Our trip to France was certainly a significant opportunity to learn about the world of work and the European Union, and what it stands for .Here I will present my experiences for each and every day of the week we spent in Colmar, France.

Monday:

Monday was the first official day of our meeting, so what better way to start than visit the school of the students hosting us? We visited the Lyce Camille See High school and were welcomed by the students as well as teachers with a brief speech. Later on, we took a tour of the school and its many facilities, that included an indoors Gym as well as a spacious cafeteria, in which the students had their lunch. After that, we received a tour of Colmar itself, a very picturesque city with many historical sights , such as its Cathedrals. We then visited the mayor’s office, where we were greeted by his representatives and got to taste some local specialties. We then returned to our hosts houses in order to meet with their families.

Tuesday:

On Tuesday, we visited the school and were separated into two groups. One would attend school sessions, while the other a presentation called “Destination Europe”, made to inform about the European Union. I was in the first group, and consequently attended a PE session in the schools indoor gym .Then the groups were reversed, and I attended the presentation , which was quite informative however brief , and learned interesting facts about the EU. After the presentation, we were yet again separated into two groups, the first of which, comprised of the delegates, would rehearse the presentation for the parliament , while the other would visit Chateu Haut-Koenigsburg, a medieval castle . Though the prospect of seeing the castle appealed to me, regrettably I had to stay within school premises to rehearse. However, I got to know some of the delegates, and made some acquaintances as well as friendships.

Wednesday:

On Wednesday, we were once again separated into two groups , the first of which would visit a water production factory ,of the company “Lisbeth” , while the other would take a tour of a car museum called “cite de l’automobile . I was in the second group , and was delighted to be presented with a vast array of classics, dating back to the 19nth century. However interesting and well preserved they were, I also marveled at some of the newer specimens, including a Bugatti Veyron Supercar. Then, the groups joined to have lunch , which was quite lavish and skillfully prepared. Afterwards, the groups were reversed and my group and I took a tour of the water production factory. It intrigued me to see how the machines functioned, and how some of the work remains manual .Certainly an eye opener for my work future.

Thursday:

On Thursday, we rehearsed the musical presentation of our anthem for the parliament, as well as our presentations. We delegates had to dress up, and stand up and speak In front of the rest of the students and teachers. Admittedly, I was a bit nervous, however I quickly shook it off .The presentation turned out fine in the end. Then, we had lunch in the school cafeteria, and returned to our hosts who had organized a special night out for our last night in Colmar. Most of us, including me, went to play laser tag, which was exhausting; however I was out of shape at the time anyway. Then we returned in order to rest for our big day.

Friday:

On Friday, we had to wake up early, but were nevertheless eager. I hastily got up with the other delegate that stayed at the same house as me, and prepared. Then we grabbed some breakfast and off we went. We went to Strasbourg by bus, and throughout the trip I glanced at the scenery of the French countryside. When we finally arrived, we had some time, so we took a few pictures, and walked around the houses of parliament. Then, we released balloons as an act of peace. Afterwards, we were called inside and went through tight security checks, that indeed reminded us of the importance of the building we were about to visit. We took a small tour, and then prepared for our presentation. I was quite anxious, but thought to myself that this needed to be done as preparation for my future work . And so we commenced, in presence of the European deputy, Anne Sander. The delegates were confident in their speech, which inspired confidence into the rest of us. So when it was my turn to speak, I was free of doubt, which turned out to be the right course of action, as the presentation was a success. We then received a brief speech from madame Sander as well as her assistants. Then we took a full tour of the houses of parliament, and dined at the cafeteria. Afterwards, we were taken to Strasbourg, where we were separated into groups and led by students from other countries that conducted their studies there. The head of my group was Johnny, an English student, who was very interesting as he had travelled abroad in multiple instances, and was an engineering student. We saw a lot of sights, narrated by Johnny, who explained their significance and how they came to be. It was fun to see the once red copper lining the roofs now greenish with oxidation. The highlight was when we visited the Strasbourg Cathedral, an imposing building towering above the rest. We then received some free time in which to explore Strasbourg freely with our friends. So we did, and we also bought some souvenirs and things to remember our trip. We then joined up with the others to dine at a local restaurant where we tried a local speciality, tarte flambee , which closely resembles the Italian pizza. Even though we were having fun, we all had an underlying thought, that this was the last day of our trip, and that soon we had to depart. We returned to the bus stop in the night, and only then could we appreciate the true beauty of the city. I had a talk with the friends I made there, and we said goodbye. As it was late, I found it hard not to fall asleep on our trip back to Colmar. When we got off, we bid our final farewells, and so our trip ended on that night when we departed back to our countries.

The trip was certainly an immeasurably significant experience, during which we met new friends and learned about the world of work. It will be hard to forget.

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