

## EXPERIENCES VECUES EN IRLANDE



### UNE EXPERIENCE VECUE : B.A.L.L. PROJET A WATERFORD .

#### **I. Introduction**

**"Ireland" this country always impressed me. This people, story, legend and this simplicity made me dream so, I always promised myself to visit it and at the same time learn this international language. I began to believe in this project when they told me about the European Voluntary Service. After 8 months of hard work with the BSC my dream had come true**

**I arrived in Waterford on the 4th of September 2001. It was dark and my first sight was the Quay. This town was so illuminate during the night that my impression was " this 6 months will be so grant and bright". Since I arrived in Waterford let me feel free and today I don't regret my choice.**

**"Waterford Regional Youth Service" perhaps it means to know not so much for the people, but to me it was the office where I worked with the B.A.L.L.**

**Project. It was like my family home in Ireland. This association integrated Local Youth Services who include Special Project like the B.A.L.L. Project.**

## **II. THE HOSTING ORGANISATION**

### **A. What is the B.A.L.L.Project ?**

**The B.A.L.L.Project was born after an initiative of three local authorities estates :**

**Ballybeg / Larchville / Lisduggan .**

**These areas are in a high level of criminality and the Project work to provide an alternative to criminal involvement and high risk behaviour for young people. He is also there to support the young people make the positive choices in their lives but the decisions are always taken by the young people.**

**The B.A.L.L. Project works consistently with 34 young people aged between 10-18 years from Ballybeg, Larchville and Lisduggan. Additional young people are involved in further programmes run in conjunction with other initiatives in the areas.**

**These are :**

- **Ballybeg Special Youth Project;**
- **SKIPS Youth Club and YELL ( Homework Club );**
- **Youth Educational Larchville and Lisduggan.**

**The B.A.L.L. Project works with three levels of involvement :**

**Level one: One to One (1:1)**

- **Initial period of engagement;**
- **Period of non-engagement in Programme or Group,**
- **Period of inappropriate placement in club/Programme.**

**Level two : One to One Club/ Programme Involvement**

- **Second level of engagement,**
- **Period of challenging behaviour within Club/ Programme.**

**Level three: One to One Club/programme and activity involvement.**

- **Full membership level.**

### My work in the B.A.L.L. Project.

I could divide my work in 2 parts.

My first period was before Christmas. This time was better because I met all the people who work and help around the Project. I began to have my own responsibilities. With Stefan (responsible of the B.A.L.L. Project), we organised a plan that allowed me to attend all the activities where the Project take part. This was important to me because I could feel independent in my work with him.

Nuala is an old teacher who decide to create a school for the young people who left school early without having the leaving certificate and want to have the secondary certificate after more thought. She offers them the opportunity to obtain the key to their future. In this way, she asked me to have my own French class with 1 student to begin and 2 at the end. This opportunity was amazing for me because first it altered me into a teacher and second I could learn English with more facilities.

Glen works in the Ballybeg Parish Centre like Education Support Worker. In the same way than Nuala, he asked me to give once per week French lessons to 4 girls. I really enjoyed the time passed with these lads.

#### Plan of my work during the week:

Monday	2h30 to 16h	Homework Group (Y.E.L.L.)
	20h to 21h	Café (B.A.L.L. Project)
Tuesday	19h30 to 21h	Young Club (S.K.I.P.S.)
Wednesday	12h15 to 13h	French class (Nuala)
	2h30 to 16h	Homework Group (Y.E.L.L.)
Thursday	12h15 to 13 h	French class (Nuala)
	18h to 19h	French class (Glenn)
Friday	17h to 18h	Soccer (B.A.L.L.Project)

After this, I worked with Stefan :

- I attended a lot of meetings where the B.A.L.L. Project was invited,
- I attended a lot of 1 to 1 ,
- I organised the Christmas Party/ the Residential in Woodstown,
- I wrote different letters to kids,

- I attended and sometimes helped the Management committee.

My second period began after Christmas. Everything changed for me because, to confront the excess work in the Project, they made a good decision, to employ someone, part time to begin. After, 2 students arrived for their practices plus 2 or 3 volunteers. I think all these people were a good breath of fresh air to the project and Stefan but to be honest, sometimes there were more people than work. I always kept good relationship with the people who worked for the B.A.L.L. Project.

