AATG members were invited to apply for Deutsch macht Spaß grants supporting local campus or community events to promote German learning and engagement with German culture. Thanks to funding through the German government’s Netzwerk Deutsch program, grants of up to $500 were awarded to support numerous creative and innovative projects.

Read what members are doing—how they are advocating for German, making sure German is visible and prominent in their schools, and reaching out to the broader community to spread the message that Deutsch macht Spaß!

Apply for a 2018 Deutsch macht Spaß Grant

Project proposals will be reviewed and funded on an ongoing basis.
The final deadline for submission is August 15, 2018.
Find details here.

Middle School German Language Hour

The German Club at Mahopac High School organize a program for middle school students to promote the learning of the German language and culture. At the first gathering, students enjoyed vocabulary-based matching activities at different stations focused on colors, cognates, and culture. During the second meeting, the middle school students learned about Schultüten and created their own. At each meeting, students enjoyed sampling German treats such as Apfelstrudel and Brezeln.

This program was a success! Many German club members volunteered, and we had great turnout of middle school students at each session. The German club hopes to implement a similar program in local elementary schools.

—Katrina Bauerlein, Mahopac High School, NY

Kids’ Craft Zone at Christmas Market Festival

German students from Tomball High School volunteered at the Tomball German Christmas Market Festival over the course of the three day festival. Students have volunteered at this festival for the past three years, but this year, thanks to the Deutsch macht Spass grant, German students were able to increase their level of engagement at the festival and promote the German culture and language at this popular community event by creating a Kids’ Craft Zone. German students offered children the opportunity to make free German-related holiday crafts, learn about the German culture, and also learn a few phrases in German. Children were taught vocabulary about Christmas and New Year’s good luck symbols while they made the following crafts: Christmas tree (Christbaum/Weihnachtsbaum), star (Stern), reindeer (Renntier), snowflake (Schneeflocke), lucky pig (Glücksschwein), mushroom (Glückspilz), ladybug (Marienkäfer), chimney sweep (Schornsteinfeger), and horseshoe (Hufeisen). While crafting, they also learned German holiday good wishes such as “Frohe Festtage,” “Frohe Weihnachten,” and “Frohes neues Jahr.”

Festival patrons seemed to greatly enjoy the Kids’ Craft Zone and German language lessons. Since the area has a rich German heritage, our crafts and language lessons attracted the attention of quite a few native and heritage German speakers who stopped by to chat with student volunteers, thereby giving students a wonderful opportunity to practice their language skills with other German speakers.

—Brenda Bauske, Tomball High School, TX

From April 2018 AATG Newsletter
Schultüten Collaborative Project

Students from York Suburban Middle School and from York College of Pennsylvania made and filled Schultüten to distribute to kindergarten students at nearby Valley View Elementary School. Students from York College then visited the kindergarten classrooms and informed the students about the German tradition of Schultüte, and taught them basic German phrases. Each kindergarten student came forward, received a Schultüte and said “Danke,” and was told, “Bitte.” At the end, the college and kindergarten groups told each other, “Tschüss.” The principal of Valley View Elementary School, Dr. Monos, and the Valley View staff and students were gracious hosts and enthusiastic participants. The project generated positive publicity for, and enhanced knowledge of, German among the community, particularly among students, educators, and parents.

—Mary Boldt, York College of Pennsylvania, and Kiersten Handy, York Suburban Middle School, PA

Lutherjahr at Wayne State University

This series of events at Wayne State University focused on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The focal point was a poster exhibition about Luther’s life, curated by the State Office for Heritage Management and Archaeology Saxony-Anhalt and the State Museum of Prehistory Halle, which displayed information on the world around 1500, women, politics, and faith during the Reformation period, as well as protestant churches in the United States. A roundtable discussion “Reforming Societies between Religion and State” expanded on the Luther theme by considering reform in different time periods and geographic locations. Other talks focused on literature, history, and current politics and religion. Two student-led culture organizations showed the films Luther and The Priest. At the poster exhibit, visitors wrote and hung their own “theses” on a door which is exhibited on campus. The series was a great success with good participation of all individual events and increased the visibility of the German program both at Wayne State University and in the Detroit Metro area. Thanks for the generous support from the Deutsch macht Spaß grant which allowed us to organize this series!

