

Tough but significant experience in America (2017)

年暑期国际志愿

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After more than 10 hours' flight, I arrived at America and my host family finally. Because of the operation two days earlier and the sore throat that inflammation caused, I've been taking medicine all the way along. In addition the tired on the way, I'm totally used up. There is also an interesting episode that I changed to the other host family because of the distance from work and these two host families are relatives by marriage! It's not very difficult for me to adjust to a new environment, it is the sickness besides the totally different environment from many aspects really made me tough the first week when I arrived. I can't walk too much, can't drink cold water, eat cold food, can't wear clothing of summer, what I supposed to do is getting good rest and keep warm. What makes me happy most is not from my host family yet from the organization or the whole family of A, for most members of the non-profit organization are the whole family. They treated me like the members of their family. E, the secretary of the board, and the hostess of the family, my mainly responsible person, showed me how Haverhill is, shared good foods with me, talked with me details about the organization and the difficulties they came across, talked with me her family story and her thoughts about different things. I can't love her much, for we have many similarities, we are sensitive, considerate, we have similar attitude in many problems. A, the founding board member of Asperger Works and its treasurer, brought D, the other volunteer from Liverpool and I to Chinese restaurant, which was very authentic Chinese food! He advised E picking me up when the weather was not good, made dinner for me alone although they have eaten and made breakfast for my roommate and me, gave me the black chocolate when he knew I like black chocolate very much. I'm very grateful for him! L, the daughter of A and E, also a founding member of Asperger Works and is the volunteer coordinator. She is very outgoing, humorous, and considerate, we always have nice conversations. She would like to travel to Liverpool and China to visit D and me, and also, she would attend my graduation ceremony and I'm looking forward to it! The last person I want to introduce is D, the founder of Asperger Works, also the son of A and E. Because of the Asperger Syndrome he caught when he was a child, he wanted to help more people with it. He is really helpful, picked me up in Lawrence and we talked a lot about my future plan and the safety problems in America. The whole family treated me very well, and I appreciated them very much! My mainly working responsibilities are divided into three parts, first is Research and Marketing, including research potential employment opportunities for our clients, research potential funders and assist in database development. Second is Print and Online Marketing, including help design, edit, and produce marketing materials(print, electronic, display, and otherwise promotional);research, evaluate, suggest and implement new opportunities and tools, including digital platforms, to market programs and events; help contribute content to Asperger Works blogs, social media feeds, quarterly member newsletter, and emails, as needed. Third is Digital Marketing, help populate the Website and social media with content; draft social media copy and Website copy to publish created content. Therefore, my work is not contacting with people with Asperger directly, more importantly, what we focused are making more people or more enterprises know what Asperger is and how does Asperger influence the work, what do people with Asperger's need from the society, what do we need as a non-profit organization. The most difficult thing in this work partly is that it is hard to make these enterprises accept a person with disabilities and let them donate to our organization. The hardest thing for me in the U.S. is the safety problem. It can be said without exaggeration that each day on my way to the train station, I have been worried about my safety for there are few people walking on the street, most people drive car. The people who walking on the street are usually not looking like so kind, which made me scared. Many Chinese people heard the news that an exchange student from Peking University may be killed by her alumnus, and we also know that many exchange student have been killed in America. What makes us worried so much first because guns are legal in America, yet guns are deadly! The other is the great gap between the rich and poor, black Americans make up a large proportion, and terrorist force are also popular. To my surprise, when I talked to D about my concern, he also expressed his same opinion with me for the guns, and told me he also anxious about his own safety because he is Jew and with Asperger Syndrome at the same time! I've travelled to New York and Boston at weekend with the other two partners, these two city are totally different, and I love Boston very much! New York is like Shanghai, very propitious, bustling, and crowded. As the world's largest economic center, New York is famous for the Wall Street, New York Stock Exchange, Broadway, and Columbia University and so on. When we walked along the road in Times Square, the hygiene status is not good, which made me sick! If we say that New York is characterized by tall buildings, Boston is characterized by its long history, classic environment, beautiful Charles river, and peaceful feelings. We visited Harvard University and MIT, which are very large and inspirational. Boston is the city that I'd like to be here for many times. The difficult part for me this month is my listening besides my poor body. I can just understand several simple sentences when I went to watch movies without subtitles, which made me especially upset. Luckily, I have found a good way of practicing my listening and oral English—watch American TVs and movies often. And the other is the communication problem. I prefer not communicating when problems arose and avoiding the questions, which is totally unuseful. What I learnt is that when we come across problems, we are supposed to talk about these problems objectively, both sides should say their own ideas about this problem, and see if one side can satisfy the other side requirements or the both sides can reach a balance. Avoiding is not a way of solving the problems at all! I'm really happy that I get along well with Adam's family and I also have my American mom, dad, sister and brother! I get over the difficulties about my body, and get the ways how to communicate with others to solve problems. I have to practice my oral English and my listening in the coming days at the same time. And I'm grateful for everyone who help me during this month! There are some astonishing moments which caused me deep reflection. What impressed me most is the culture differences between America and China. Age of work/tip culture/lunch and dinner E and A worked for the non-profit agency busily, although they are more than 70 years old, had retired earlier. Yet most retired people in China enjoy their old age in peace. I'm very surprised that asking for tips has been a culture in America. When we arrived in Boston Airport, we took a taxi from the airport to our host family. We are charged more than \$100 fare, and the black driver asked us for tips when we were ready to leave, which surprised us! In China, we pay more attention to dinner, yet Americans focus more on Lunch. They usually had very simple dinner after work. Slogan on License plate in different state of America When I saw the slogan on the