The conclusion in my consideration was: I didn't attend to the meetings or to the 1 to 1 any more. My main work was reduced to my own activities. The real fact was I didn't feel involved enough in the project and sometimes I also felt frustrate.

#### B.Relation with my Co-ordinator ( Jim)

I never had problems with Jim. He was perfect. Never late for the pocket money and always present to any problems I met ( accomodation or others). He shared with me his passion for the Irish Music and his joy of life and I hope I brouhgthimmy culture and my smile. Thank you very much Jim and Mary (his wife).

#### C. Relation with the responsible of the project (Stefan).

Stefan is a very kind person, honest and friendly. Like all the people I met in Ireland, I never met any problem with him, but I don't think the communication was completely good because I never confided in him. Today again I don't know "why" because the relation was very good. I just want to say that he is brilliant in his work and he learned me a lot in the area I didn't know before. So, thank you Stefan for trusting me and I hope I was a good element in the project.

Now I want to tell about Eoin he is the Manager inthe "Youth Service" and a very professional person. He became a good friend of mine with all his family and a hope for the life.

#### D. My integration.

My expectations exceeded in all areas. This is a good aspect for a brilliant integration. I enjoyed my stay in Ireland.

- In the project

I always do my best. Of course I was more motivated and open-minded in the beginning but I was always honest open and flexible even if sometimes I was

depressed because a long way divided me from my family and it was not easy. I hope I brought new blood and I shared my own culture on the European dimension to the project.

- In the Irish life.

"I'm walking in some street in a so beautiful town of Ireland. The houses are all painted with colours very unusual ( brown, green, yellow, white), but there are so well integrated into a nature so present in the life of an Irish. On the wall, I can see some adds about international Guinness, Baileys, Jameson, Whiskey... I decide to go in one of the pubs. Yet, the door looks so old. I go inside. It seems to me that the time stops. The stuff is so old and in the same time so new. It is dim inside. It's time for lunch and everybody make the line like in the canteen at school. There is stew, lovely and so warm because today the weather is raining yet the other days were so nice, when I visited the Connemara or Kerry where one word is enough to qualify the region : Stunning. In the pub the people are so happy with their Guinness and they speak and laugh. Outside I watch the sky, to me it translate the depth and all the beauty of Ireland.

Now it's time to leave and I'm so sad because my travel was one of my most beautiful experiences in the country of the Celts".

### E. Accomodation

I lived during all this 6 months in a house for 2 people but I was alone. There were all the facilities. My home was not so far away from the centre and the place where I worked but not very close to the areas I had all my activities. This explains "why" I walked so much! But it became soon a good habit. I never felt good because the house was too a big for me and I was lonely.

However on January I had new lodgers : mice. After only 2 or 3 days, I began to develop a kind of fear and I was so bad. I could'nt sleep, could'nt eat. I was always with the suspicion to see the mice since the day when I saw the first one. At the end I was completely tired and so disappointed. Finally we find a solution with poison. Since this period, I did'nt feel secure in the house situated in 10b Pearse Park.

### F. Food / Pocket Money

No problem. Jim had the responsibility to give me my pocket money and my food money. I always received it all the Friday as agreed between him and me when I arrived for the food money and every 4th of the month for the pocket money. I always cooked myself.

### **G. Eligible for holidays.**

No problems. Jim cared to give me holidays during Christmas to allow me to spend Christmas with my family. I was given three weeks so, more than I planned and I got a good price for my ticket.

### **III SENDING ORGANISATION (BSC - BELGIAN SENIOR CONSULTANTS)**

#### **A. How was I aware of the BSC ?**

A friend of me told me about the European Voluntary Service Program. She gave me all the information about the sending organisation. I contacted Mr Brévière and we met to permit me to have a better sight about the program. After a few explanations, I decided to begin the processes with the BSC the month of January 2001.

#### **B. Work of the BSC to plan my project.**

Mr Delanghe was in charge of my file. He was excellent: he guided me and advises me. When I found the association in Ireland, Mr Delanghe always kept the contact with them. He made all my administrative papers and when I lost self-confidence about the program, he was always positive. The search was normal but all the contacts and administrative works took a lot of time.