—Nicole Coleman and Julie Koehler, Wayne State University, MI

Lebkuchenhäuseraufbau in Williamstown, New Jersey

The Delta Epsilon Phi Junior Honor Society members at Williamstown Middle School invited students from the autistic classroom and multiple-handicap classrooms to learn about holiday traditions in the USA that come from German traditions. 7th and 8th grade German students partnered with 22 students to create gingerbread houses. Then the gingerbread houses were collected and put on display during parent-conference week. Fifth grade students voted on the gingerbread houses during their lunch period, and students took this privilege quite seriously. There were 12 categories to vote on. The students in the Junior German Honor Society wanted to give prizes to the majority of participants. The Deutsch macht Spaß grant helped with supplies and prizes.

Feedback was very positive! My students felt great about their involvement from planning to executing. We were proud to include the autistic students in our school and bring awareness to parents and fifth graders. Fifth graders will soon be making the decision of which language to study, so exposure to our German project might prove quite successful.

—Christine Webb, Williamstown Middle School, NJ
Connecting through German

**Beim (Deutsch-) Lernen gibt es keine Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzung**

With the help of the *Deutsch macht Spaß* grant, the German program at Carleton College purchased t-shirts to promote German learning and engagement with German culture on Carleton’s campus. The shirts featured “Carleton College German” in schwarz-rot-gold on the front, and “Beim Lernen gibt es keine Geschwindigkeitsbegrenzung” on the back. We distributed them to our faculty, German majors, student departmental advisor, our soccer players, and to those students involved with the design of the t-shirts.

Students are wearing these t-shirts on campus and during special events, which we hope will increase the visibility of “things German” at Carleton and raise awareness among students, faculty, and staff about the number of people involved with the German language and culture here at Carleton. Students have already asked where to purchase these and how to get involved with the soccer team. We hope that new freshmen will be more aware in coming years about opportunities to study German at Carleton and will connect with German students on campus much faster.

Over time, these shirts will help foster a sense of community among German students, which will eventually help increase enrollments in our classes and larger participation in our German-sponsored events. Such a German community will increase inter-departmental and inter-collegiate connections, which supports the AATG’s mission of bringing the language, literature, and cultures of the German-speaking world to all Americans.

—Juliane Schicker, Carleton College, MN

**Martinstag at Shaker High School**

Junior high and high school German club students began planning well in advance for this event with their teachers. The students worked together to construct and decorate authentic *Martinstag* lamps from Germany. Bringing the two clubs together was an excellent way to promote the continuation of language study throughout high school, and also offered an opportunity for the high school students to mentor the younger students.

Over 75 people attended the *Martinstag* celebration at Shaker High School, including school administrators, students from the elementary, junior high, and high schools, along with parents and other family and community members. Two junior high students acted out a *Martinstag* performance, followed by a presentation about history and traditions in Germany. Then participants paraded around the school track, singing, with colorful lanterns, and were welcomed back into the school with hot chocolate and authentic German treats. In addition to learning about St. Martin’s charitable acts, participants also contributed donation to our school’s food pantry to help feed those in need—two boxes full of food items were collected!

