

Senior Service

Settling in a new country and a new home is always difficult. Realizing this, Offenburg University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with the City of Offenburg initiated the Senior Service program.

The members of the Senior Service are local citizens interested in fostering intercultural understanding, and they work on a voluntary basis. Organized city tours and informal get-togethers give students the opportunity to discuss topics of everyday life in Germany and Offenburg. Students may also be invited into the Senior Service members' homes or attend cultural events with them. The Senior Service may sometimes be able to help you in locating internships or even in finding a job. And of course you'll also have the opportunity to practice your German language skills while participating in these activities.

Started in 2002, the Senior Service was the first of its kind in Germany and has been going strong ever since. The City of Offenburg has recognized the importance of this program especially in view of a globalized economy, and the Mayor of Offenburg, Edith Schreiner, is its official patron. In 2005, the Senior Service was awarded a respectable prize for its volunteer commitment by the Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement ("National Network for Civil Society"), and in 2010 it was awarded by the Association for the Promotion of Science and Humanities in Germany.

A great number of students have benefited from the Senior Service, and the relationships that are formed with its members often become enduring friendships across generations and cultures. The Senior Service is a crucial reason why international students come to feel at home here in Offenburg.

Statements from International Students about the Senior Service

"Senior Service Offenburg... It's a very good organization full of kind, creative and lovely people. It has blessed my life especially during my stay in Germany..."

"Being the friends, philosophers and guides for the international students, members of the Senior Service are like another wonderful jewel in the crown of the Hochschule Offenburg."

"I don't have a word to express my feelings about Senior Service, but it always made me feel at home whenever I would meet 'my' member. I had the same feeling as when I talk to my mom."