

Like Alice in Wonderland

By Au Pair Denisa Adamikova from the Czech Republic with the Powell Family in Bellefonte, PA

My name is Denisa, I am 23 years old and I am from the Czech Republic. That is a small country in Europe. I came from a little village that has just 800 inhabitants. I live there with my parents, brother, and bunch of farm animals. And this girl, who lives with pigs and chickens, one day, just appeared totally alone at JFK airport in New York. Wow! Many times I was just speechless about all the beautiful places I visited and how huge this city is. I was a little bit scared, but very happy at the same time. It was hard to believe where I was and that my dreams became true.

That happened seven months ago. And during these months I already saw many places which I will remember forever. I arrived in October and my host family took me to Florida in November. It was a little

of. We had lunch on top of the CN tower with a view of the entire city. I took the Hop On Hop Off bus to see all the must see places and as a big hockey fan I visited the Hockey Hall of Fame. The Niagara Falls were just amazing, and because it was one day before New Year, there was a huge firework above them! I hope I will be able to make it back to the Niagara Falls in the summer because I want to go on the boat to get closer to falls.

Next amazing surprise for me was a ski trip to Whistler in Vancouver, Canada. I love to ski and with my host family we were skiing every weekend during the winter. I have only known this place from TV when I was watching big races and championships with my dad back home. When we were driving from the airport in Vancouver to Whistler I was just amazed by the nature in

day after, I had a big surprise...my host family had arranged for us to go bobsledding. That thing goes down 130km/h and you can also feel 5G pressure on your body. And it was real. We got a professional bobsleigh driver; I was a little bit disappointed that it wasn't a member of the Czech team, and two men pushed the bobsled down the slope. We got all the instructions before but the driver told us that we could scream all the way down, which I did it. Poor man who was sitting in front of me. Haha! I have never in my life even thought that I could experience this, it was amazing!!

My Au Pair friends and I also made some daily trips to Baltimore, MD and Harrisburg, PA which is the capital of Pennsylvania, where I currently live. As I said, I am a hockey fan so for me one of the "MUST DO" was to go to an NHL game (National Hockey League game). I went with my host mom's sister to Pittsburgh, PA to watch the Penguins play against the Flyers. Both teams have players from the Czech Republic, so it was my dream to see them play in real life not just in TV.

After that game, I went to the hospital and I had an emergency appendectomy. I just needed to try everything here obviously... But I must say that the service, the nurses and the doctor were great! And even though I was very scared, they explained to me everything by using very simple English so I could understand what was going on. The day after the surgery, I was able to leave the hospital with just three tiny scars in memory of this experience.

Living in another country as an Au Pair is the biggest adventure. Trust me, when you first arrive simple experiences like going shopping seem like an adventure! But when everything becomes familiar you start to feel so confident that experiences like ordering through a McDonald's Drive Thru or paying for parking become easy. By the way, I have been in the USA for 7 months now and I still do not understand how to do that.

Thank you for sharing your experience with us, Denisa! We wish you many more Alice in Wonderland moments!



This is a picture of me and my host siblings Alyssa (8) and Ethan (6) leaving school on Friday!

challenging to buy summer clothes in November but I did it! When we were there, one evening I was just sitting on the beach by myself and I was so thankful and proud of myself that I decided to do this experience. We were in Fort Lauderdale which is famous for its big marina full of big and luxurious yachts. One day, we took a water taxi so we could easily see things around the canal. I love that beach atmosphere, and my Au Pair year couldn't have started better than this. I will appreciate it forever.

I also spent more than one week in Toronto, Canada where I was visiting my family friend. And I saw more than I have ever dreamt

Canada. I literally fell in love. We had such a good time. I was like Alice in Wonderland and I couldn't believe how beautiful the weather was for skiing. I met many people from my home country, too! And because it was a while since I last met someone I could speak my native language with, I always said hello and chatted a little bit with the Czech people I saw.

Also while we were in Whistler, the World Bobsleigh Championship was taking place at the same time. Oh man, you can't even imagine how fast that bobsleigh can go! So we went to see one race and I also met the Czech national team and took a picture with one of the team members. The

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About Us...

EurAuPair Intercultural Child Care Programs is a non-profit, public benefit organization designated by the U.S. Department of State to conduct the Au Pair cultural exchange program under the Fulbright Hays Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 and is intended "to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges".

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Wichita, KS a Melting Pot in the Midwest

By Community Counselor in Wichita, KS Pamela Porvaznik



Dancing the Dubke, a Lebanese dance

Wichita, Kansas has a long history of welcoming people from foreign countries into its community. The Mexican and Vietnamese people have found a real home here in the Midwest, and the Lebanese and Syrian people helped pave the way.

To celebrate the Lebanese culture and heritage, two orthodox churches in Wichita have enlisted the talents of “family cooks” to showcase their skills with food festivals each year. One church is on the east side of town, the other downtown. St. Mary’s Orthodox

Church is the downtown church that has an outside festival with raucous Lebanese music you can hear for miles, spirited dancing, and food: BBQ chicken kabobs, meatloaf on a stick, Lebanese potato salad, baklava and of course that yummy green bean and steak dish, the name of which is too hard to pronounce.