—Brenna Muldoon, Shaker High School, NY

**Schultütenfest in South Dakota**

All of the German students at Stevens High School are involved in *Schultütenfest*. The German club organized the event and assembled *Schultüten* for the first-year students. German 2 and 3 students set up the space, baked cakes, and prepared dances. The German 2 class researched and prepared 32 posterboard displays on German cities and states, and the German 3 class prepared 12 displays on German traditions. First-year students and parents received a handout with questions to answer based on the displays. Upper-level students provided first-hand accounts of how they’ve benefitted by learning German, including information on our trip to our sister city Apolda. The Schultüten were distributed. Music and dance performances followed, and everyone enjoyed samples of three different cakes, along with a *Spezi*. Thank you for the *Deutsch macht Spaß* grant!

—Oliver Hasse, Stevens High School, SD
Winterwichtel at Falmouth Academy

The Winterwichtel project was designed to increase visibility of Falmouth Academy’s German program by branching out into the local community. Students in German classes in grades 7-12 were introduced to the project, learning that Wichtel are small fantasy creatures that do good deeds. Students would design, craft, and create a background story for their Wichtel. The Wichtel would then be “adopted” for a donation to support the Falmouth Service Center, whose mission is “to ease stress, reduce hunger and improve the quality of life for our neighbors in need.”

Students created their Wichtels in different ways: some students created oil paintings; some made clay sculptures; one student persuaded the ceramics teacher to be allowed to use the school’s kiln; some 7th graders sought advice from the landscape elective and the science department to use all-natural materials to incorporate our school’s sustainability mantra; some students preferred needlecrafts; others used various iPad applications for green screen collages. Their stories are as different as the Wichtels themselves, and reflect the individual characters of the students. Students created slides to introduce their Wichtel, which were incorporated into a Winterwichtel website.

The project generated enormous excitement within the entire school. The students enjoyed the chance to create and tinker; the project helped some quieter students to find their voice by getting caught up in the excitement about their Wichtel’s story. The project allowed a great amount of differentiation and scaffolding, so even students with still under-developed language skills could feel successful. It also allowed students to follow their interests and passions. It allowed us as teachers to learn more about different aspects of our students’ personalities. The wider community is equally appreciative! The Falmouth Service Center loves the idea, is enchanted by the creations, and appreciates the donations. My colleagues and I appreciate the fact that the project allowed students to see that they can actively contribute to a local good cause by using their German language skills.

—Petra Ehrenbrink, Falmouth Academy

Schreck-Fest and Nosferatu Film Concert

The Altoona Symphony Orchestra, in collaboration with Penn State Altoona, gave a Halloween film concert featuring F.W. Murnau’s 1922 silent film masterpiece Nosferatu: Eine Symphonie des Grauens to a live performance of the original Hans Erdmann score. The Deutsch macht Spaß! grant supported a Halloween and fall-themed Schreck-Fest focused on German language and culture for young children. Additional funding through the Penn State Altoona Community-Based Grant supported a lecture for senior high school students, commemorative t-shirts designed by a high school student, supplies for Horror Haiku writing workshops on campus, at the local library and as part of the Schreck-Fest, as well as free tickets to the Nosferatu film concert for high school and college students. College students were also able to attend a round table discussion on the idea of zombies, featuring faculty from disciplines as diverse as mechanical engineering, integrative arts, earth sciences and English. The Schreck-Fest project enabled high school teachers, college professors and students of varying ages to engage, in a fun, yet meaningful way with the German language and culture.

—Jutta Gsoels-Lorensen and Anja Wagner, Penn State University-Altoona, and Alicia Schmouder, Hollidaysburg Area Jr. and Sr. High Schools
Exploring German Roots in the Twin Cities

The German programs at Carleton College and St. Olaf College held a joint outing to sites and events of interest for German Studies in Minneapolis and St. Paul. We arrived by bus at the state capitol, and went into the Rathskeller to view the architecture, including historic frescoes in German, and to read informational signs about the history of the building. Next we met our guide, who guided the bus driver around the Summit Avenue and Irving Park neighborhoods of St. Paul while providing numerous anecdotes and background information about the German heritage in this portion of the city.

