

Denmark Exchange Trip

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Diesel Technology

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This Summer I went to Denmark as part of an exchange trip with my instructor and 3 other students. My Diesel classmate and I wrote an essay and were selected with two welding students for an educational and life-changing trip to Denmark. For the past 7 years my school and a company called Scan-Design have been sending 4 students to Denmark each summer for two weeks. We attended two weeks of school, lived with a host family, worked alongside the Danish exchange students at their marine job, visited and toured many different corners of the diesel industry, and thrived in a whole new culture and experience. The magnitude of what we lived through is incredible and I can't wait to go back.

The four of us treated school like we do back home. Class was from 8 am to about 12 pm, Monday through Thursday. Each day we visited a new program including Culinary, Masonry, Machining, and the Diesel program to experience what they are learning. In Culinary we prepared delicious pork briskets, special potatoes cut on seven sides, and a white chocolate mousse. In Masonry we built brick walls, and laid tile. In Machining we used a lathe to cut out a shot glass from aluminum, and in Diesel we used a precision micrometer to measure the flex of a crankshaft in a large engine. Each day after school we visited a wide range of sites including a record setting giant engine, a wind turbine production plant, many different ships, a WW2 Nazi bunker with two giant cannons, a coast guard station, machine shops, a

hydraulic cylinder production plant, local landmarks, and a wide range of restaurants. On our last day of school, the head of the Machining program had a retirement party in the diesel shop. We were invited to eat hot dogs and drink beer while trying to understand the speeches and stories in Danish. I am honored to have been there for Mr. Karsten's party, it was a great last day for both him and the exchange program.

On the weekend in the middle of our trip, all 4 of us were paired up with one Danish student to live and work with them at their shipyard job. I stayed 3 days in a beautiful home with my exchange buddy Regitze, two other girls, the mother and the father. I had a comfy bed and I was fed like a king the whole time. For two days I went with Regitze to her place of work in a shipyard. Her company had 30 employees and worked on every system of a boat. Half the employees are contract mechanics sent out to far and remote places. My favorite thing was my freedom switch from one project to another, usually there were five underway at any given time. I was not only learning what they do and how to fix boats, I was meeting new people, seeing how they act in their work environment, and getting to follow up on each project. This was the most rewarding experience of the trip because I am in the stage of looking for a career and wondering what other jobs and places are like. I experienced the other side of the spectrum and after the two days I was offered a job.

Each day after school was time to hit the road to visit anything to do with the Diesel Industry. On the Marine side we visited a cruise ship, a couple coast guard stations, a huge boat that installs windmills in the sea, a ferry, and commercial

fishing boats. After asking around we finally got a tour through a windmill production plant. On the first day we visited a record setting Diesel-Electric power plant built in the 1930s. Every tour, walkthrough, and museum were packed with things to learn and experience. And all of the guides were awesome with great English skills and tons of knowledge about everything they were involved in. The main goal of my trip was to get a feel of how my industry compares to the same industry in another country. I accomplished my goal by paying attention to every work environment I visited, and comparing them to my own.

In the short two weeks we were in Denmark, I know that I took every opportunity to get the most out of this once in a lifetime chance. I came back to America with a new perspective on my career path, and my life.