

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Bureau of Career & Technical Education
July 2011

TO: Superintendents, Vocational Directors, Guidance
Counselors, and Instructors

FROM: Lee Burket, Ed. D.
Director
Bureau of Career and Technical Education

SUBJECT: "Congress-Bundestag" Scholarship Opportunities for Vocational
High School Seniors in Germany

We are pleased to inform you that Pennsylvania has been asked to participate in the German/American Vocational Education Scholarship Program for 2012-2013.

We encourage "*special and deserving vocational students in your schools to apply to compete for a full scholarship*" to spend a year abroad in Germany with the "Congress-Bundestag" Program. Therefore, we ask that you share this with your principal, counselor, supervisor, assistant director or anyone having the responsibility of working with students seeking potential scholarships and recognition.

This is part of a larger high school program sponsored by the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag. Ours, however, is the only one being offered to "vocational high school seniors". This program will enable a total of 25 students from various states to spend the 2012-2013 school year in Germany, where they will participate either in an educational or employment experience. The program for the students will begin with two months of intensive language training in Germany prior to moving to their host families for their school/family practicum experience.

The program, "The Congress-Bundestag Vocational Youth Exchange" is named for its benefactors, the United States Congress and the German Bundestag. NACEL OPEN DOOR administers the program in the United States and cooperates extensively with a coordinator in Germany.

It is important to emphasize at the outset that this is a "Young Adult" program which seeks to enroll students who have demonstrated "maturity" and "responsibility" and who can be entrusted to fulfill their roles as exchange students without day-to-day supervision. Throughout the selection process, full consideration should be extended to minorities and women.

One of the most important characteristics when choosing a candidate is “the ability to adapt to an unfamiliar environment”. Self-confidence, a positive regard for others, curiosity and a sense of humor are other traits that have proven to be important qualities for a successful exchange experience.

When making your selection, the following attributes should be considered:

- A mature and stable individual
- Active involvement in school and community
- Strong desire for a yearlong overseas family stay
- Demonstrated interest in civic and/or international affairs

Although previous study of German is advantageous, it is not a prerequisite for scholarship selection. The program encourages applicants from all economic, ethnic, religious and social backgrounds.

Each participating school may nominate up to three candidates. The minimum requirements for nomination are:

Age

At least 18 and no more than 19 years of age by July 1, 2012.

Grade Level

Graduating senior who will complete U.S. vocational-technical studies in January or June 2012 prior to departure.

Concentration of Studies

Students should be fully aware that NACEL OPEN DOOR'S Coordinator in Germany will make every effort to place them in a school or "work situation" in their field of interest or related to their field of interest. This, however, will not necessarily be the case in all instances. Students should fully understand that their "international experience" is the important and essential element in the exchange, rather than specific training in their given fields of interest.

Academic Achievements

Minimum of a "B" average (3.0 GPA).

U.S. Citizenship or permanent residency with intent to become a U.S. citizen.

It is vital that students should look upon this experience as an opportunity to spend their 13th year abroad, while learning a new language and getting to know another culture and at the same time having the prospect to grow and possibly make career decisions.

Applications may be accessed online via Nacel Open Door's website www.nacelopendoor.org. Once in the website, you click on "Travel Abroad"; a map comes up, and one then clicks on "Programs for Europe"; this brings up the Programs, then click on "Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange." Scroll down the page, and you find "Click Here to Download an Application", and information indicating that you can download the application to your own computer as a document, and then work directly in the application to answer all the questions. Take your time, and go back to your saved document to edit, etc. Once you are finished submit the document.

We ask that applications online be completed by the deadline date of January 31, 2012 and to notify the Bureau of Career and Technical Education in care of:

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REMEMBER THE JANUARY 31, 2012 DEADLINE!