We returned to the Germanic-American institute for an excellent “Abendbrot” dinner, followed by a reading and discussion of poems by Erich Kästner delivered by UMN professor emeritus Gerhard Weiss. The event with Professor Weiss was a highlight of the evening: the large room was full of rapt listeners, many of whom had known Professor Weiss over many decades as his students and colleagues. The readings drew their energy from Weiss’s intimate love of Kästner’s texts, dating back to his childhood, when receiving a gift of a new Kästner volume was a much-anticipated event. Weiss’s long personal connection to Kästner’s texts was combined with full awareness of their difficult historical contexts (Professor Weiss himself emigrated from Germany, and the question of Kästner’s potential loss of credibility after remaining in Nazi Germany was discussed at some length).

Students enjoyed the event very much, and were impressed with the diverse forms of German culture they encountered. Thanks to the Deutsch macht Spaß grant, this collaborative excursion connected St. Olaf and Carleton College German students to each other and to the local German cultural community through multiple channels and disciplinary perspectives: historical tours, literary discussion with a prominent figure in the field of German Studies, and a literal taste of everyday German culture.

—Amanda Randall, St. Olaf College, MN

Memorable German Words Contest

Our plan to increase visibility for German: create buttons with fun, memorable German words, selected by our German language students, and distribute these to prospective students on campus and especially to high school students. By including students from all levels of German, we collected words of a wide lexical and semantic variety. The thirty most chosen words: Schadenfreude, Apfel, Eichhörnchen, Krankenwagen, Faultier, Kartoffel, Purzelbaum, Entschuldigung, flimmern, Frühstück, Kummerspeck, Schweinehund, Sehnsucht, Frühling, Leichenschmaus, ausgezeichnet, Schnabeltier, wunderbar, Quatsch, Ohrwurm, Schnapsidee, Wanderlust, Ampelmann, Glockenspiel, Waschlappen, Keks, buchstabieren, Schmetterling, Wochenende, and prima. With the Deutsch macht Spaß grant we were able to buy a button maker and an initial number of buttons. The button-making party drew over 30 students, four graduate student teaching assistants, and three faculty—and we made over one hundred buttons. This provided an opportunity for our German-language learners to come together and thus to further build and strengthen our German studies community. We have scheduled a variety of visits to and from high schools, involving our undergraduate students (particularly alums from those schools). During these visits we will give each attending high school student a button, our own unique giveaway item that reflects how we approach German at UMass: It is fun, it sticks with you, and it is collaborative.

—Ela Gezen, University of Massachusetts–Amherst
Oktoberfest in Crown Point

113 students had the opportunity to celebrate Oktoberfest in Crown Point in their own style. Students from the local middle schools and area high schools saw the high school’s fieldhouse transformed into a celebration complete with music, dancing, food, games and crafts. The Deutsch macht Spaß grant made it possible for the Jay Fox Bavarian polka band to fill the fieldhouse with music and fun. Students enjoyed a full buffet of Hähnchen, Brezel, Bratwurst and Strudel. There was also a cookie decorating station and a drink-tasting station where students sampled the traditional flavors of Mineralwasser, Apfelschorle and homemade Mezzo-Mix cola. The games supplied by the German Club were trivia, bozo buckets and the traditional Deckel flipping game. Students worked off their appetite with dancing and an inflatable Twister game. The fun continued with face painting, a hat making station and a selfie station. Tickets were sold to cover the additional costs of catering and supplies. Students enrolled in German at CPHS and the CPHS German Club ran the food, games, crafts and face-painting stations. The CPHS Oktoberfest received local media attention through the school’s TV-station, CP-TV, as well as a spot in the regional newspaper. The video from CP-TV can be found here https://youtu.be/GmlUd5Mdm1g. The first CPHS Oktoberfest was a great success. After the Oktoberfest the students asked, “Will we have this again next year? We really should!”

