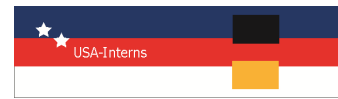




**Steuben-Schurz-Gesellschaft – USA Interns**



## **Chase Howard Henry** **Axalta Systems-Internship – also a language experience**

**Chase Howard Henry is student at the University of Arizona, Tucson, where he studies Mechanical Engineering and German Studies. He was happy that the USA Interns-program could offer him an internship that combined both subjects in real practice**

As my internship at **Axalta Coating Systems** (formerly DuPont Performance Coatings) draws to a close, it is now the time for some reflection on the experience. While at Axalta, I was integrated into the Reliability Engineering department, which is part of the larger Site Services. Axalta manufactures automotive paint as well as paint thinners. The **production** of these products requires that machinery functions efficiently and consistently.

The primary task of the Reliability Engineering department is to assess where there are deficiencies present in the manufacturing process, namely where machines, such as agitators, ventilators, electric motors, expansion joints, as so forth, are concerned.

Once these deficiencies are determined, a solution must be quickly found and enacted in order to keep the plant running at optimal efficiency. The department works behind the scenes, so to say, in order to ensure that paint production is still profitable for the company.

An important part of reflection is the comparison of expectations and goals versus outcomes. Prior to beginning the internship, I hoped to improve my German communication skills in addition to expanding my almost nonexistent technical vocabulary. This goal was fortunately a spectacular

success. Not only can I express my thoughts and ideas outside of work more fluidly, but I can also express simple ideas at work using technical vocabulary.

During my first week of work, I was forced to play catch up. My primary assignment at Axalta was to write a technical instruction manual of sorts for rotating cleaning nozzles, **in German**. In an incredibly short amount of time, I had to learn 50+ new vocabulary words as well as apply them in detailed technical sentences. I will admit that the first week or two were a little overwhelming, but fortunately, I was able to bring myself up to speed. **This expectation was fulfilled.**

I had also expected to gain a deeper understanding of how German businesses operate and conduct business. Axalta is actually an American firm, so it is difficult for me to determine if this expectation was fulfilled or not. Regardless, I gained valuable insight into how a large international firm operates, which is more or less the type of firm that I would like to work for when I graduate. From my perspective as the intern, I learned how problems on site are approached and dealt with. I will, without a doubt, come across these types of problems solving methods repeatedly as I continue with my education at the university and in the business world.

My last expectation was probably one of the more important ones that unfortunately went largely unfulfilled. I had hoped to apply and expand my knowledge of engineering through this internship, but it did not turn out that way. From a language perspective, I was challenged every day of the week

to learn new words and to learn new ways to express myself.

From an engineering perspective, that was not the case. My advisor showed me the inner workings of the site a few times, and I was able to apply a few concepts that I learned at the university during this time, but these instances were seldom.

Overall, this internship was a step in the right direction for me. I gained valuable experience in the field of Reliability Engineering at Axalta's production site in Wuppertal.



**Chase H. Henry (first row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left; USA Interns-Coordinator Juliane Adameit 2<sup>nd</sup> from right) on the Seminar & BBQ-Day with 2013 Interns – tour of the city of Frankfurt after Seminar and before BBQ-time**

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