



SWISS-CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION

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Francesco Iberg – Fellow 2009-2010

"Bridging – exchanging – creating"

It is this ideal of the Swiss-California foundation, which perfectly encompasses what I want to offer to Northern California and the Swiss California Foundation.

My name is Francesco Iberg and I am the 9th Fellow of the Swiss California Foundation. Having grown up in Basel and Lugano, Switzerland, I am bilingual, speaking both Italian and German. I lived with the two different cultures and developed a strong interest in understanding their differences. This experience and the general multicultural atmosphere in Switzerland have given me the capability of understanding different cultures and of 'bridging' them. I want to use this knowledge and experience to create a bond between Switzerland and Northern California. Thus the "bridge" will then hopefully result in a vivid mutual 'exchange' of ideas and experience profitable for both sides.

Through education I have deepened my interest and knowledge in history, politics and the economical science, which I have continued at the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland and Harvard University, United States. These universities have provided the opportunity to further my knowledge in international relations and governmental studies.

With my extracurricular engagement in the International Students' Committee (ISC), an entrepreneurial student initiative consisting of 25 students from the University of St. Gallen who commit themselves on an honorary basis for a year to the realisation of the St. Gallen Symposium, I personally entered into the debate with politicians and business leaders from all over the world on fundamental challenges of our time. It is through the ISC that I discovered to have a facility in approaching and convincing people of an idea, a skill I wish to improve upon during my stay in Northern California.

In addition to my professional interests I have always been interested in oenology. For me tasting a glass of wine is like travelling to a city, discovering a landscape or talking to local people; it is a cultural experience. I think that this common interest will help me contact and bond with people from Northern California. With these skills I hope to 'create' sustainable bonds between the Foundation and local businesses as well as the local population, but also live and accept 'the American way' of life and work.

I believe that as a student with experience at both Swiss and American universities, I bring a unique and valuable perspective to the Swiss-California Foundation as well as to Northern California. After my time in Santa Rosa I hope to pursue a Master in Public Policy at a University in the United States or United Kingdom. My ambition is to positively contribute to the development of society, hence I am aiming for a career either in the public service, economic development, diplomacy or politics.

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