—Heidi Marek and Candis Carey, Crown Point High School, IN

Schultüten in Maryland

German honor society students at North County High School developed a community service project focused on spreading awareness and understanding of German culture and traditions. They decorated over one hundred and fifty Schultüten, and filled them with pencils, pens, erasers, snacks, and candy. During the first week of school, several honor society students went to Hilltop Elementary school. They visited each Kindergarten and first grade classroom, sharing a small lesson they had prepared about the history and significance of Schultüten, along with some basic facts about Germany. They also taught the young students how to say “please,” “thank you,” and “goodbye” in German. The principal, teachers, and students at Hilltop Elementary all enjoyed the experience.

—Katrina Griffin, North Country High School, MD

Apply for Deutsch macht Spaß Grant Funds

AATG has grant funds from the German government’s Netzwerk Deutsch program to support local campus or community events to promote German learning and engagement with German culture. Grants of up to $500 will be awarded to support creative and innovative projects. Projects must be completed by December 15, 2018. Eligible applicants are teachers at Saturday schools, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and post-secondary institutions, or teams of teachers from multiple institutions. Application information is available here. The last day to submit an application is August 15, 2018.
AATG members were invited to apply for Deutsch macht Spaß grants supporting local campus or community events to promote German learning and engagement with German culture. Thanks to funding through the German government’s Netzwerk Deutsch program, grants of up to $500 were awarded to support numerous creative and innovative projects.

Read what members are doing—how they are advocating for German, making sure German is visible and prominent in their schools, and reaching out to the broader community to spread the message that Deutsch macht Spaß!

German Film Festival at Auburn University

We held a German Film Festival to increase awareness of German at Auburn University, and to strengthen relationships with local schools and the community. We selected five films tied to specific themes in order to increase interest and attendance, and asked faculty from outside the foreign language department to do a presentation on a theme presented in each movie (suggested examples are listed below). Each film was shown in the German language with English language subtitles to reach students who do not have German language skills, and still allow the German language students to hear the movie in German. Door prizes were offered to attract students to the film festival. We hope to offer the film festival again in the future.

—Kendall Parks, Auburn University, AL

German and STEM in North Carolina

The Deutsch macht Spaß grant enabled us to sponsor a field excursion for our students who are enrolled in both German and Mechanical Design at River Bluff High School.

Our trip to Charleston to visit IFA Rotorion, a German-based company that produces parts for automakers, was a huge success! Students were greeted and introduced to the company by CEO Mauro Amarante. Then the human resources department spoke with students about their co-op opportunity, and how what the students are learning in high school will help them get a job in the future. The company will be opening a new facility in the next few years and will be adding 600 employees. Students toured the facility, complete with steel-toed shoes and eye protection. Students were able to see firsthand how what they are currently learning in class can be directly used in their future professional lives. We’re hoping to visit BMW and Bosch in the spring.

—Sarah Buckliew, River Bluff High School, Lexington, SC
German Unplugged: Creative Writing with German Author Tobias Hülswitt

German writer Tobias Hülswitt served as a writer-in-residence at the University of Idaho in October 2017. He taught creative writing to students in two classes at the main campus, and also joined students at the Semester in the Wild program in the Frank Church Wilderness. There he led a discussion of authorhood in Germany, and advised students preparing presentations, based on his extensive experience presenting environmental challenges in an interactive video show format. Tobias also participated in a campus-wide literary reading, showcasing works by authors in the original language and in translation, where he read from his short story “Granular.”

The students enjoyed the opportunity to work closely with a German author to learn about how literary texts are created. Students expanded their German language skills beyond their textbooks and gained a new understanding of the power the communication skills. Students currently enrolled in German classes were motivated to continue beyond the four-semester requirement and to minor in German.

