

# limes international



The semester magazine for international partners, students, and parents No. 16, August 2016

- Themes: Internet of Things, Start-Up Initiatives
- Fascinating Insight to the World of Materials
- Energy Efficiency



MEDICINE  
HEALTH  
TREATMENT  
DOCTOR  
SURVEY  
RECIPE

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# Internet of Things: A New Study Programme

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‘If I had to study today, I would choose Internet of Things,’ said headmaster Prof. Dr Gerhard Schneider at the ceremonious beginning of the semester and the opening of the new premises of the Internet of Things study programme in the Forum Gold + Silber in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. Within a few months only, the Aalen University and the University of Design of Schwäbisch Gmünd have implemented their first joint study programme. ‘Together we have created a core - and I hope that something will sprout from it,’ said Schwäbisch Gmünd's chief mayor, Richard Arnold. ‘Design is taken serious as a force of innovation,’ said Prof. Ralf Dringenberg, headmaster of the University of Design, gladly.

The students are going to learn not only a professional discipline but to seek to mold the world and future society by merging of technology and design. Architect Cemal Isin referred above all to the impossibly short planning time that had been granted to him and his team. The go-ahead had been given at the end of May, with construction commencing in July. ‘The fact that we managed to complete it so quickly has mainly emerged from our desire to create something special here,’ he said. ‘The concept had been thrilling.’

■ buc

# Strengthening regional start-up initiatives

Prime Minister of the State of Baden-Württemberg Winfried Kretschmann, MdL, Aalen's chief mayor Thilo Rentschler, head of the district authority Klaus Pavel and Rector Professor Dr Gerhard Schneider opened the EU lighthouse project Innovation Centre Aalen (INNO-Z) on Wednesday, June 24. There were a large number of visitors and the cafeteria on the Burren was fully occupied for the official ceremony. The event was also broadcast live into the INNO-Z and online.

A joyful day for town and university, even for the whole region, was praised by chief mayor Thilo Rentschler in his welcome speech: 'Innovation, research power and start-up initiative will from now on get a new impetus at the campus, shoulder to shoulder, door to door. Our investments in the Innovation Centre at the rate of eight million euros are money well invested. I thank the EU and the State for sponsoring the project, along with the university and town for their close collaboration, and the intensive joint work at the premise and, most of all, the supporting companies. Good luck to all start-ups and innovatively minded people: Occupy your Innovation Centre.'

Prime Minister Winfried Kretschmanns spoke before parliamentary members Claus Schmiedel, Winfried Mack and Klaus Maier, about his visit to the Silicon Valley and about the unique start-up culture of California shortly before the opening. Baden-Württemberg had 15 start-ups per 10,000 inhabitants per year, meaning there was much to catch up, he said. The Prime Minister expressed his hope that the INNO-Z would support the local start-up scene. 'We have to leave our make-no-fault culture behind and adopt an innovation culture. Milestones like the innovation centre are needed along that route. It was perfectly justified that this is a lighthouse project of the European Union. Baden-Württemberg is a successful business place because there are prominent science locations across our State. Universities increase the innovative power and contribute to the excellent education of our professional forces.'

campus

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That was why the University Funding Act had been signed early this year, adding 1.7 billion Euros until 2020. 'If we do not invest into these subjects, we will undermine sources important for the future. Every euro raised for science purposes promotes the future power of Baden-Württemberg. Aalen University is going to profit from that as well.' The rural area is anything but underdeveloped, also owing to the universities. Especially Aalen University is very prominent here. At nine consecutive occasions it has been awarded as the University with the best track record in research of Baden-Württemberg. 'Embedded in a powerful research environment, the start-up and innovation centre has quite excellent preconditions for turning the facility into an incubator of the Ostalb region. I wish all of the partners all the best and a lot of success.'

Rector Professor Dr. Gerhard Schneider considers the INNO-Z a response to technological advancement gaining speed. The facility was based on two pillars : It was intended to be a drop-in centre for all companies in the region and to provide opportunities for start-ups. He said, The aim must be to position the University as an academy for start-ups; the INNO-Z might be the pacemaker towards that objective..

Klaus Pavel, head of the district authority, designated the INNO-Z as a unique property of the Ostalb, radiating into the whole State and, and as a workshop for innovative minds. He expressed confidence that this workshop would be accepted.

