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Leslie's dream job in Switzerland

educationsuisse gives advice on all matters related to education in Switzerland. It is also involved in the placement of language assistants, as shown in the case of Leslie Schmid.

In Swiss upper secondary schools and vocational education and training schools, native speakers enrich language lessons and exemplify cultural aspects of their country of origin. These language assistants, usually young students from abroad, are placed by the national agency Movetia in collaboration with educationsuisse. Leslie Schmid, a Swiss Abroad from Canada, is one of them. She has been working since September 2018 as a language assistant at the Kantonsschule Zug upper secondary school and describes her experiences in an interview:

Leslie Schmid, what made you apply for the programme?

As a small child I already knew that I wanted to be a teacher someday. In Ottawa I studied German language and literature and got a teaching diploma for foreign languages. Since a large part of my relatives live in Switzerland, I decided to apply here for the position of English language assistant. Movetia helped me find my dream job – I love the work!

Were you able to settle in quickly at school and in Switzerland?

Yes, I settled in quickly at school and also get along well in

everyday life in Switzerland. The teachers and students have accepted me very well. I feel at home here. It certainly helped that my parents and brothers in Canada always spoke Swiss German.

Are there any specific differences between Canada and Switzerland?

There are differences, such as in the school system. What I particularly noticed is that the Swiss engage in less small talk than we do in Canada. It also seems more difficult for me to find friends outside of my working environment. Life here is more expensive; the medical insurance costs were a huge shock for me. In Canada health care is free! What also astonishes me every day is how many people here smoke.

Is it difficult living so far away from your family in Canada?

Sometimes yes and sometimes no. I used to miss all my Swiss relatives. Now I miss my parents and brothers, who stayed behind in Canada. I grew up on a dairy farm, so whenever I pass by a farm here, I'm really homesick. Thanks to the new technologies though, I can give my family a short call at any time.

Applications for language assistants for the school year 2019/20 are being accepted until the end of March 2019.

For detailed information about the Language Assistance programme, kindly contact edith.funicello@movetia.ch or info@educationsuisse.ch, educationsuisse, Alpenstrasse 26, 3006 Bern, Schweiz, Telefon +41 (0)31 356 61 04, info@educationsuisse.ch, www.educationsuisse.ch.

Leslie Schmid uses her language skills to support teachers at the Kantonsschule Zug.



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