—Rachel Halverson, University of Idaho

Learning about Alpine Horns at Sparta High School

An Alphorn demonstration was a great outreach event for current and potential students of German at Sparta High School. The event was promoted ahead of time, and the band teacher even offered students credit for attending a musical performance. The musical trio included a veteran music teacher who explained the history, construction, and use of the instrument, along with his sons, who were close in age to the high school students. Students who play brass instruments found the presentation particularly interesting, since the mouthpieces and note ranges are similar. A chance to attempt to play an Alphorn was a hit. Most students gave it a try, and took photos and videos. A yearbook photographer also captured the event for posterity. It was a great experience for the students and showcased German for prospective students at the school.

—Michael Bendorf, Sparta High School, NJ

Deutsch macht Spaß at the Back to School Carnival, Chapel Hill, NC

To prepare for East Chapel Hill High School’s “Back to School” Carnival, students and I stayed after school to make a “Want to learn German?” poster. We decorated the table with Teach German Day materials, “Klub Deutsch” postcards, and stickers and flags, and a sign up list for interested students and parents.

The carnival was attended by about 600 people. Dozens of parents and kids stopped by the table and learned that we have an active German program and a German Club at our school. Eli, Charlie, and Stefanie, students from my German 3 class, talked about their experience learning German. We also gave the table a slight “Oktoberfest” theme. Since I am originally from Bavaria I wore my Dirndl. The German Club sold Brezeln and Brezel-Knots which were a hit!

—Barbara Roeder, East Chapel Hill High School, NC
German at Allen High School

German students at Allen High School were involved in a variety of activities. They formed a folk dance group and practiced every week after school, learning a number of dances for males, females, and couples. They participated in the St. Jude International Food Festival, and performed two dances for approximately 150 people. The coordinator of the event was so happy that she already invited us back to perform again next year.

German club students also participated in Sportfest, and competed in many of the activities. For the first time, we participated in the Allen Christmas parade, which had the theme a storybook Christmas — so students selected Hansel and Gretel, made a gingerbread house, and dressed as the characters. The Deutsch macht Spaß grant helped us promote community awareness of the German program, and encouraged students to have fun with German!

—Beth Raeder, Allen High School, Allen, TX

Luthertag 500 at Butler University

For Luthertag at Butler University, we decorated our outdoor gazebo to resemble the doors of the Wittenberg church where Luther posted his 95 theses. Students and visitors from the outside community received a handout on Martin Luther, and were encouraged to write their ideas on ways to improve society locally and globally, which were then displayed on the gazebo. Activities included Sola Fide: The Reformation board game, a poster exhibit, and a treasure hunt which led to various campus destinations, where participants found information on Luther. For the next event, the Table Talk, we welcomed Pastor Seth Mierow and Reverend Danny Mackey, along with two faculty members, Scott Swanson and Brent Hege (who came dressed as Luther). These experts selected passages from Luther’s Table Talks, and discussed them with participants who rotated between the tables. Luther film bingo and period snacks rounded out the evening — a resounding success!

—Melissa Etzler, Butler University, IN

Fairy Tales and STEM Gingerbread Houses in New Hampshire

Seventh and eighth-grade students from a neighboring Waldorf school joined students from Conval High School for a Fairy Tale Day. There were 30 middle school students and 32 high school students in levels 1 and 4. We started in the auditorium with four different fairy tale productions. After each group presented, we put them into mixed groups of three, and they did some icebreaker activities to get to know one another. Next we played Team Kahoot based on fairy tale knowledge. In these same mixed groups, we next held a gingerbread building competition. The kitchen staff selected the best looking house — and then the STEM challenge began. Houses had to withstand a hurricane (hairdryer blowing on the houses), a flood (water bottles spraying the house seams), and finally an earthquake (shaking the houses). Students agreed the day was great fun — and the event was shared on Twitter. Facebook, in a local newspaper, and a Goethe-Institut representative was there to enjoy the festivities.

