

REAF Excursion to Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial for Generation Talk

On Friday, 20 April 2018, a group of 22 UR American Studies, European American Studies, and Political Science students joined REAF for an excursion to the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial. After an informative guided tour of the former camp grounds led by Sonja Sczech, the group had the chance to explore the permanent and temporary exhibitions of the memorial before receiving the unique opportunity of a generation talk with the daughter and granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor.

Helen Albert, who is currently serving as the Acting General Inspector for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C., and her daughter Sarah presented the life of their grand/father Oskar Albert prior to, during, and after his consecutive internment in five concentration camps and subsequent emigration to the United States in 1949. Since Oskar Albert had only ever admitted to being an inmate at Flossenbürg in his lifetime, Helen Albert had to reconstruct his ordeal during World War II. Thus his path led him from his native Rzeszów, Poland, where he was captured at age 14 in 1939, over five concentration camps in Eastern Europe, to liberation by the U.S. Army in 1945 on one of the so-called 'death marches' from the Flossenbürg camp towards Dachau.

The survivor's daughter was able to reconstruct this path with documents she found in her father's estate as well as the help of the memorial at Flossenbürg. Her daughter Sarah then reported from her perspective on his life in the United States as a successful businessman and proud American. Afterwards, the floor was open for questions on this multi-national and multi-generational life story.

REAF thanks Dr. Jörg Skriebeleit, the Director of the Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial, and Julius Scharnetzky from the memorial's Educational Department for this wonderful opportunity, as well as our sponsors, the Freunde der Universität Regensburg e.V., and of course Helen Albert and her daughter Sarah for sharing their family history.