg as a whole always felt like it was out of a different time period in history much older than our own.

**Thank you, congratulations, and all the best in your new job!**

## An Interview with Andrea Danziger (AYA 2016-17)



*Andrea Danziger*

**Just a quick summary of me:**

Andrea Danziger, 26. I currently work at USAID, Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance on the Syria Programs Team. Before my current job, I served in Peace Corps Mongolia from 2018-2020. I studied in Salzburg during 2016-17 and graduated from BGSU in 2017 with a B.A. in political science and German. I speak English, German, Mongolian, and I started Arabic about six months ago.

**What experiences in the AYA program and at BGSU helped prepare you for your further international career?**

Living abroad during the AYA program helped prepare me to take more significant steps into working and living abroad. I had lived abroad with my family when I was younger but never as a self-reliant adult. If I hadn't participated in AYA Salzburg, deciding to serve in the Peace Corps would have felt like a much bigger challenge.

Additionally, the internships and experiences I took advantage of while in Salzburg remain essential pieces of my resume and professional and personal development. I interned with Caritas Salzburg in their refugee housing cooperatives during the school year. I also volunteered in Kara Tepe Refugee Camp in Lesbos, Greece, with Movement on the Ground (MoTG), both in February and the summer after the program.

**What did your work in Mongolia involve?**

I served in Mongolia as a public health educator. I was partnered with a school in a small northern city called Bulgan. I worked with the local health teacher, local English teachers, and several leading community members to teach basic health interventions targeting 6th to 12th-grade students. Sometimes these interventions looked like formal classes, and sometimes I taught through arts and crafts or other non-traditional learning methods.

**What were some of the most challenging aspects of life in Mongolia?**

One of the most challenging aspects of living in Mongolia was the isolation from others who could relate to the experiences I was going through. A single woman coming to live alone in a new city is a very "foreign" thing to do in Mongolia because the culture rests so heavily in all things family. Also, Mongolia is a vast, sparsely populated place, which meant that other volunteers were far away. While I had beautiful friendships with several Mongolians, sometimes you yearn for the freedom to converse fully and fluently in your native language.

**What surprised you the most about Mongolia? How did it differ from your expectations?**

I think I was most surprised by the style of living in Mongolia. I think the difference likely comes from the nomadic origins of the country, but so much more is shared, whether it be food, classrooms, or houses. This idea kind of permeates into all aspects of life and reflects incredible resourcefulness that I think the rest of the world could learn from. People live happily and fully with much less space, fewer things, and utilize more communal areas than we are accustomed to in America. I should also emphasize that such a lifestyle is by choice and not from lack of resources.

**Did you get to go horseback riding over there?**

I was able to horseback ride in Mongolia; I did several treks, and they were absolutely stunning! Horseback riding for leisure was definitely a tourist activity though, as horses are a key part of livelihoods for the nomadic people of Mongolia. Most "tamed" animals are used for work, and there are herds of horses used for milk and meat in the same fashion we think of cows in the US.

**What is your best memory from your time in Mongolia?**

When I think back on my time in Mongolia, there are too many happy and exciting moments to possibly pick one. I could tell you about an amazingly successful summer camp, dog sledding on a frozen river, or climbing the Singing Sand Dunes. What sticks out most in my mind though, and what I often find myself missing here, is the beautiful vastness of untouched land, unchanneled rivers, and nature just beautifully unaltered, even just two miles outside of town.

**What advice would you give to fellow alumni who are interested in the Peace Corps?**

I would tell those interested in joining the Peace Corps that I don't know any returned volunteers who regret their experience, but I know hundreds who gained something completely unexpected. The reasons I joined are not the same reasons I would recommend Peace Corps to others. Development is challenging, and if you expect to arrive in a new place and quickly see concrete results that you can directly attribute to yourself, you will design your own failure. Peace Corps is about sharing your culture, learning a new culture, and doing your best to better the lives of those you interact with, whether it be in that moment or something that helps them 30 years later. You have to be open to whatever the experience brings you, even and especially when it deviates from your own expectations.

**Tell us about your current position with USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.**

Currently, I work for USAID/BHA on the Syria Response Management Team (RMT). My team oversees and coordinates US government-funded emergency programming for immediate life-saving assistance in Syria and Syrian refugee populations in Egypt and Turkey. Our implementing partners provide basic shelter and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) services, food assistance, health and nutrition interventions, child protection services, and other similar critical needs. My team facilitates the awards to NGOs, INGOs, and other organizations that make the delivery and implementation of US international assistance possible.