'This EU lighthouse project is setting us on course to keeping our graduates in the region while generating a knowledge base for our companies to exploit. This way we strengthen the academic and economic environment of EastWürttemberg. We are competing worldwide; therefore we ought to expand our advantage in knowledge and technology persistently. The INNO-Z makes an important contribution to this,' chief mayor Thilo Rentschler concluded.

■ Press Office of the City of Aalen

# Students develop a brand image campaign based on the University



How can the university improve the perception of their brand? These students developed the Students of International Marketing and Sales concept.

What might Aalen University have in common with companies like Coca Cola, Volvo or Xerox? Like them, the Aalen University competes for matters like quality, service, price and reputation.

In the context of the 'Marketing & Sales II' course in the M.A. International Marketing and Sales Master study programme, students have been allocated to developing a 'Brand Image Campaign' for improving awareness of the Aalen University brand. The main goal of Prof. Dr. Christina Ravens' course in the second specialised semester is to apply knowledge of marketing instruments to a real example, extending it and, finally, balancing the respective effects of actions chosen.

Competing project groups have been arranged at the start of the course. Its structure is meant to simulate the 'Agency Pitch', common in real economy, of several marketing agencies competing in minor groups.

Prof. Dr. Jae-Aileen Chung, course administrator, also attended the students' presentations. The 'agencies' presented different proposals, and one team received the award. In this special case, however, the primary goal of the students was to get the best mark possible.

Prof. Dr Christina Ravens had deliberately chosen university marketing as her real project to underline that universities are not exempt from competition. Even they have to adapt to changing conditions to inspire potential candidates, to increase the number of applicants and to ensure a high level of market-oriented education.

■ ay/op



Delighted with this year's research award.  
University Professor Dr. Volker Knoblauch from the Institute of Materials Research  
and his research group.

# Research

## Research dedicated to mobility and resource and energy efficiency

The Institute for Materials Research has granted this year's Research Award of the University to Prof. Dr. Volker Knoblauch for his dedicated commitment.

Since his appointment as Professor of Materials Engineering and Dean of the 'Advanced Materials and Manufacturing' Research Master in 2010, he has rapidly become one of the most dedicated research professors at the University. He had a share in establishing the Institut für Materialforschung

(IMFAA) at the University, contributed much to fundraising for the currently built Zentrum innovativer Materialien und Technologien für effiziente Energiewandlermaschinen (ZiMATE).

The focus of Prof. Knoblauch's research is on lithium-ion batteries and lightweight (composite) materials. His career path so far has been as follows.

## Material research in industrial environments

Volker Knoblauch is a graduate of Prof. Dr. Gerold A. Schneider at the Institute of Advanced Ceramics of the University of Technology in Hamburg-Harburg. His thesis on 'Thermal shock testing and fracture-mechanical characterisation of advanced ceramics at high temperatures' is his early commitment to a topic still prevalent in automotive applications. It has been followed by more than ten years of employment by the Robert Bosch GmbH in a senior position - first in material research, then in the technology management of Bosch Rexroth AG. During this period he was also working abroad for a long time, under Professor Robert M. McMeeking, the renowned scientist of the Department of Mechanical Engineering of the University of California in Santa Barbara. Basic papers on the behaviour of piezoelectric ceramics under electrical and mechanical load was derived from their collaboration. Subsequent papers on the 'Design and reliability of highly loaded ceramic components' have been honoured with the Georg Sachs Award of the German Society of Material Science in 2005, on account of their high relevance for industrial applications.

## Back in the region of talents & patents

When professorship was offered by the University in 2010, Volker Knoblauch did not think twice - especially since he had already lectured at Aalen University for many years and was familiar with its many opportunities from common projects. In the field of teaching, Professor Knoblauch and colleagues guided the development of a new structure, the 'Advanced Materials and Manufacturing' Research Master, or AMM for short, which he began supervising as dean in 2011. Students shall gain access to applied research by their integration into recent projects here. Research at the University is perceptibly empowered that way: a perfect model for the benefit of all partners.

Research activities of the working group have been continuously expanded. 'Inclusion in the IMFAA and collaborating with colleagues working for that have helped a lot,' said Professor Knoblauch, appreciating the good framework. Third-party funds helped budget not only staff but also urgently required devices like battery test benches. The working group currently consists of twelve employees and Master students. Three employees intend to write a thesis.

