

German students gain border perspective

By **Stephanie Soto**

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Since spring 2008, the Cross-Cultural Communication Club, or C4, had been fundraising money to fly students from Chemnitz University, in Germany, to expose them to El Paso's distinct culture.

Their hard work paid off with the arrival of 13 German students and two professors Sept. 21. They will spend two weeks learning about this region.

"El Paso is so diverse because we live on the border, and there are so many different cultures combined, and they've never seen that before, so they want to get a sense of what the border region is like," president of C4 Davi Kallman said.

In preparation for the arrival of the students and professors, C4 has come up with an itinerary that will offer them a complete cultural experience.

"We're going to the University of New Mexico, Santa Fe and Acoma village in northern New Mexico for an overnight trip, and then spend the day at NMSU in Las Cruces, and we're also going to spend a day at White Sands in Alamogordo," said Frank G. Perez, C4's advisor and chair of the communication department.

The schedule also includes several lectures on campus, among them a piece entitled, Juan de Oñate in El Paso: The Fantasy Heritage of the Border Region, which will be given by Perez Sept. 23 at 9 a.m. in the Education Building, Room 102.

Richard Pineda, assistant professor in the Department of Communication will discuss Latino Political Communication Sept. 23 at 11 a.m. in the Business Administra-



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Dean of Students, Dr. Gary Edens (left), accepts a gift from visiting German student Nora Daeberitz. She is part of the group of students and professors visiting El Paso for two weeks.

tion Building, Room 313. All students are welcome to attend both talks.

"Besides the lectures, next Sept. 27 for the football game, we'll probably be tailgating with them so that they can get the football experience since it's not big in Europe," said Sofia Chavez, vice president

of C4. "Later, if they want to go to Juarez, they can do it on their free time, but it won't be through the University or the organization."

The idea to fly students from Germany began last semester after a longtime friendship between Perez and Dr. Klaus Peter-Shulz, the German coordinator of the

trip. In the summer of 2007 Perez took a group of nine students to Chemnitz, to experience the German culture and lifestyle. While there, Perez, Peter-Shulz, David Coldwell (professor at the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal in South Africa) and Andrea Fried (professor at the University of Chemnitz), for-

mally started working on an agreement for the universities to work together, resulting in the American African and European summer program.

"The arrival of these students could be beneficial to UTEP in a number of ways, first of all I think it strengthens our international standing", Perez said. "Having them here will allow them to interact with students, so it will allow others to learn more about the German approach and perspective on business and business relationships toward other countries."

Perez recruited members like Kallman, Chavez and Alicia Coltrane, treasurer for C4.

"He discussed it in his Communication Theory class, and he was telling us about his experience with it since he has been to Germany and stayed in the university over there, and it really interested me," Chavez said.

Next summer, C4 hopes to raise enough money to send students from UTEP to Germany or South Africa to study more about their cultures.

"We're trying to distinguish that communication has no borders, and that's the slogan of our organization, that we're trying to communicate with people from Mexico, Germany and South Africa, but we're definitely trying to say that communication can go into different countries, and different people," Kallman said.

If you would like to know more about C4, or how to get involved, e-mail Perez at frankgperez@yahoo.com or Kallman at dikallman@miners.utep.edu.

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