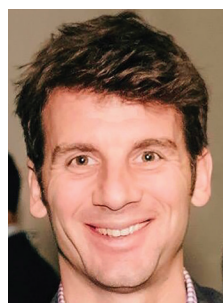
**What advice would you give to recent graduates based on your experiences?**

I would tell recent graduates, especially those looking for jobs, to never undersell themselves. So many experiences we mentally write off have value and are marketable, but thinking about yourself in that way can be really challenging. Also, never be afraid to ask for help. The people around you should want to see and help you succeed. And finally, apply to everything that interests you! If you ask yourself, "Am I qualified for this?" and the answer is "maybe," then you should definitely apply!

**Thank you, and all the best for the future!**

**An Interview with Alexander Mirescu**

(AYA 1996-97, 1998-99)



*Alexander Mirescu*

**Thank you for your willingness to tell your fellow alumni about your career during the more than twenty years since you earned your dual master's in German and political science at BGSU. Could you outline the highlights of what you have done since and tell us what you are doing now?**

After completing my master's in Salzburg, I moved to Vienna to take a research position at the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), which set my career on a path towards working in international organization and development. Vienna is one of the global capitals for international and regional organizations. I simply did not want to leave Austria after defending my thesis in Salzburg and was keen on continuing to globalize my career options. BGSU students should investigate working or interning in Vienna after their studies in Salzburg.

*Continued on next page*

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After returning to the United States and about two years on Wall Street in international finance for a German bank, where I was paid mostly to speak German to clients in Frankfurt, I started doctoral studies in political science at the New School for Social Research. There, the International Center for Migration, Ethnicity and Citizenship hired me on a recommendation from ICMPCD in Vienna. Between doctoral coursework, working at ICMEC, and waiting tables, I applied for research grants and received one at the Free University of Berlin in support of my dissertation, which focused in part on anti-communist free space development in the GDR.

After two otherwise uninteresting years in Berlin, a city I consider inferior to Vienna, I returned to metro New York/New Jersey to finish writing my dissertation. In that period, the United Nations Development Program offered me a research position and later hired me as a full-time consultant. I did this for two and a half more years after my doctoral defense. This led to other consultancies with UN ECOSOC and UNOIOS. In 2010, I accepted a tenure-track position in comparative politics at Saint Peter's University in Jersey City but maintained my consulting work until I left academia in 2016 to do full-time international development work, especially in the growing field of disaster risk reduction and urban resilience.

In 2016 I started my own small consulting firm, Resilient/City LLC, which works with international organizations, municipal and national governments, and the private sector on resilience. This work expanded to more regular assignments with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), the World Water Council, and since 2019 the World Bank, where I serve as Senior Disaster Risk Management consultant. In early 2020, the World Economic Forum and the city of Jersey City hired me as a policy analyst for their Healthy Cities & Communities global platform.

**As you indicated earlier, you've worked for the United Nations in various capacities for many years. What have been some of your contributions to their programs?**

I have served as a program consultant to various United Nations agencies since 2009 with my focus now mainly on UNDRR and with much of my effort going to the World Bank, which is technically a United Nations body. My contributions were rather broad at first, mainly analytical research and writing, with some project management and human resources work. Since it had been my dream to work for the United Nations for many years, I would have been happy to serve tea and biscuits, but I was luckier than I expected and with each new assignment, my workload and responsibilities grew: to leading research teams, supporting and designing missions to other countries, participating in UN and World Bank missions, to now representing both institutions vis-à-vis national and municipal governments and other international organizations, as well as the private sector.

Incidentally, I have continued to encounter German-speakers and get to use German professionally. I am convinced that Bavarian, Swiss and Austrian colleagues at the World Bank and World Economic Forum have opened doors for me to the odd new assignment or contract. These are AYA dividends.