St. Mary’s two-day festival is where I love to take my Au Pairs. This year, Kelly from Colombia, got up and learned to dance the Dubke, a Lebanese dance that starts out slowly and advances with the music to a fever pitch. It’s a line dance of sorts, where all join hands in a circle and the leader starts off with some fancy footwork that all replicate. As the music gets faster and faster, the dancers look like they are literally dancing on air they are going so fast.

I was so proud of Kelly for daring to get out there and learn the steps. “I love to dance,” yelled Kelly over the music, “but this is wild!”

I guess I’m kind of an honorary Lebanese. I’m really German/Irish, but I have many Lebanese friends and I can vouch for their love of life and willingness to embrace new friends

and make them part of their families.

Kelly, although from Colombia, has been so embraced, and now begins her journey to appreciate all things ethnic and to learn to love yet another culture right here in the heartland of America.

Thank you Pamela for sharing with us and with our Au Pairs all that Wichita has to offer!



Community Counselor Pamela and Au Pair from Colombia, Kelly

Becoming an Au Pair

By Au Pair from Colombia, Kelly Silva Torres with the Robertson Family in Wichita, KS

Making the decision to travel to another country is very difficult; leaving your family and discovering a new culture and a new language is complicated but exciting. When I made the decision to be an Au Pair and travel to the United States, I felt a lot of expectation about the family with whom I would live this experience and, most importantly, how my relationship with the children would be. I arrived in this country with fear and uncertainty until I met my host family, the Robertson’s. They are a beautiful family with three children, six year old Xander and beautiful four year old twins, Scarlett and Penelope.

At first the process was a little complicated because we had to adapt to new customs. It perhaps was a little more difficult for me, because before I arrived, the children had another EurAupair Au Pair who took care of them, and she was a great person. I knew it would be difficult for them to separate from her and that’s how

it was. That was when I had to show the family that I, too, was an incredible person and that I would give the children the best of me, a lot of love and dedication.

I have been here for five months and I can say that my experience has been incredible. I am lucky because I am with a

wonderful family that makes me feel like a family member. I share with them a lot of time because I feel very happy. I go with them on all the trips they schedule and I am there for them when they have meetings with their friends. Currently my relationship with the children is very good, they

are wonderful children, educated and loving. They understand things just by talking to them and explaining to them. They are cheerful and fun.

I feel that I love them very much and they love me and all the time they let me know with an “I love you!” that always makes me feel very happy and makes my days happy. I enjoy going with them to the zoo, museums, parks and other activities, because we have fun to the fullest. We share incredible experiences and a lot of love for giving and receiving. I feel so happy and fortunate to be part of this wonderful family because it has made my stay one of the best experiences of my life.

Thank you for writing about your experience, Kelly. We wish you a wonderful time with your host family.



Kelly with her host siblings Xander (6) and twins Scarlett and Penelope (3)

EurAupair Photos



Area Coordinator Cynthia went to Alaska to meet with Community Counselor Linne and some of the Au Pairs in the area. They all went to a seasonal jumping slope and park and had a great time.

From left to right: Au Pairs Anna and Clarissa from South Africa, Maria from Venezuela, Area Coordinator Cynthia, Au Pairs Nele and Jennifer from Germany



Community Counselor Sophie from Chicago, IL took her Au Pairs on a Chicago Ghost and Gangster Tour. The group learnt about the Italian mob in Chicago and had a very knowledgeable guide who not only knew about gangsters and ghost stories but also about Chicago history and architecture.

From Left to Right:

First row: Au Pairs Dani from Venezuela and Rocio from Spain
Second row: Au Pairs Julia from Brazil, Diana from Venezuela, Rosita from Italy, Obi from Venezuela, Community Counselor Sophie and Au Pair Valeria from Venezuela
Back row: Au Pairs Celia from France and Brandy from China



Community Counselor Otilia from Nantucket, MA met with her group of Au Pairs at the second oldest lighthouse in the USA, Brant Point Light. In the picture, the following countries are represented: Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, South Africa and Turkey.



Community Counselor Carole from Bronxville, NY took her Au Pairs for a tour of the iconic Stephen A. Schwarzman Building of the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue in New York City. The building is a magnificent example of the Beaux-Arts style of architecture. This library has symbolized the democratic ideal of free and open access to knowledge since it was opened to the public in 1911 by President Taft.

In the picture, the group is standing in front of the iconic Library Lions. They acquired their nicknames of Patience and Fortitude in the 1940s. From left to right: Au Pairs Manon from France, Maria from Venezuela, Sara from France, Marion from France, Anna from Germany, Sevane from France, Fernanda from Brazil and Community Counselor Carole.



Community Counselor Jeanette from La Honda, CA took her Au Pairs for a beautiful hike at Russian Ridge Park followed by lunch at her house. Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve is a regional park located in the Santa Cruz Mountains in San Mateo County, California along the San Francisco Peninsula.

