

GERMANY EXCHANGE PROGRAM

JANUARY 2015

During January 2015, I was part of a cultural exchange program in Germany. I had an amazing experience that would not have been possible without the efforts and funding of UJ's Internationalization office. The program I was part of is the TSAP (Tübingen South Africa Program) which takes place every year in January. University students from around South Africa travel to the university town of Tübingen Germany and attend seminars about: German culture, geography, politics, art and many other topics. We stayed with host families who are just wonderful people who want to share their culture with you. In addition, we did sightseeing and factory tours of renowned German companies such as Daimler, who own Mercedes Benz among other brands, and Ritte Sport the third most popular chocolate in Germany. And of course we had to experience German student life.

My most memorable experience was walking up to the Hohezollern castle, once the seat of the Prussian empire, it is now open to the public. It was about a half an hour walk, due to heavy snowfall the day before the shorter route was not open. It was fantastic, I was absolutely mesmerised by the icy white forest and we had a great time messing around in the snow and having snowball fights along the way. As well as the time my host family took my roommate and I sledding in the Schwabien Albs. This was truly an eye-opening experience, I learnt much about the German culture but also about myself. I would hope that more students will apply for programmes such as this. Challenge yourself, get out of your comfort zone, learn something new – I highly recommend it.