## Winning by collaboration

Professor Knoblauch is convinced that close collaboration and regular exchange are very important for developing new ideas. He maintains relationships, therefore, not only to local colleagues but, inspired by common interests, also to the KIT in Karlsruhe or the University of California in Santa Barbara, as well as to industrial partners like Robert Bosch GmbH or VARTA, successfully collaborating with them in mainly publicly funded projects. Volker Knoblauch appreciates 'the plain and plausible questions and immediate benefits' he can generate in industrial research. Currently he is doing a research semester, intended to be used for identifying new questions and sustainable subjects and expanding his network.

## The current investigation

'The mobile phone battery is empty again, more and more often it needs to be recharged ...' Isn't that familiar? Current battery technology cannot exceed a limited storage capacity and service life. To overcome these restrictions for using batteries in vehicles is the hottest current subject of Knoblauch's team. Their aim is to better understand the influence of parameters in battery production to streamline manufacturing processes based on this knowledge.

One such project is dedicated to the question of how production flaws affect the aging of cells and which tolerances are to be observed in production. That helps save costs and makes batteries cheaper. In another project, a collaboration with VW, VARTA, the TUM and chemical companies like BASF, latest high-energy materials are examined to increase the range of electric vehicles. Besides energy technology, lightweight construction is one further future technology. Volker Knoblauch has been able to expand his activities to cover carbon-fibre-reinforced plastic (CFRP) and multi-material composites at the ZAFH Centre, 'SPANTEC light'. His subject is to understand how drilling and other cutting ways of processing affect the strength behavior of components. This allows deriving the quality level to be obtained from processing. Recent papers discuss combining CFRP with light metals to obtain cheap and reliable multi-material composites for innovative lightweight construction. The fact that the ZAFH has recently been externally evaluated and will now receive further funding 'is a fantastic acknowledgement of our joint work with colleagues from Aalen, Ulm and Mannheim,' Prof. Dr. Volker Knoblauch happily stated.

■ Dr. Ralf Schreck  
Research Officer

# Profound insights into new dimensions



Pride and joy of the Institute of Material Research: Two new high-resolution scanning electron microscopes made by Carl Zeiss Microscopy GmbH will grant entirely new insights into the properties of materials.

Two new scanning electron microscopes made by Carl Zeiss Microscopy GmbH have been recently commissioned by the Institut für Materialforschung (IMFAA) for a total price tag of two million euros. Aalen University now possesses nano-analytical equipment that many other German research institutions would be proud to have.

The IMFAA vigorously used the non-term to install two very powerful research scanning electron microscopes in the renovated REM- and ion preparation laboratory. Their 'first light' was very promising. Entirely new insights into the properties of materials may now be obtained in the field of microscopic material characterisation.

The now available equipment allows addressing new issues at a high academic level and makes the IMFAA a more appealing partner of collaborating research institutions and companies. Both high-resolution scanning electron microscopes - Crossbeam 540/Laser and Sigma 300VP - are provided with extensive element analytics and structural analytics made by EDAX to determine the chemical phase composition of, say, elements in alloys or even active materials in batteries, permitting laser and ion-beam nano-processing. Focused ion beam preparation - FIB - with the Crossbeam 540 will grant new insights into the internal structure of materials.

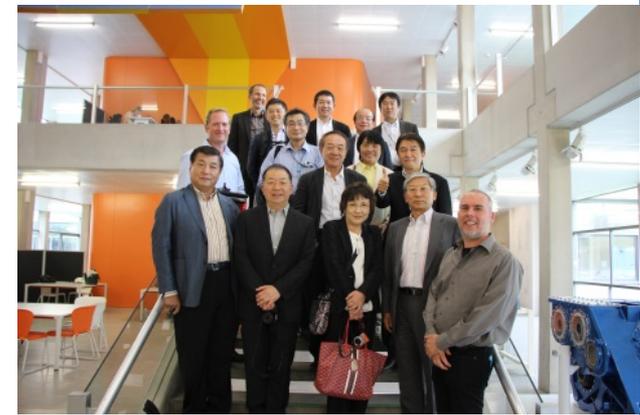
Careful ion preparation allows for detecting very fine and delicate structures at submicron resolutions. The unique combination with an ablation laser in the Crossbeam 540 may speed FIB preparation up by a power of ten. Many potential applications arise in battery technology, magnetic materials and composites, functional coatings, components of microsystems engineering and selective laser sintering (3D printing). The available specific extension of the FIB serial interface technology is even prepared for future 3D nanotomography - also combinable with analytics (3D-EDX/EBSD).