—Cindi Hodgdon, Conval High School, Peterborough, NH
Hudson Valley Audre Lorde Film Night

The screening of the documentary film “Audre Lorde: The Berlin Years, 1984-1992” at Vassar College attracted students and faculty from Vassar and SUNY New Paltz, as well as community members from the Hudson Valley. Director Dagmar Schultz’s portrayal of Audre Lorde’s time as a guest professor in Berlin examines the impact she had as a Caribbean American feminist, scholar, writer, mother, activist, and lesbian, in bringing the Black German community in Berlin together. The film also depicts Lorde’s personal struggles with cancer during this time and how her time abroad enhanced her quality of life, both physically and emotionally. A panel discussion followed, focused on the film’s interdisciplinarity and intersectionality, after which the floor was opened to questions and comments from the audience. The film resonated with those in attendance, and the discussion was dynamic and spirited. Thanks to the financial support we received from the Deutsch macht Spaß grant, we were able to make this a successful cross-institutional event between Vassar College and SUNY New Paltz—a collaborative endeavor that resulted in the advocacy for German Studies as an inclusive discipline and as an interdisciplinary field of studies that both participates in and furthers the conversation on social justice in and beyond the United States.

—Vanessa Plumly, SUNY New Paltz, and Karin Maxey, Vassar College, NY

Sankt Martinstag in Tuscaloosa

St. Martin’s Day is one of the most beloved festivities in German-speaking countries, yet little known in the United States. The University of Alabama German Program in conjunction with Tuscaloosa Academy brought the magic of St. Martin’s Day across the Atlantic. At dusk over 200 participants from the community and university began to assemble at Tuscaloosa Academy. The celebration began with a brief introduction to St. Martin of Tours, whose almsgiving has remained in the European imagination for almost 2000 years. The Tuscaloosa Academy’s Children’s Choir sang classic songs such as “Ich geh’ mit meiner Laterne” to rousing applause. The celebration continued with a children’s play staging the legendary generous act of St. Martin dividing his cloak in two to provide for the needy. The evening culminated with one of the most memorable aspects of St. Martin’s Day: the horse-led lantern parade. Parents, children, and other members of the community gathered and marched with their self-made lanterns behind a costumed St. Martin on horseback. After the parade, a buffet was served of traditional St. Martin’s Day and German cuisine, ranging from the Martins goose (or rather turkey), red cabbage to pretzels and sausage. By the end of the evening, there was no doubt that our St. Martin’s Day celebration brought German programs at Tuscaloosa Academy and The University of Alabama in touch with the community at large. The celebration was critical to raising awareness for this holiday, allowing local German families to recreate a beloved tradition in the United States, and allowing Americans the opportunity to take part in a new cultural tradition. Participants and organizers were so pleased with the outcome that they are already talking about repeating the festivity next year as well as cooperating on other community-centered projects.

—Matthew Feminella, University of Alabama
German Banquet

The Nolan Catholic High School German Banquet was a great success! Current and prospective students attended with their family members. The banquet was held in our school cafeteria. Colorful boards about our German program, along with a collection of ribbons, medals, and trophies won at our regional and state German contests, were on display for people to view as they waited in line for the buffet. A student-created slide show displayed photos from the past year at the front of the room.

A number of student groups were recognized, including German Club officers, National German Exam award winners, participants in the regional and state German contests, and the German 4 AP class. The German Honor Society induction followed, and honor cords were given to the seniors. Three students talked about their experiences on our summer language immersion trip to Germany. The folk dancing team performed two dances, and the trivia team organized a tournament for students and parents. It was a great opportunity to advocate for our program.

