

Mr. President, Member of Board,

My name is Kai-Uwe Deller, an international exchange student from Germany. As a participant of the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange I am able to study at UNLV and work in a US company. I am proud to stay in your beautiful country.

For example the Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange was initiated in 1983 by the United States Congress and the German Bundestag in celebration of the 300th anniversary of the first German immigration to North America. The exchange program conveys the importance of common values, mutual acceptance and lasting personal relationships to young Americans and Germans.

Let's see that since 1983, almost 15,000 young people have participated, approximately 2,500 of them young professionals. By extension, these participant numbers multiply into 15,000 hosting families and 75,000 high school classrooms in which a Congress-Bundestag student has been seated.

In later years, German and American program alumni will very likely host their former host family in their hometown, they are three-times more likely to exhibit life-long professional learning than their peers who did not participate, and they are five times more likely than those same peers to continue to travel internationally for professional and personal reasons. In short, program members participate in the life of their host country and are changed by the experience. And that is only one of many programs American students can join.

Teaching German is the first step to give them the opportunity to become a participant in such a program.

More than 6 million people in the US speak German. German is the second most used language in Europe and on the internet. The third most imports in Germany are from the US and every second export goes to the US. Millions of people communicate among a US-German relationship, because many Americans still have relatives who speak German or even live in Germany.

We all know that the world society acts more and more global. You cannot stop at your own borders. Of course you can talk in English to most of the people. However, I feel more comfortable to talk to my friends and business partners in their language. You acknowledge somebody through speaking his language, even in a bad way, don't you?

Give the children a chance to grow up in a global world and let them find their interests out of the country and through different languages they prefer. Sometimes the right word is better than thousands of gestures.

Beside the language, German offers a lot of basics in culture and art. German also spread out to every continent and founded early relationships to foreign countries. You will find German roots everywhere. Give your students the chance to find many things we have in common.

At last you should let this door open, because it is always harder to reopen a locked door.

Thank you for your consideration. I was proud to talk about my concern.