Procurement was funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), the German Research Foundation and the State of Baden-Württemberg. All over Germany there are only a handful of material microscopy and material analytics laboratories that are this well equipped. The University's main topic of research, 'New materials and manufacturing technologies', is considerably improved. Plausible and applicable teaching at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering and Materials will also benefit from the new devices, providing opportunities to study materialography or materials and surface technology and to graduate as an 'Advanced Materials and Manufacturing' Research Master.

■ [Dr. Timo Bernthaler/Tim Schubert/Prof. Dr. Gerhard Schneider](#)

# Lecture tour to Japan

Prof. Dr. Dagmar Goll visited the National Institute for Materials Science (NIMS) in Tsukuba, Japan, the main Japanese institution for the development of new high-performance materials. Professor Goll joined a guided tour through the institute and the ESICMM-G8 symposium concerning 'Next Generation Permanent Magnets', reporting on 'High-throughput experiments to discover novel permanent magnets'. With a team of graduates, scientific assistants and students, Prof. Schneider and Prof. Goll research in successful development of magnetic materials for powerful and cheap power conversion at the Institut für Materialforschung (IMFAA). Prof. Dr. Arndt Borgmeier and Prof. Dr. Jobst Görne (Industrial Sales Management and Technology) travelled to Japan as well: At this year's conference of the Global Sales Science Institute in Hiroshima they presented experiences in performing the European Sales Contest (ESC) and studies in sales management. Aalen University has been a member of this international organisation for many years, and is dedicated to promoting research and teaching in B2B sales.



The Japanese  
Fine Plating Study  
Group visited  
Aalen.

Meanwhile the Surface Technology/New Materials study programme enjoyed a trip in the reverse direction: it was visited by the Japanese Fine Plating Study Group. The members of this union include presidents, senior members and chairmen of the board of Japanese companies in the metal-coating industry. During their voyage to Germany, the group was informed about study contents and research subjects of the institutes IMFAA (Institut für Materialforschung) and FINO (Forschungsinstitut für Innovative Oberflächen), included in the study programme. Professors Dr. Timo Sörgel, Dr. Joachim Albrecht and Dr. Volker Knoblauch presented results from the intensely researched subjects of battery technology, smart substrates, superconductive layers, magnetic materials and composites.

■ goll/gö/sö

# Smart Energy for NATO

Prof. Dr. Martina Hofmann participated in the panel of experts of NATO's 'Capable Logistician 2015: Smart Energy' exercise performed in Hungary from June 15 to 17. She had been invited there with other energy experts from seven countries. During the exercise, new technologies were presented for efficient energy production, storage, distribution and consumption, and they were tested for their applicability in military or natural disaster contexts. During military operations and natural disaster aid, the usually petroleum-powered equipment consumes a lot of energy. An important future goal of NATO is to significantly reduce the required energy. The energy experts examined and assessed the presented technologies in subsequent discussions. 'One interesting and promising side-effect for the study programme was our exchange with specialists and professors from other European countries,' Hofmann concluded.



Prof. Dr. Martina Hofmann

She welcomed that energy efficiency is now also considered for military applications. Especially NATO's increasing natural disaster aid campaigns will benefit from these efforts and further promote an energy shift.

■ sr

In the department of Electronics, research focuses among others on energy revolution



# Research

## Researching abroad

Professor Dr. Christian Neusüß from the Faculty of Chemistry has finished a research semester at the renowned University of Uppsala, Sweden, last summer. He was hosted by the working group of Prof. Jonas Bergquist of the Biomedical Centre examining clinical problems with the latest instrumental analytical methods. Neusüß managed to obtain specific findings for his own work with the latest mass spectrometers available there. Jointly with the pharmaceutical industry of Uppsala, he examined changes in the haemoglobin blood pigment to draw conclusions on diseases like diabetes. Beside new engineering expertise, Christian Neusüß has also contributed methods of how to prepare blood tests to the University. Results of his stay have already been presented during an international conference and will be published soon.

