

# OHIO TECHNICAL COLLEGE

HEREBY GRANTS A

*Tuition Scholarship*  
IN THE AMOUNT OF

**\$5,000.00**

AT THE

**2012 PITTSBURGH AUTORAMA  
EDEL BROCK CARR CHALLENGE**

JANUARY 28, 2012

*Nick Berdis*

OHIO TECHNICAL COLLEGE  
1374 East 51st St, Cleveland, OH 44103  
(800) 322-7000 x122  
[www.ohiotechncollege.com](http://www.ohiotechncollege.com)  
Scholarship has NO CASH VALUE

CHRIS STEINMAN  
Financial Aid Director  
Contact the College for Details



***AutoRama***

**PSI**  
PowerSport Institute

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*Alec Ligenysk - Mikes*



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### Congress- Bundestag 2012

There were about 1,000 applicants for the Congress-Bundestag exchange program this past year and out of 1,000 they narrowed it down to 110 semi-finalists. Interviews are across the country and the interviewers started on the east coast of the US and moved west. The PA section of the interviews was held in Harrisburg on February 29<sup>th</sup>. I had the great pleasure of making it to the semi-finalist level and had a great experience during the interview process.

The drive down to Harrisburg was definitely worth the experience. I had an afternoon interview because they took into consideration that I had the longest drive which was great. When I got to the Department of Education building I was greeted by everyone on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor which was also great. They made sure that the interviewees didn't feel lost or unwelcome. They had all of the semi-finalists in a meeting room and provided lunch for anyone leaving or just getting there. There was a presentation about the program and the Nacel-Open Door which provides all the travel accommodations for all finalists. During the presentation a past participant talked to us about his experience with the program back in 1998 and how he has been active with the program ever since. He told us about all of his experiences both good and bad so that we had an understanding that this is a great opportunity but it takes dedication and a lot of hard work. It was great to have him there and tell us about the program through his eyes because, if selected into the program, we would be looking at the program in the same way.

As for the actual interview it was a great experience. There were five people that sat in on the interview including the past participant. Also, the PA coordinator Dick Steinmeier sat in on everyone's interview and since he reads all the essays and applications he was able to bring out everyone's strong qualities, as well as, allow the semi-finalist to clarify anything that was shaky in their essays. The panel was a great group of people and they made it a very comfortable interview. It was also a great chance to meet other semi-finalists who were just as nervous and be able to talk to them in order to ease into the process. I think being able to meet with other competitors was nice because even though we're all competing for the same seats there was no real sense of urgency to beat the other guy out because we were all able to cheer for each other.

Mr. Steinmeier walked with everyone to the interview room and talked to me about how he read everything and that he knows I wouldn't be intimidated by the panel. And he was 100% right. Walking in, or course, I felt nervous, the initial "not wanting to say something stupid" factor kicked in but when I sat down and they started asking me questions, I had all the answers. I felt really comfortable and it was an interview where I didn't feel like I was on trial.

They asked questions about the essays that we had to write and to explain those. Also, they asked questions about my language background and if I found learning a language difficult. They asked about everything that I have done at ECTS and they asked about my motivation to apply for the program. Also, they asked about my past experiences and my past hurdles that I have had to overcome. Then came the dreaded question of what makes me different from the other competitors but at that point of the interview it was an easy answer. They started basic and the more I sat there with them the

more naturally the conversation flowed. At the end of the interview they all had a big smile on their face and I shook all of their hands with a huge smile on mine.

If I were to make it to the finalist level there would be more essays involved and more paperwork on my end. They only get to take 20-25 students to Germany for a year and I do have high hopes that I do stand a chance. If selected I would travel to Washington, DC and be there for three days starting on July 10<sup>th</sup> for an orientation and a further and more specific look at what a year abroad would be like. As of now I do know that we would all fly out of the country on July 12<sup>th</sup> and arrive in Munich, Germany for two months of intensive language education and we would be placed with temporary host families for our two month stay in Munich. Then I would be placed in a school based on my technical field and I would be placed with my permanent host family for the remainder of program. I would attend school for about four months and then put into an internship within my field.

Internships are guaranteed but there will be more interviews and the real life process of getting a job. This entire program is centered on opening doors for students who have a high potential. This program can open up so many doors it's amazing. Even if I do not make it to the finalist level the entire experience has been great. Just the interview experience itself and getting to meet the handful of people that I met in Harrisburg has made this a very worthwhile process.

Truly and honestly the hardest part of the entire process was the application process. I had two essays that I had to do. Plus I had to get forms of reference and recommendation from the teacher that knew that me the best and from either a work manager or volunteer advisor, and since all of my volunteer work has been with different companies I asked my manager at work to fill it out for me. Both the teacher I asked and my manager were more than happy to fill out all the paper work even though by the time I heard about the program I only had six days to pull everything together. Another hurdle that I had with the process was with McDowell. They didn't see the urgency that everyone else did about getting the forms filled out and I needed the official copy of my transcript and it was just a really big headache because they weren't necessarily willing to put this in priority and I feel that since it was an opportunity presented to me through ECTS they were more hesitant because home schools don't always see the importance of the technical education process.