

I'm in the United States for two months now and when I look back I can't believe how long I'm here now and how many things have happened. Everything started with big excitement and uncertainty when I entered the plane to go on this adventure but now I finally found a home in the small town Brookfield. I have orientated myself at school and the environment, found friends, joined clubs and got to know my host family.

Crosscountry Running



When I decided to join the Crosscountry Running Team, I didn't really know what to expect. But right after the first practice with the team I knew that it was the best decision I could have made. Because the best thing you can do after a day of sitting in school is going for a run and a hard workout with your teammates! The daily practices pay off and I was able to enjoy getting in shape and see how I can improve myself by working hard. The highlight of every week of running and effort is the meet on the following weekend. On one side it is a great opportunity to see that the effort is worth it when you reach your goals and get faster every time, but the most important thing is the social aspect! There is

nothing more fun than going on a ride in the school bus with the whole team, getting your "motivation letter" from your "running sister" and experiencing the support from the whole team. At least after a lot of warm ups, races and cool downs, the varsity crosscountry girls were able to qualify for the state meet in Wisconsin!

Furthermore, my team likes to spend time together outside the practices so we meet for a weekly team dinner, which always promises a fun time! We also organized a carwash to raise money and made sandwiches and lunch bags to support an organization for homeless people. Finally, we also had a joint sleepover as a great conclusion of the Crosscountry Season 2018! For me, it was an amazing opportunity to meet people, make friends and experience real American team spirit!



Homecoming



The school is decorated, the theme week is organized, tickets are sold, dresses are bought and the anticipation grows and grows - Homecoming is just around the corner!

Like most of you, I have heard of homecoming before, but it's a completely different thing to be able to experience this tradition yourself. For me the most impressive part was that the whole school was excited even a week before the actual Homecoming event. It was a time of fun in which everyone dressed up like crazy for the theme days, a lot of activities are going on during and after school, bonfires are lighted and the homecoming court is voted. After a lot of preparation the Friday night and the desired football game was approached. Everybody came to the game, cheered for our football players and was part of the famous American "high school spirit". On Saturday night I finally went to the dance. Every single student dresses up nicely for this evening and usually the homecoming

groups meet for taking pictures first and afterwards the students go out for dinner. Strengthened with food everybody danced in the gym and finally my Homecoming ended with an afterparty at a friend's house. In summary for me it was an exciting time and I was able to make some really good memories!

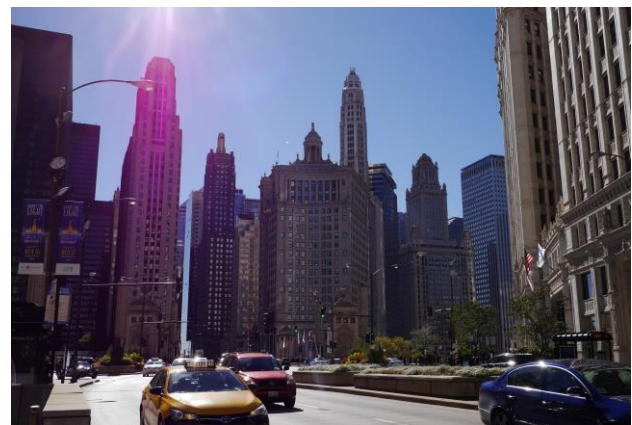


Music - the only universal language

Taking Band as a class and having the opportunity to include music in my daily schedule was amazing and I learned as much as in other academic classes! My school's band has about 150 members and is the biggest ensemble I have ever played in. Furthermore, I learned more about different types of music, but the most exciting part was the marching! Once a week the band meets for a rehearsal on the football field and to practice the new drill. So finally, after a few practices, my uniform was fitted and I was ready to perform at the most important football game of the year! Playing at games became a routine and I don't want to miss these Friday nights I spend together with my friends playing to cheer for the football team.

Beside these performances we also made a short trip to a school for disabled children. Playing for these children and their families was an honor and I was glad that I was a part of this and that I had the opportunity to bring joy in their lives! Activities like this or the "chili feed" we organized to raise money made this class my favorite!

There's something bigger than Brookfield...



After living a month in a small suburb I was so used to the unvaried environment with the typical American family houses with flowers in the yard and little kids playing outside that I sometimes forgot that I am in America: "The land of endless possibilities" and "world famous attractions".

But this has changed after my trip to Chicago. I had never been to such a big city before and I am very glad that my host family was able to provide the opportunity to spend a weekend in this fascinating place! I liked walking down the streets, through the never-ending rows of skyscrapers and watching the business life of Chicago. Of course, we also used our time to experience as much as possible so that we finally ran from one attraction to another! So I was able to see Millennium Park and "the Bean" and its fascinating how big the parks are, even though they are in the center of such a big city. I also enjoyed walking along the river and eating typical "deep-dish pizza", which is a big deal in Chicago. In the evening we watched "Charlie and the Chocolate factory" in a big theatre, which was fun and on the next day we visited Navy Pier. The pier at the border of Lake Michigan was beautiful because the lake is so big that you can't see the end of it,

which gives you a feeling of looking out on the sea! But my favorite one was the John Hancock 360 Degree Observation Deck! It's the second tallest building in the city after Willis Tower and when I arrived at the 100th level, I was able to look around the whole city and to see it from a different perspective!



Arizona

I had been looking forward to this trip for a long time, but like always the time went by so fast and I felt like I blinked and suddenly my things were packed and I stood at the Chicago airport ready to go on my flight to ARIZONA!

We stayed at one of my host mom's relative's house in Scottsdale and even on the way there I wasn't able to stop looking out of the window! It's insane how different each state of the United States is, but I think Arizona is definitely an extreme. The people there literally live in the desert, in the yards and on the side of the roads grow cacti and palm trees and the air is dry. This makes it one of my most special experiences. After one day of just relaxing, swimming in the pool and spending time with the family, we went on a bigger trip on the second day - a visit to the beauty of Sedona! I was able to get a wonderful view at the red rocks, which surround the city, and go on a pretty hike through a nearby national park! We also went to one of the most famous and rarest lakes to go on a walk on its border. The scenery was amazing and finally I was even able to see some wild horses! All in all the nature was incredible with its fascinating and peaceful appearance, which touches everyone and made me feel free! We also visited the city of Fontaine and needless to say everybody tried real southwestern tacos!

But like everything this trip came to an end and I had to leave sunny Arizona and got back into rainy Brookfield!