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Prof. Dr. Christian  
Neusüß



## Recently graduated

Verena Richter has recently graduated 'cum laude' on the 'Integration of angularly resolved scattered light measurements in the microscopy of living cells in a multidimensional culture' at the Medical Faculty of Ulm. Richter has studied in Aalen and worked on her thesis in the biophotonics laboratory, supervised by Prof. Dr. Herbert Schneckenburger, since 2011. Her work has provided essential contributions to label-free diagnostics, applied in examinations of programmed cell death or the migration of cancer cells into connective tissue, among other things. Rolf Winkler from the Centre for Virtual Product Development at the University has passed the viva voce of his thesis on 'Experimental and numerical determination of structural-mechanical and acoustic properties of metallic hollow-sphere structures' at the University of Halle. He was examined by Aalen's Prof. Dr. Markus Merkel.

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Dr. Verena Richter happy about the successful swearing in ceremony.

# People

University Board of Governors  
Chairman: Prof. Dr. Michael  
Kaschke, Executive Chairman of the  
Group Carl Zeiss AG



## Senate confirms University Board of Governors

For the coming term of office, the senate of Aalen University has confirmed the following university governors in office: Prof. Dr. Michael Kaschke, Dr. Stefan Kampmann, Franziska Eichel, Prof. Dr. Jae-Aileen Chung, Prof. Dr. Silvia Schuhmacher and Miriam Bischoff. Science minister Theresia Bauer has officially appointed them for another three years.

The University Board of Governors, composed of eleven members, is one of the main committees of Aalen University.

It assumes an honorary capacity and is not bound to orders or instructions. The committee deals with the strategic alignment of the University and its developmental planning and profiling.

Together with the Academic Senate, the University Board of Governors elects the Rectorate members. 'I am looking forward to further collaboration with the University Board of Governors and thank you to all members for their willingness to continue their participation in this responsible task,' said Prof. Dr. Gerhard Schneider, Rector of Aalen University.

The progress of Aalen University can be continued owing to the support of the extremely competent university councillors. The committee consists of six external and five internal members. Chairperson of the University Board of Governors is Prof. Dr. Michael Kaschke, chairperson of the Group Management Board of the Carl Zeiss AG. Other external members are Dr. Stefan Kampmann (Executive Vice President of Robert Bosch GmbH), Franziska Eichel (partner of LMT Leading Metalworking Technologies Group, Oberkochen), Martin Hennerici, Gerhard Grimminger (chairman of Kessler & Co. GmbH & Co. KG) and Prof. Dr. Gabriele Bleibst (Rector of the Ernst Abbé University of Jena). Internal members of the university council are: Prof.

Dr. Silvia Schuhmacher (Surface Technology/New Materials study programme), Prof. Dr. Jae-Aileen Chung (International Business Management study programme), Prof. Dr. Ulrich Klauck (Informatics study programme), Miriam Bischoff (leader of the main study consultation) and Carolin Schätzle (student of Technical Editing). Concerning the 'female side' of the university council - six of the eleven members are women, - the University's equal opportunity commissioner, Prof. Dr. Annette Limberger, said with delight, 'The Aalen University is a shining example in terms of equal opportunity.'

■ Saskia Stüven-Kazi  
Communication Department

## Best Paper Award

At the CARF conference (Controlling, Accounting, Risk, Finance) at the college of Lucerne, now held for the first time, Prof. Dr. Robert Rieg's paper on the changing role of controllers was honoured with the 'best paper award'. The CARF conference is targeting applied research. It also intends to bundle and promote new teaching concepts from the German-speaking countries. The paper by Prof. Rieg is an empirical study of the question whether tasks of controllers will turn away from doing routine work to supporting the management. His findings, however, suggest that the roles of controllers will expand: Controllers will perform more diversified tasks but there is no trend towards becoming a business partner. In agreement with other studies, a 'hybrid controller' may hence be assumed.

■ sky



On the way to Czech Republic: the business applications of computer science scientists.

## A voyage into the Czech Republic

In June 2015, our group of 22 students of the Master of Information Systems, our course administrator Prof. Dr. Frank Richter and our teaching assistant Wolfgang Gunsenheimer joined for a 3-days trip into the Czech Republic. Our first destination was Letohrad near the Polish border. Once there, we were received by two employees of the Siemens-OEZ plant that we intended to visit on the next day. We had a brief guided tour to Letohrad and then visited the handicrafts museum that was opened just for us. At the end of the day, we were invited by Siemens-OEZ to a classic Czech dinner. The next day we visited the factory of Siemens-OEZ in Letohrad.

After the very interesting factory tour we continued to Pilsen, the cultural capital of Europe in 2015. There we visited a traditional Czech parade on the marketplace - and, of course, the brewery museum of the city of Pilsen that gives an overview of the city's long tradition of brewery.

