Inside Carl Benz School

Student Voice

USA
force flows through a gear box or the
dimensioning of ball bearings. I espe-
cially enjoyed the course work, and
I feel that the Carl Benz School has
prepared me well, both academically
as well as personally, for the future.

Interviewer: Could you tell us more about
your motivation to continue your Bachelor
studies to a “Diplom” degree in Mechani-
cal Engineering?

Kyle: A “Diplom” in Germany is com-
parable to a Master degree in the
United States. It is recognized in all
German speaking and many European
countries and represents a high stan-
dard of quality in the field of technical
education. I was able to complete my
“Diplom” studies in only one year
whereas a Master in the US would
have taken me two years. During this
time students have the opportunity
to choose between a special field of
interest in Engineering. I focused on
Manufacturing Technology and enjo-
yed especially the lectures in logistics
and production technology.

Interviewer: What has been your general
motivation to study in Karlsruhe, and did
you find it difficult to adapt to the German
culture?

Kyle: A counselor at my High School
back in Indiana suggested the pro-
gram at the Carl Benz School to me
and I found the idea of studying
in Germany very appealing. I had
already spent a couple of months in
Spain before, where I took part in a
language program. This was my first
positive experience with a foreign
way of life and culture. I felt very
fortunate when my application at
the Carl Benz School was considered
and I was awarded a full scholarship
from the German company IWKA.
When I finally arrived in Karlsruhe
in August 2003, I was impressed by
the international atmosphere at the
Carl Benz School. It was an amazing
experience to share stories with the
other students about our different
countries and cultures. I had no pro-
blems to adapt to the German culture
at all. My parents come originally
from an area in Southern Indiana
with a lot of German heritage. One
town even holds a typical German
festival called a “Strassenfest” every
year complete with a beer garden. At
home, my mother is a very good cook
and likes to cook hearty foods which
we always thought came from our
German heritate. I felt right at home
with the meat and fried potatoes
here in Germany. I like the German
culture of relaxing and spending time
in a beer garden during the summer
very much. Around Karlsruhe I adore
the landscape – it is very beautiful
and varies a lot more compared to my
home state of Indiana. What I do not
like so much in Germany is how most
supermarkets here are run. They are
fully packed with grocery products,
and the aisles are far too narrow. At
the cash register you have to pack
your bags by yourself and you have to
be quick about it because the cashier
tyrs to serve as many customers as
quickly as possible. It can be a stress-
full experience.

Interviewer: Your German skills are very
good. Do you think that it is important
to speak one or more foreign languages
fluently for a professional career?

Kyle: I only knew a handful of words
when I arrived in Germany. I was dis-
couraged at first by the complexity of
the German language and thought in
despair that I would never be able to
speak German, but I persevered and
have now mastered the language
well enough to do coursework and
university research in German. In my
opinion language skills are becoming
more and more important. Business
relationships are built on mutual
trust and understanding. Knowledge
about your business partner’s langua-
ge and culture can only be beneficial.
Interviewer: You were sponsored by MAG during your “Diplom” studies. How did this cooperation between you and them come together?

Kyle: Through a conversation with Dr. Judith Elsner, Managing Director, and Dr. Kappes, Head of Student Office, at the International Department, I learned about a scholarship being awarded by MAG for engineering students. I was interested in the company since it was an American machine tool company with many subsidiaries in Germany. I believed that working at the company would be a perfect opportunity to utilize what I had learned during my studies in Germany. I decided then to submit my application for the scholarship.

Interviewer: Could you tell us more about the company and your experiences?

Kyle: MAG Industrial Automation Systems is a group of leading machine tool and systems companies serving the durable-goods industry. Utilizing a comprehensive line of equipment and technologies, in combination with diverse process engineering knowledge, MAG provides tailored manufacturing solutions to key industrial sectors across the globe. I personally completed an internship with MAG Powertrain in Eislingen from November 2007 until February 2008. The main goal of my work during my internship was to develop a workflow management system for the logistics department.

