



# Internship Report

Center for Creative Leadership | Lorenz Bölter

March – September 2019



## Contents

Overview .....	3
Job Interview.....	3
Visa .....	4
Finances .....	5
Junges Konto.....	6
Flights and arrival .....	6
Accommodation .....	7
Car .....	7
Phone.....	7
Traveling & Activities.....	8
Work .....	8
Conclusion.....	8
Pictures .....	9

# Internship Report

## Overview

This internship report is about my working and living experience in the US in 2019. In cooperation with the University of Applied Sciences Merseburg I worked as an intern in the HR consulting and the leadership development institute "Center for Creative Leadership". I was in the US from March to September 2019.

This report should be a source of information for future applicants as well as a statement of encouragement to go for the internship in the US.

## Job Interview

If your application is considered, you will be invited to a phone interview. It takes about half an hour and includes questions like "What department/division would you like to work in?", "Why do you want to work for CCL?" or "What would you consider your field of expertise?"

Prepare to introduce yourself to your interviewers and present some facts about your life and your CV to them. Don't worry too much, they know you will be excited and you're not on top of your game when it comes to speaking English. To be honest, I wanted this opportunity so bad I got really excited and my English level dropped a ton. I thought I failed the interview. Obviously, that didn't happen, so relax. 😊

When the formal part is over they will ask you if you have any questions about CCL or living in Greensboro/the United States. Prepare some questions you'd really like to have answered so you can spend another 5 to 10 minutes talking to them. Gabi Meister is able to give you further information about the job interview, don't hesitate to ask her anytime.

## Visa

To avoid any delay, make sure you have a valid passport before starting the visa application process. Since you have to deal with a very bureaucratic process I recommend relying on a professional visa agency. I decided to go with INTRAX<sup>1</sup> and have not regretted it. Their service was excellent. There are a lot of other visa agencies out there so just compare their services and prices and decide for whatever you prefer. It'll probably take between 2 and 3 months from registration at INTRAX until reception of the approval of your visa so you should start this process as soon as you get the internship offer. During this process you will be confronted with different important documents.

See the list below for descriptions of the most important documents:

**DS-2019** - The DS-2019 is the most important one of your documents. Its official name is "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status". It basically confirms that you meet all requirements to get a visa. For further information see INTRAX's website<sup>2</sup>.

**DS-7002** - This document is an internship/training plan breaking down your stay into different phases. These phases will be defined by your supervisor.

**DS-160** - The DS-160 is an Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application form required for your appointment at the consulate/embassy. The DS-160 will be submitted online.

**Visa Interview Appointment Confirmation** - self-explaining. You'll get one after successfully submitting the DS-160.

**I-901** - A document confirming your fee payment for the visa interview at a consulate/embassy.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.intrax.de/j1-visum-service/usa.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.intrax.de/j1-visum-service/usa/ds-2019.html>

## Finances

The internship is unpaid so you have to save some money in advance depending on the financial support you might get from your parents. You will get some money from the University (1175 - 2375 €) and might get some money if you successfully apply for BaFöG. Unfortunately if you're enrolled in the Master's program for project management you won't meet the requirements for BaFöG unless the University changes the minimum time of the internship from 8 to 12 weeks.

<u>One-off costs</u>	
Visa	1100 €
Flights	630 €
International health insurance	350 €
<b>Sum</b>	<b>2080 €</b>
<u>Running costs</u>	
Accommodation	\$425
Car rental	\$299
Gas	\$50
Cost of basic living	\$200
<b>Monthly sum</b>	<b>\$974</b>
<b>Total sum over 6 months</b>	<b>About 8000€</b>

Keep in mind that you have tons of opportunities for activities in Greensboro/North Carolina. Sports events, music concerts, theater, cinema, festivals, road trips, beach days – everything will require some money. The table above does only list basic costs that you have to be able to cover. Also in order to obtain your visa you have to prove that you will not run out of money, either by having a guarantee of a relative or by providing a financial statement of your bank account. 9000\$ will be required for 6 months.

## Junges Konto

I recommend opening up a *Junges Konto* at Deutsche Bank. It's a special bank account for students that allows you to pull out cash at all Bank of America ATMs without paying any fee. It might save you a lot of money and you'll find BoA ATMs almost anywhere. Additionally, make sure you own a credit card when you go to the USA. For booking domestic flights, booking a hotel room or renting a car, you'll need one with your name on it.