—Madeline O’Bryan, Nolan Catholic High School, Fort Worth, TX

Visit to the Indianapolis Athenaeum

German students and instructions from Marian University enjoyed a visit to the national historic landmark Athenaeum in Indianapolis. Previously known as “Das deutsche Haus,” it was designed and built in 1894 for the Indianapolis Socialer Turnverein as a “house of culture” for the mind and body. It remains an active hub of German-American cultural events, hosting an Oktoberfest, a Fasching celebration, a Nikolauslauf, and is home to the Indian German Heritage Society. The Athenaeum features an exhibit on the contributions of German-Americans to Indiana. Students toured the meeting halls, performance halls, and the Turnhalle, which still contains athletic equipment from the Turnverein, and enjoyed the architectural highlights pointed out by the docent who led the tour. An authentic German lunch at the Ratskeller in the building capped off the visit. Students were impressed with what they learned about German heritage in Indiana—and many of the students have signed up to continue with German.

—Wendy Westphal, Marian University, IN

Poetry Slam at Southwestern University

The goal of the First Annual Poetry Slam at Southwestern University was to build community by celebrating spoken word art in all its forms with a special focus on German poetry. The first half of the evening was dedicated to spoken word performances, while the second half focused on a Poetry Slam with six contestants, a judges panel, and cash prizes for the top three performances. We had a wonderful turnout with an audience of about seventy from Southwestern’s campus, our local community, and the greater Austin area. All participants in both the Spoken Word and Poetry Slam events received swag bags decorated in the German colors of the flag, filled with treats like Gummibärchen and Schokoladen, as well as German stickers and buttons. We offered German themed refreshments which were much appreciated by our audience. We concluded the evening by sharing information about the SU German Program, its function as host for the Poetry Slam event, and teaching the entire audience how to recite “poetic words” in German. The event was a celebration of German poetry and culture, brought great visibility to the German Program, and engaged a diverse audience in having fun with German—Spaß mit Deutsch!

—Michelle Reyes and Erika Berroth, Southwestern University, TX
Über Mauern hinweg – Beyond Walls

Through a Deutsch macht Spaß grant, the German program at the University of Colorado Boulder held a series of events focused on Germany’s experience of division and reunification and its implications for contemporary global debates on politics, nationalism, and disunion. A TED video and a presentation on Junction, reunification art by K.O. Götz, served as an introduction to the topic. Students watched the films Liebe Mauer, Das Leben der Anderen, and Westwind, and prepared questions for an interview session with contemporary witnesses from East and West Germany. The Zeitzeugen interview took place on the historically significant day of October 3, and received overwhelmingly positive feedback. The German Club then hosted Kreativstunden in which students put their thoughts and impressions from the films, discussions, and interview into art. The art productions were display in the Über Mauern hinweg – Beyond Walls art exhibit. At the opening reception, artists mingled with visitors and engaged in conversation about their art. In addition to 22 paintings, sculptures, and installations, a few students also wrote songs and composed music. One student presented her composition during the opening. The exhibit received great visibility beyond the German program, due to its central location on campus.

Current students were able to draw connections between the target language and its application in discussions, interviews, and creative productions. Students’ experience at the interview session and art exhibit reaffirms their interest in continuing their studies of German. The project also helped the German program to do outreach on campus and become more visible through the art exhibit and the coverage it received in university publications and social media. It is likely that the exhibit will draw students to the German program since they see a real life application of German, and a link with other disciplines such as art, music, and creative writing.

—Berit Jany, University of Colorado Boulder, CO

German Games for Recruitment, Practice, and Reinforcement

Games are a great way to promote the German program at Watts Middle School to elementary school students, and also to foster interaction between middle school and high school students. The Deutsch macht Spaß grant enabled me to order a number of German games, based on age-appropriateness and topics such as numbers, food, geography, clothes, and animals. We have started game sessions with middle school students, both during class and after school. Students bring friends who are not in a foreign language class to play with us during lunch, and I hope this will encourage them to choose German when they go to the high school. We will start visiting the elementary schools to introduce the games and the German language to the students, before they choose the language they’ll learn in middle school. The students love the games so much that many ask to come in during lunch and play them. We are off to a good start and will be able to use the games both in our classrooms as well as in our ongoing recruitment efforts for many years.

—Dagmar Tingle, Watts Middle School, OH