**You are the founder and CEO of Resilient/City, which according to your website "offers expert consulting in conceptualizing and developing national policies and municipal strategies on risk reduction and urban resilience." Can you give us a quick overview of what "urban resilience" entails?**

Urban resilience is the new sustainability. It is, stated simply, a mechanism of designing economies and societies in such a way that they can withstand, absorb, recover from and better adapt to various climate, pandemic and man-made "stressors." Experiencing Hurricane Sandy or losing dozens of UNDP colleagues in the Haitian earthquake of 2010 laid bare how our cities

need to prepare better for heightened climate-driven risk. This means working consistently with the private sector, which can advance and implement technology and innovation in collaboration with the governmental sector. The world is rapidly urbanizing, and I have become very interested in how cities function. Through my work with Resilient/City, UN Habitat invited me to participate in its Academy for Urban Sustainable Mobility in Koblenz, Germany and Vienna.

**What are some of the highlights of your work with the World Bank and the World Economic Forum?**

Unlike in academia, my work for the World Bank and WEF produces tangible, measurable and durable results that generate compassion and positive impacts by cooperating with the private sector and governments. Both in the policy space, like helping to author much of Mexico's first legislation on resilience, and in the built environment, by improving the way cities are designed, my projects always come to fruition.

**What do you see as the future of public private partnerships (PPPs)?**

There are many misplaced, misinformed, and disparaging attitudes toward engaging with the private sector, the most troubling coming from an alarming flirtation with Marxism-Socialism among some of my fellow liberal thinkers. PPPs are the only meaningful vehicle to advance technologies and innovative approaches to designing and administering governance, from how we park cars to how we manage storm water and emissions, to using artificial intelligence to make public transportation more efficient and sustainable. The World Economic Forum and World Bank, as well as the United Nations, have recognized the value of good partnerships for achieving, for example, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). City governments simply do not have the capacity to do all the heavy lifting. Hence, harnessing the private sector's support is necessary.

**What advice would you give to AYA alumni who are interested in doing consulting work?**

Language acquisition and fluency open doors in ways that other skillsets do not. It is true that English is largely the lingua franca of Europe, but it does not predominate everything. German-speakers, for example, still like to see others with professional fluency. My achieving a high level of professional fluency in German was rewarded with work opportunities and advancements as well as professional and friendship networks in Vienna. The BGSU and Salzburg program directors proved themselves instrumental in that endeavor.

Secondly, as I advised my students a few years ago, international exposure and global fieldwork distinguish some job candidates from others. As the United States exits both a global pandemic and a political climate of isolationism and nativism, now is an excellent time to globalize the skillsets you gained from the AYA. For those currently in the AYA, I would strongly suggest maximum immersion in Austrian culture, society, education and work, to the point of near total rejection of English. If one is investing in one's future by studying abroad, it always seemed important to me to immerse oneself completely in the new host society.

Thirdly, global consulting work requires a global vision. Alumni networks and academic advisors are typically great tools to expand that vision. It is good that the AYA has integrated a jobs and internship program. I had to do this completely on my own, and I would love to offer my support for the current program.

**Is there anything else you would like to pass on to our alumni?**

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I would be happy to help anyone affiliated with the AYA.





# SALZBURG SWEETHEARTS

Many AYA students form friendships in Salzburg that last well beyond their time there – often a lifetime – with fellow participants in the program, with their Austrian roommates and others they met there. Some students have found their future partners in Salzburg. We know of 21 marriages. Some married within their AYA group; others married Austrians and Germans they met in Salzburg. We plan on making Salzburg Sweethearts a regular feature of the Newsletter. In this issue, two couples of AYA participants relate their stories. Next time, AYA alumni who married Austrians or Germans will have their turn.

But first, we have two other romantic accounts from former AYA students: the first married couple to participate in the program and an alumnus who returned to Salzburg 20 years later to propose to his future wife.



Rhonda and Michael Westerhaus

### Michael and Rhonda Westerhaus

(AYA 1980-81) were BGSU students originally from Kansas. Michael had begun courses in German to fulfill a language requirement for his doctoral studies in biology. Rhonda, a social sciences graduate and part-time teacher, decided to learn German along with her husband and enrolled in the intensive BGSU summer immersion program. Both

from German backgrounds, Mike and Rhonda enjoyed the German classes and, interested in becoming more familiar with their ancestral culture, they decided to apply for the AYA Salzburg Program. When they sat down with Dr. Margy Gerber to discuss going to Salzburg, they learned that they would be the first married couple to participate. Since at the time there were no dormitory arrangements for couples in Salzburg, Mike and Rhonda lived in several rooms in a house in Aigen (a district of Salzburg) with their landlady, Frau Zeigen. Michael recalls, "Frau Zeigen was typically Austrian in that she could be very direct, but also very hospitable. Every Sunday we were invited to Kaffee und Kuchen and had engaging conversations." During the vacation breaks Mike and Rhonda travelled extensively. They located and connected with relatives in Germany, with whom they remain close today.