From left to right: Au Pairs Maeva from France, Laura from Finland, Mariana from Colombia, Reandi from South Africa, Gabriela from Venezuela, Bing from China and Community Counselor Jeanette.



Community Counselor Catherine from Appleton, WI got her two host families and Au Pairs together for Easter egg hunt!

From left to right: Back row: host mom Emily, Au Pair Marianna from Brazil, host mom Sarah, Au Pair Judit from Spain and host sister Anjolie. Children: Olivia, Michael, Mahra and Alexa.



Community Counselor Nancy from Garrett, IN took her Au Pairs to the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo.

From left to right: Au Pairs Leticia from Brazil and Annika from Germany



Community Counselor Cheryl from Grand Rapids, MI took her Au Pairs to Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, a 158-acre botanical garden and outdoor sculpture park.

From left to right: Maria Victoria from Venezuela and Maria Cristina from Brazil posing in front of the Light of the Moon sculpture by Polish-born sculptor Igor Mitoraj.



At a Salt Lake City Au Pair Week-End Class.

From left to right: Susie from Germany, Nadine from South Africa and Paige from Namibia

Experiences from America

By Au Pair Julie Gundertofte Nielsen from Denmark

My adventure in the United States started back in February 2019 when I received an email from an American family. Even though the family, at that time, was just considering me as their new Au Pair, I still remember the feeling of complete excitement and joy as if it was yesterday. Suddenly it was no longer just something that I wanted to do, but somebody actually wanted me! After many emails and two interviews via Skype the family decided to invite me to the USA as their new Au Pair.

I was ready to start a new chapter in my life! On April 8th 2019, I landed in New York City after a long day of traveling and I was really tired. At the same time, I was also so excited about finally being in America. I had a fun week in New York with many great Au Pairs, but of course I thought a lot about the meeting with my new family.

Arrival in St. Louis

The Lichtenberger family was waiting to greet me at the airport when I arrived from New York. It was so nice to finally meet them and give them all a hug. Before we drove to Saint Albans and my new home for the next year, we went out for a good dinner, which was a perfect way to start our year together. The following week I learned a lot of new things. My host mom was off work for a few days, so she could teach me how things work in their home. Pretty quickly I started to take over by myself and learned how to be that extra hand they need every day. When the kids are going to school my day starts at 6:30am and I wake them up, get them dressed and prepare their breakfast and lunches before I drive them to school. While they are in school, I go home and clean before I have to pick them up and take them to their activities or sports. Now, when it is summer and the kids are off school, we have more time to play, visit the Zoo, Six Flags, our favorite parks, ride bikes around the golf course or just relax at home. We have fun but there is still a lot to do and to take care of with 4 kids.

From an only child to 4 kids

For me personally, the greatest difference from my life in Denmark is that I am an only child, and I went from one day being alone to another day where

I suddenly have 4 kids around me every day and every night. But they give me so much joy and even when I am the one who is taking care of them, being around them is one of the most instructive experiences I will ever get. I have Nina (5) and

big eyes and says, “one more last chance?” when she knows that she did something wrong! Beside two small kids I have Emma (14) and Jay (15) which is completely different; because to help and take care of two teenagers is actually

raise and teach the kids how to behave and act, but with teenagers it is much more about giving advice and finding compromises. I am proud to say it is working for me; they listen and trust me which makes our relationship strong. Being around them has already taught me a lot about myself, my weaknesses/strengths and my boundaries. It is not many years ago that I was in their shoes, had the same feelings and challenges. Guiding them in a good direction and teaching them what I know about life makes me grow as a person and it makes me happy.

Being away from home

I have now been in the United States for about 3 and a half months and the time has just flown away. So many things have happened, such as school finals, confirmation, graduation and birthdays, so I have not had a lot of time to sit down and miss my family and friends from Denmark which is a good thing. It is nice to get distracted by the kids because they are making memories, and they are making this year unforgettable for me.

Life challenged me for real about a month ago when my Grandpa passed away and suddenly, I felt alone. Not because my American family wasn't helpful, they were more than helpful. However, for the last two months I had been living their life as I tried my best to get to know them and suddenly my feelings had become the focus. While it was hard to be away from my family in Denmark during such a difficult time, I was so thankful to be with the Lichtenberger family and I learned I had another family right here. Being in the United States has been one of the best experiences, and it has also reminded me about all the good things I have at home and has helped me to appreciate my life, friends and country.

I love my American family and I love to be here, so I can't wait to see what the next months will bring.

Thank you, Julie, for sharing your experience with us! We wish you and your host family many more memorable experiences!



Julie with all her host siblings: Fifi (6), Emma (14), Jay (15) and Nina (5) at the Continental divide

Fifi (6) who see life so simply and from a kid's perspective. Both of them have a huge heart and since I arrived in St. Louis, they have made me smile every single day. My heart melts every time she looks at me with her beautiful

much harder than taking care of two young kids. Their age is closer to mine which means that their respect is different from the younger children's and they sure do have their own opinions. As an Au Pair, one of your tasks is to help



Julie with her American family, the Lichtenberger's, at the Snake River in Keystone, Colorado