#### **C. Communication with the BSC.**

He was the link between the BSC and me. He always maintained the contact with me. During my EVS, I received 2 or 3 times a letter from the BSC. I sent a postcard to the BSC office and once I sent a mobile message to keep the contact. I have no idea if the BSC phoned and took some news to my office because I didn't work a lot there. In general, my experience was very good and I never met any serious problems.

They never provided me training before coming. Perhaps it is something to improve because I needed to have more explanation about Ireland and the program like I received in Dublin during a week.

#### **D. Insurance**

When I met the others EVS young people in Dublin, they told me about a yellow card from AXA Insurance. Normally you always need to have this card with you. To my part, I never saw this card before and never received it. When I left, I signed some documents for the insurance and I had my E111 from my Health Board. I never had health problems so I don't know what would happen in case of illness.

#### **IV. MY OWN OPINION ABOUT ALL MY PROJECT**

**Before coming, I had 2 main objectives :**

- **to learn English**
- **to discover Ireland and it's culture.**

**Today, I'm very happy because this encounter brought me more than all my expectations. Naturally, I improved my English and I travelled around the country but I had exciting work where the children were so kind and so warm. Each minute I passed with them procured me a lot of love.**

**Thanks to this experience, I became more independant and I am inspired in a new way to get a job. I really improved my personal skills.**

**I am totally sure, if I was to do again my answer would be a great YES because even if some days weren't easy, I leave with so much knowledge and of course I recommend this place to get experience.**

#### **V. CONCLUSION**

**I think that in a life you have to realize your dream. In a few years I could tell to my child my dream in Ireland. I am proud of my choice and I want to thank everybody for having been part of my adventure:**

- **Stefan, Rachel (his wife)**
- **Eoin, Bernie (his wife)**
- **Jim, Mary (his wife)**
- **The entire worker in the Manor: Michael, Maeve, Tina, Rose and teresa.**
- **Glen, Nuala and Eoin (her son)**
- **John Kiely to have been my friend**
- **Joan, Pamela, Tina and Breda (SKIPS)**
- **Fiona( the student)**
- **The kids.**
- **And everybody I missed.**
- **Belgian Senior Consultants to have given me this opportunity and especially Mr Delanghe.**

**Now, I want to thank all my family and my fiancé Vito to support me in all the bad moments and to have been present in all the good time.**

**I will miss you.**

**Dans ma langue natale, je voudrais dire:**

**" Du fond du coeur, chaleureusement merci "**

**Lombardi Angela**

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## Rapport de mi-service de Germain Brasseur

Nom du projet : Tools For Solidarity

Ville : Belfast

N° identification : 2007-GB-33

Pays : Irlande du Nord

Période de service prévue : Février – Aout 2009

### DEBRIEFING :

Nature du service presté : Réparation de machines à coudre et d'outils, collecte d'outils, travail avec des volontaires

Commentaire sur les activités : Malgré le fait que je ne connaissait pas grand-chose ( rien ) en arrivant en matière de réparation de machines à coudre, après les explications de John et quelques semaines de travail, je répare maintenant des machines plus compliquées (électrique). Ce projet est vraiment exceptionnel car il aide directement des personnes qui ont besoin d'outils grâce au travail de personnes qui sont volontaires. Ces machines d'une très grande qualité (rien à voir avec les nouvelles machines « made in china ») vont avoir un deuxième usage en Afrique (en Tanzanie et Uganda pour le moment), et en même temps on ne devra pas les recycler en Europe.

Pour en revenir aux activités, rien de négatif à signaler, que du contraire.

Ambiance de travail : Excellente !

Problèmes d'intégration éventuels : Aucun

Logement : Je loge dans la maison de John Wood. Je me sens ici comme chez moi car nous pouvons faire ce que nous voulons (dans les limites du raisonnable évidemment).

Repas : Tous les volontaires mangeant ensemble le midi à l'atelier et le soir. Chaque un cuisine une fois par semaine le midi et une fois par semaine le soir grâce à un système de tournante.

Paiement de l'allocation de volontaire : Aucun retard jusqu'à présent.

Problèmes éventuels liés à l'assurance : Aucun

PS : Je me limite à ça pour le moment, sinon ça ne vaudra plus la peine que je fasse le rapport final !

Tout se passe très bien !