■ Marco Flickinger  
Student Master in Informations Systems



Internationally connected: Guests from Israel (left) and the USA (below) recently visited the University



# International

## Looking abroad: Aalen University International

Aalen University has become quite a lot more international again: Special significance arises from its membership in the Deutsches Hochschulkonsortium für internationale Kooperationen (DHIK), now including membership of the Chinesisch-Deutsche Hochschule für angewandte Wissenschaften (CDHAW) in Mechanical and Automotive Engineering and of the Mexikanisch-Deutsche Hochschulkooperation mit dem Monterrey Tech. System (MDHK) in Mechanical and Electrical engineering. Both schemes provide a chance to graduate twice, either way.

The first Chinese students from the CDHAW, located at the Tongji University in Shanghai, arrived in Aalen in early September and are now studying General Mechanical Engineering with a focus on Automotive Engineering. Even before their arrival, they passed the German Test-DaF, and now they study here in German. The same is true for the programme students of the joint university-company programme with the Robert Bosch Automotive Steering GmbH, initiated by Aalen University.

The Chinese Mechanical Engineering and Mechatronics students of selected partner universities in Shanghai, Nanjing and Shandong are first studying for one semester at Aalen University before they are going to pass an industrial training period at Bosch

Relationships with the above-mentioned partner universities become closer. For example, a delegation of the Southeast University of Nanjing visited Aalen University in Spring 2015. Deans Prof. Dr. Markus Kley (Faculty of Mechanical Engineering) and Prof. Dr. Rainer Börret (Optics and Mechatronics), accompanied by deputy headmaster Prof. Dr. Harald Riegel, paid a return visit to Nanjing, Shanghai and Shandong in Autumn 2015. The next steps of collaboration and exchange were discussed on that occasion.

Indeed China has a special place in the internationalisation of Aalen University. Already the fifth China Day, organised by the Academic International Exchange of the University for German students interested in China, took place in December 2015.

Its focus was on high-calibre training to prepare a practical or studying period in China. An Intercultural training was followed by an opportunity to talk to Chinese expats, representatives of various companies operating in China. Michael Egner, general manager at Continental Tires in Hefei, reported on 'Working and living in China'. Chinese students introduced their native country and their universities

Further development of the collaboration with universities in other BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) is progressing too. With the Faculty of Chemistry already providing for an optional double graduation of Chinese students from the China Jiliang University in Hangzhou, it is continuously expanding partnerships in South Africa and Brazil. Collaborating with the Faculty of Management & Business Sciences that has already maintained close partnerships with local universities for years, options for two-way exchanges have been made available for chemistry students in South Africa too.

In Brazil, promising contacts with several universities have arisen from the scholarship programme of the Brazilian government, Ciência sem Fronteiras ('Science without borders'), so that options for exchanges are now explored. Concerning India, efforts have been undertaken to establish bilateral collaboration by founding a satellite station of an approved university based on the structure of a German advanced technical college. The Russian partnerships with Ishevsk and Saratov are also developing well, with professors of the Faculty of Management & Business Sciences visiting the Russian universities in the past semester as guest lecturers.

More partnerships have been established in the USA, an important location for Aalen University. This is partly due to intense and much-needed staying in contact with the relevant partner universities but also to the 'Short Program' of the University, which took place for the fourth time in the summer semester of 2016, supported thus continuous improvement of the exchange balance between the University and its American partners.

A successful application has also been filed in the context of the new Erasmus+ programme directive concerning mobility with 'partner countries', to be precise: jointly with the Shamoon College of Engineering in Beer Sheva, Israel, for the subject of surface technology and materials.

Israel has also assumed a special position with regard to international educational projects of Aalen University in the recent 18 months, covered by the EU Tempus Project Life-Long Learning Applied Fields (LLAF). LLAF is a unique and innovative project, combining developing the capacity of universities in international collaborations with a reform of the curriculum for life-long learning in various applied occupations like medicine, speech therapy and audiology, optometry, education, photography, communications and computer sciences. For Aalen University, this project is governed by the Vision Science and Business Master study programme, assisted by the Academic International Exchange.