License plate in America, I'm astonished that the slogan in different state is diverse, which stands for features or the history of different state. For example, Massachusetts, the birthplace of America, its slogan is The Spirit of America. New Hampshire, which is near Massachusetts, its slogan is Live free or Die! People from all over the world, especially Chinese would like New Hampshire very much, because it is a duty-free state! It's known to all that we can save a lot if we don't need to pay the tax! Is it happy for people to live in New Hampshire? The answer maybe not. As Americans say, people in New Hampshire use guns more often to declare their privilege of freedom, which seems unsafety. Capacity of food and the gap between the rich and the poor I'm also astonished of the capacity of food in the supermarket, very big size! I can't help thinking of the gap between the rich and the poor. The rich in America usually eat healthy food like beef in good quality, fruits and vegetables, milk, whole-wheat and nuts. On the contrary, the poor often buy fast food, large fried food, very large Coca Cola, cheap chicken, they don't want to pay more for vegetables, fruits, and beef. And we can easily see that people in Andover, a city near Lawrence, there is usually one kid in one home, unlike three or more kids in Lawrence. People in rich usually devote lots of money to their child education, renowned private high school is their ideal choice. Andover is famous for Phillips Academy, Bush and his son, C H, the co-founder of Facebook, all are well-known alumni of this well-known alumni. The safety problem in America I'm pavid all the time in America, there are many reports covering Chinese exchange student were hurt or disappeared in America. And I'm astonished to find that local people don't even go out at night, and very careful when they are out in daytime. Also, friends who had gone to America told me prepare for \$10 in pocket in case of rubbed! The safety problem in America partly because of the gap between the rich and the poor, especially the blacks. Partly because the free use of guns. The pronunciation of English in different area In my opinion, English pronunciation are almost the same in America, like the listening we usually hear in China, that's absolutely wrong! People from different state have their own pronunciation, but people in New York have very authentic pronunciation. D, my working partner from Liverpool, his pronunciation is quietly different from authentic England English, which is hard for me to understand. The life style of Hispanic are very energy, they usually have barbecue and dance after work in week day or in the weekend until late at night. My host family are from Dominican Republic, they migrated Massachusetts 20 years ago. The host shared with her transfer from Dominican Republic to America, which is totally different. Her home in Dominican even had servants and she don't need to work. When she come to America, everything in America is expensive and she must go out to work to earn money for taking care of the family. At the same time, the pace of life is very fast, she must keep pace with it. Everything if tough when she just moved to America, and everything becomes better and better at present. The volunteer work in America The volunteer work in America is diverse and abundant. There are many big and non-profit organizations, and many people and companies donate money to them, and they can get privileges of taking part in some activities, memberships, tax reduction and exemption in return. American's Opinions of China American's Opinions of China are far-sighted. E, studying the history of East Asia, knows a lot about China, D, director of Asperger Works and E's son, thinks that he would go to the country of China to look for the true China. These are fantastic photos I'd like to share with you!