Interviewer: Did you write your “Diplom” thesis with a subject related to the company?

Kyle: Yes, I did. A “Diplom” thesis in Germany requires six months to complete. I worked on my thesis in the Maintenance Technologies division of MAG in Eislingen. The goal of my thesis was to develop a method to quantitatively evaluate the benefits of product-supporting services such as Ramp-Up packages, Tele-Service or on-site maintenance personnel for the customer. The Institute of Production Science at the Universität Karlsruhe (TH) supervised my thesis. Their main activities focus on education and application oriented research and manufacturing engineering, machine tools, handling technology and production systems.

Interviewer: What did you appreciate most during your sponsorship with MAG?

Kyle: In general I am grateful that MAG sponsored my “Diplom” studies at the Universität Karlsruhe. Without their financial support, I would not have been able to focus entirely on my education and to complete my “Diplom” within one year. Furthermore I am very grateful for all the input and professional support that I have received from my contact person in Eislingen. He turned out to be my mentor and without his positive attitude, writing my thesis would have been much more difficult.

Interviewer: Are you currently employed by MAG and what are your plans for the future?

Kyle: Unfortunately at the time MAG had no suitable job openings available. I therefore decided on continuing my studies and pursuing a PhD degree in Mechanical Engineering. In November of 2008 I began working at the Institute of Production Science at the Universität Karlsruhe. There I am involved with the researching innovative methods for the quality management of micromanufacturing. My aim is to complete my PhD by the end of 2012.

Interviewer: Many technically orientated companies especially in the car industry suffer because of the financial crisis. What advice would you currently give to High School graduates who are interested in pursuing an engineering degree?

Kyle: Despite the crisis I think, more than ever, the global market needs qualified engineers in the future. The economy is cyclical in nature and I am sure that it is only a matter of time until things will turn around and become positive again. Alternative fuel vehicles present new opportunities for car manufacturers. However many technological challenges must first be overcome before these cars can be offered at affordable and competitive prices. Skilled engineers are needed to solve such problems. I think there is an enormous growing potential for new markets in the automotive industry and for young engineers as well.

Interviewer: Kyle, many thanks for your time! I wish you all the best for the future!
Bachelor Program Key Facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) in Mechanical Engineering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>Production Management, Energy Engineering and Rail Systems Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope</td>
<td>With globalization it is becoming increasingly important to provide international students with excellent opportunities to study in Germany. This trend was addressed in collaboration with the industry in 1999 within the KIT. The degree program in Mechanical Engineering is offered by KIT and the supplementary courses are offered by the Carl Benz School (CBS) will provide the perfect platform for students to benefit from a proficient English-taught engineering education at a German elite university. The CBS as a college offers an optimal learning environment and in addition students will obtain assistance with industrial internship placement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Since courses are presented in English, foreign applicants must pass the TOEFL Examination with a minimum of 560 points pb, 220 points cb and 85 points ibt. TOEIC with 720 and IELTS band 6,5 are also accepted. Basic knowledge of the German language eases integration into general student life on campus, but is not a prerequisite for admission to the degree programs. German language courses are offered on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>German university admission to a B.Sc. program requires that applicants must have completed a secondary education, i.e., the German high school diploma. The admission requirements will decide on the eligibility of students joining the CBS. The final admission will be based on the results of an entrance examination which will take place at the end of pre-semester.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Semester</td>
<td>9 week preparatory course in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and English which will ensure that applicants are equipped with all the quantitative skills to start their engineering studies at an elite university.</td>
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<td>Fees</td>
<td>A tuition fee applies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Starting Dates</td>
<td>August for each given year (Presemester)</td>
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International Student Origins

Contact

Please direct your application to:

International Department GmbH
Carl Benz School of Engineering
Schloßplatz 19
76131 Karlsruhe | Germany

Phone: +49 (0)721 608 4788 0
Fax: +49 (0)721 608 4788 2
Email: info@carlbenzschool.de
Web: www.carlbenzschool.de

Find us on Facebook!