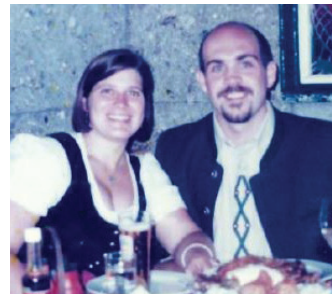


Brett and Katherine married in April 2004

**Brett Porter** (AYA 1983-84) didn't meet his wife Katherine in Salzburg, but when it was time to marry, he took her to Salzburg and proposed in Mirabellgarten. "Salzburg was such a special experience for me, I wanted it to be special for us as a couple too. So, I proposed to Katherine in Salzburg."

**Katie O'Leary and Kirk Ross** (AYA 1998-99) met in Salzburg in October 1998. "We know where we met (the welcome party at Dr. Howes' apartment), but neither one of us actually remembers meeting the other. Our first (sort of date) was a day accidentally spent together in Berchtesgaden. A whole group of students had bought a weekend train pass, planning to go to Munich together.

But everyone else backed out at the last minute, so we decided to visit Berchtesgaden instead. We spent a magical day hiking in the snow, ending with Kaffee und Kuchen at a local café. Both of us figured we needed to start spending some serious time together after that. Kirk always tells people that if you're going to fall in love with a beautiful woman, there's no better place to do it than Salzburg. We spent hours exploring the city together. We attended services together in many different churches. We went for an overnight snowshoe hike in Nationalpark Hohe Tauern (the Putzfrau from Katie's dorm joined us). We spent a week in Prague, ducking from bar to bar, trying to keep warm in some of the coldest weather ever. On our last night together in Salzburg, we dressed in Tracht, ate at an outdoor restaurant behind the Dom and went to the opera in the Festspielhaus. "It's no wonder we were married less than a year after we got back. Three kids and twenty years later, Salzburg will always hold a special place in our hearts."



Katie O'Leary and Kirk Ross



Katie and Kirk now

**Réka Barabás and Jeff Moore** Jeff Moore (AYA 1999-2000) first met in Bamberg, Germany in 1997, where Jeff had a scholarship from the German-American Friendship program, and Réka, a student from Hungary, was also studying German. They soon became a couple. In 1999 they both joined the AYA program in Salzburg, Jeff as an undergraduate and Réka as a graduate student. They were able to move as a couple into the new Studentenheim Glockengasse before it officially opened. "We loved walking down Linzergasse to grab a Döner from Frauenberger." In April 2000 they married in Nyiregyhaza, Hungary, with a later wedding celebration at the director's apartment in Salzburg. Dr. Foell remembers a beautiful cake topped with roses. "Our friends were very accepting and always invited us to events, parties, or even just grabbing a beer at Murphy's, which was conveniently located for anyone who missed the bus and had twenty minutes to kill." "We have such fond memories of our time in Salzburg. We recently visited the city with our daughters and showed them all of our favorite spots: Wilder Mann, Kapuzinerberg, Konditorei Fürst, Sternbräu, Mirabellgarten."



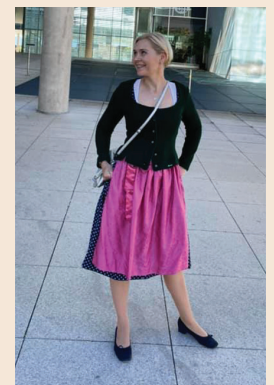
Réka Barabás and Jeff Moore



Réka and Jeff now



# Salzburg in September



Ivett Guntersdorfer took pictures at the annual Rupertikirtag, celebrating Rupertus, Salzburg's patron saint

**AYA Austria newsletters available online**

All the AYA Austria newsletters since 1971 have been added to the AYA Austria website. They can be read or downloaded from the Alumni Newsletter Archive available at: [www.bgsu.edu/AYASalzburg](http://www.bgsu.edu/AYASalzburg).