The consortia project TOP, funded by the Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, has featured the first common pilot actions performed by the four state universities of EastWürttemberg in Aalen, Heidenheim and Schwäbisch Gmünd to take care of foreign scholarship holders and to prepare German scholarship holders for their stay abroad. Currently, networked actions with regional companies are initiated to convey the special attractiveness of the region to foreign scholarship holders and students, also in regard of future career options. The International Club, founded ten years ago by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce and the companies BSH, Bosch, Voith and Zeiss, has recently extended its activities to include foreign students in the region.

On account of its experience with EU capacity-building projects or the subject of 'practical semesters abroad', Aalen University is increasingly also requested both nationwide and internationally these days. After all, the number of Aalen students spending a practical semester abroad is pleasantly high.

A related publication in the American journal, Academy of Internationally Business Insights, has been highly appreciated by all participants and motivated them tremendously - knowing that many tasks can be addressed only thanks to the vigorous support by faculties and administration. Since demographic changes will not spare the region of East Württemberg in years to come, further internationalisation of the University will continue to be of high priority. A large number of foreign students will gain importance. The 'Always go for the (international) extra mile' slogan stays applicable.

■ **Pascal Cromm**  
Director of International Relations



## A Letter from Finland

*Dear Limes Reader,*

during my nursing training, before studying, I was already determined to spend a semester abroad in the context of the 'Erasmus' exchange programme. I was not aware then that I would be one of the very first health management students of Aalen University participating - but it was even more exciting to witness the exchange programme under development.

Now I'm a student in the seventh (practical) semester, having passed my fifth semester (winter semester 2014/15) in Finland. There I visited the Mikkeli University of Applied Sciences, or in Finnish: Mikkelin ammattikorkeakoulu. This university is one of the most famous advanced technical universities in Finland. It has a faculty of Economics but also a socio-scientific and a technical faculty. The town of Mikkeli is located 230 kilometres to the north of the capital of Helsinki.

It was a great experience that I would fully recommend to every student. Even though the preparation may seem a little bit complex, support from Aalen University's programme and Mikkeli University has always been available. The lectures were very much centred on projects and applicability. Together with a French exchange student, I joined an 8-week start-up accelerator programme, elaborating our ideas under supervision of famous coaches like 'Monty' Michael Widenius, the founder of MySQL. The background of this programme was an international competition, awarded with a trip to Silicon Valley - unfortunately, we made it 'only' to second place here.

There was no shortage of leisure activities, either: We travelled to Lapland and lived there in wooden huts with fireplaces. My personal favourite were trips by snowmobile, rushing through the forests at a speed of up to 110 km/h, accompanied by reindeer. I also ought to mention sleigh-riding with huskies through the national park, of course!

I gained a lot of experience and got to know a great country. Apart from the fact that my English has improved, it is very convenient if you have to find your way in a foreign country on your own and to improvise in uncommon situations. Insights into a different educational system have also helped me decide about my Master, I think. Now I can imagine obtaining it abroad.



After my return, I managed to set up a manual within the scope of a practical project with fellow students and to speak in lectures about our experiences. Meanwhile, other students of our study programme have gone abroad - that's great! For now we may establish long-term international partnerships.

*Kaikkeä hyvää! (All the best!)*  
*Malte Kendel*

Health Management



# A new collaboration with California State University

California State University in Fullerton, hosting a total of about 37,000 students, includes the biggest accredited business school in California: the Steven G. Mihaylo College of Business and Economics. Its Department of Accounting is second in size, surpassed only by the Department of Finance, and has a high reputation.

Following the autumn 2013 visit of the head of the Department of Accounting, Prof. Betty Chavis, to Aalen University and especially to the International Business Management programme, Prof. Dr. Reinhard Heyd and Prof. Dr. Robert Rieg paid a return visit in the recent semester. The purpose of this visit was to initiate an exchange of students and lecturers. In many talks, the two professors could ascertain a huge interest in collaborating.



Prof. Dr. Robert Rieg (left) and Prof. Dr. Reinhard Heyd visit California State University in Fullerton USA.

Provided that the other formal processes will be quickly concluded, the first students from Aalen may spend a semester in Fullerton as early as autumn 2016. Students from Fullerton may also be hosted in Aalen during the same semester. The collaboration is initially limited to students of the International Business Management study programme with an emphasis on FACT (Finance, Accounting & Taxation) but will be expanded within the foreseeable future.

■ rieg

# limes international

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## In the next issue:

- Student Engagement,
- University Strategy 2030,
- International Buddy Program  
and much more ...

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