## Flights and arrival

I recommend booking your flights right after you get your visa approved. Keep an eye out for great deals on comparison websites like [idealo.de](http://idealo.de), [skyscanner.com](http://skyscanner.com) etc. for you might be able to save some money which you will much more enjoy spending in the US. I spent roughly 630 € on both flights, including travel insurances.

The first journey took me from Berlin Tegel to London Heathrow, where I had a two-hour stay. Then I flew to New York JFK which took about 8 hours. Don't be afraid of the long flight, it felt pretty short and American Airlines provided great snacks, beverages and entertainment opportunities. From JFK I had to take an about 40-minute long transfer shuttle bus ride to New York LaGuardia. I had 5.5 hours in New York before my final flight to Greensboro took off, so in sum I had a journey of about 19/20 hours. At LaGuardia I was picked up by Steve Elliott by car. Make sure to give your flight numbers to whoever will pick you up at the airport so they can check on possible delay.

A few hints: Make sure to have both 50€ and \$50 in cash with you so you can buy some stuff at the airports if needed. For example, the transfer ticket from JFK to LaGuardia was \$17. Also, if your first airport in the United States isn't Greensboro, make sure you have enough time between the two connecting flights. When you arrive, you will have to get your immigration done which might take about an hour. Make sure to have your documents ready for the officer. Store all of your documents in your carry-on bag. After immigration, you might be asked to go to customs and have your baggage checked. In my case, that didn't happen, so I just took my baggage and booked the shuttle transfer to LaGuardia. For the overall processing of your

baggage ask the service employee at your first check-in if your baggage will be automatically transferred to connecting flights. In my case, the baggage was automatically transferred from the first to the second flight but I had to pick it up at JFK and take it to LaGuardia myself.

## Accommodation

Your supervisor will help you find a place to stay. In my case Jenni sent an email to the campus staff asking if someone wanted to host a German intern. I stayed with Steve Elliott during my time in Greensboro. He's a cool guy, a manager from the client services division. He likes to play tennis, go for a hike or watching all sorts of sports games. Steve hosted several German interns before and was very open to answering all of my questions and helped me with all kinds of stuff. I can definitely recommend staying with him, you'll have a great time. If you're looking to live close to downtown and maybe share an apartment with other students/younger people though, you should look for Student Quarters/dorms at UNCG.

## Car

A car is an absolute necessity in Greensboro and you will definitely not regret having one. Just like previous interns I rented a 2001 Pontiac Sunfire from Keith Meadows and Robert Daugherty who also work at CCL. The monthly rent includes insurance, maintenance and repairing in case anything happens. Since Keith and Robert provide these services 24/7 for you they ask you not to drive any further than a 150 miles (240 km) radius around Greensboro. You can always rent a car from a local rental company if you want to go to places that are further away by car. Ask your supervisor to send you the email address of Keith and/or Robert to reach out to them in advance of the internship. They will let you know all the relevant details.

## Phone

CCL might be able to provide you with a SIM card depending on their capacities. It took approx. a month to have mine ready, but Johnny Smith was able to give me a SIM card. If you want to get a SIM card via CCL too you should introduce yourself to him as soon as possible and ask for it right away.

## Traveling & Activities

You should definitely make sure to take your time off to enjoy this beautiful country with the friends you make. Go for hikes, on a road trip, visit big cities, eat at fancy restaurants, go to rooftop bars in metropolises etc. There is so much to discover and this will be one of the best parts of this experience. Don't hesitate to ask your supervisor for days off, they know that this is a key component of this experience. During my time, I went on a road trip to Nashville, St. Louis, Kansas City and Denver. I also met up with my brother and explored the east coast and big cities like Washington, Philadelphia and New York with him. I got to see an NFL game of my team (go Chiefs!) in Jacksonville and managed to spend a few days at Disney World in Orlando. I went to a few festivals and concerts and explored beautiful landscapes in the States. Definitely take advantage of that opportunity, it's just amazing.

## Work

Your work might be pretty frustrating at first as you need to get to know a lot of people to really get started. Also speaking from experience it's very likely you'll not be managed at all. You'll be in charge of finding work and getting assigned to projects. Speak with a lot of people, get to know CCL's departments and projects and you'll find work. In my experience the project managers for open programs are always looking for some help as well as the program coordinators, so start with them first.

## Conclusion

This summer was one of the best experiences of my life.

Even though work was sometimes frustrating, the people I got to know, the events I went to and the road trips I had while being there made this experience so unique and special. I think it depends what you make out of it but if you're open to new experiences and like to get to know people you'll have a great time! I definitely encourage you to go for it!



Pictures

