All of the sudden you somehow belong into two different worlds.

My Name is Patricia Krueger, I am 27 years old, and I spent more or less my whole life in my hometown of Brunswick, Lower Saxony, in Germany. Since August 2017 however, I have been living and working in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, United States of America.

How did that happen?

I was always interested in Logistics. I started working in forwarding agencies when I was 16. I have been with Schnellecke Logistics since 2012 and back then I would have never believed that this will lead me to leave Germany one day. In 2014 I decided to study International Logistics Management at German Foreign Trade and Transport Academy (DAV) in Bremen, and for me it was always clear that afterwards I will go back to Schnellecke Logistics. Schnellecke offers an International Trainee Program. Within one year I would get the chance to see four different Schnellecke sites, work in 4 different areas, and one of them would be abroad. This sounded good to me, so I applied for this opportunity. I was chosen for the program, and my second station was Schnellecke Logistics Alabama. Spoiler, I did not get the chance to see the other two stations because I fell in love with Alabama very fast.

Schnellecke Logistics is a family owned business with special cooperate values that are valid and lived all over the world. Because of this, I was part of the Schnellecke USA family from day one. Colleagues changed to friends very fast. I was very insecure at the beginning about my English or about cultural differences that might be an issue. If I look back at the last 12 months, none of that was ever a real issue. Yes, it was difficult, but everything regarding the language struggles can be summarized under “Uebung macht den Meister” or in English, “practice makes perfect”.

Living on a different continent than my family and boyfriend can be very hard some days, but it can also be something very nice on the other days. What I enjoy the most about living here is the freedom to do things how I want them. I can put up the Christmas tree in the middle of November, while I would get in serious trouble with my grandmother if she would find out about that. I enjoy living between both cultures. I will catch myself watching the live stream of the carnival in my hometown with tears in my eyes, and I also will need a deep nap after the thanksgiving dinner because I had too much turkey. With the exception of the family and friends, there is just one thing I really miss – German Bread! However, this issue can get fixed easily by just baking it by myself.

I changed a lot within the last 12 months. I had to develop skills like baking bread or making “Quark”. Sometimes I wonder what my colleagues mean with “That’s so German”. In most of these moments I am very detailed about something like trying to discuss something for the umpteenth time when a decision was already made. It is what it is, we like to be complicated. I had to learn the little small talk like “how are you?” and “excuse me”. It doesn’t really matter how different a culture is, the key is to be willing to adjust to it. I could make many experiences here that I would never have had if I would not have answered immediately with “Yes” when I was asked if I could image living and working in Alabama.

I learned that everybody can define their own “way of live”. I do not need to follow the conventional way. I enjoy my life here in Alabama and at the same time I miss my life in Germany.

Would I do it again? Absolutely yes. No doubts.