



My Personal Experience in an American School, Louisiana 2023

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Par Karine AUGER, enseignante Anglais-lettres au LP Les Grippeaux à Parthenay.

Descriptif :

This article focuses on the personal experience of Karine Auger , an English teacher at the vocational school Les Grippeaux in Parthenay who has been actively involved in the twinning between Loudun (France) and Thibodaux (Louisiana, USA) since 2009. It highlights the cultural exchanges organized between the two cities, including school partnerships, work placements, and visits.

► I am an English teacher at the vocational school Les Grippeaux in Parthenay, but I live in Loudun. Previously, I worked at the vocational school Marc Godrie.

In 2004, I learned about **the twinning between Loudun and Thibodaux, Louisiana**. Thanks to the former president of the twinning committee, **the teachers of Marc Godrie vocational school were able to go to Louisiana with a class of BEP (21 catering students) from Loudun to practice Cajun cooking**. These students had correspondents at Thibodaux High School. I also had **the opportunity to meet the governor of Louisiana and the president of the CODOFIL** at that time.

► Incredibly, I have been **the president of the twinning committee between Loudun and Thibodaux (Louisiana)** since 2009. The twinning committee between the two cities was created in 1978 thanks to Mr. Monory, the mayor of Loudun, as many inhabitants of Thibodaux have ancestors from the Loudun region.

► The purpose of this twinning **is to introduce young students and pupils from Loudun to Louisiana and its cultural traditions, organize exchanges between schools, and support students from Loudun who go there for work placements**.

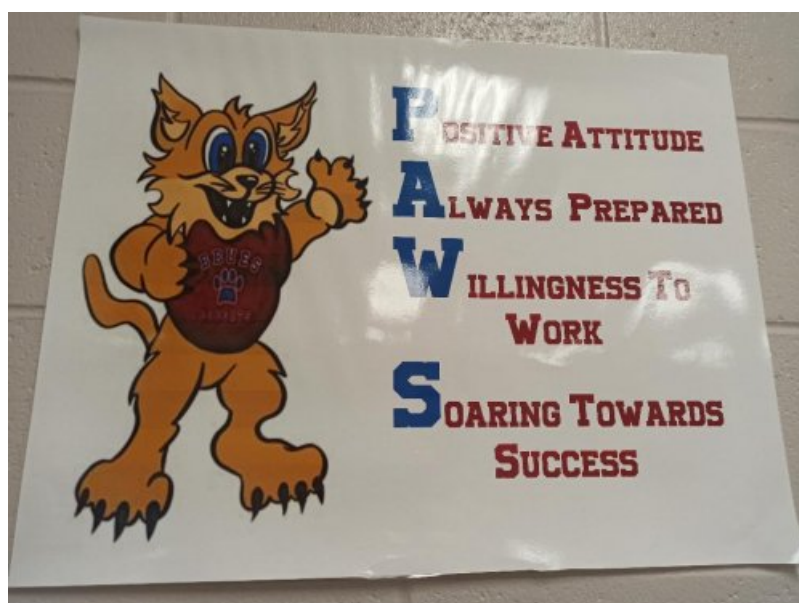
Last April (2023), I was commissioned by the international section of the Vienne department **to establish contacts and correspondences between all the schools in Loudun and those in Thibodaux**.

► At the same time, I **led a group of 15 people from Loudun who wanted to discover Louisiana . They were accommodated in the homes of Thibodaux residents**. While there, I spent a day at a primary school in Lafourche Parish, where the teachers are employed by the CODOFIL (Conseil pour le Développement du Français en Louisiane).



► With the French group from Loudun, we were welcomed by the CODOFIL and the international committee of the city of Lafayette to develop contacts and exchanges between high schools and vocational schools. I met many teachers interested in establishing correspondences, as Lafayette is a city where children, pupils, and students can study the French language from primary school to university.

The only correspondence project I led that was successful was between one of my sales classes (TMCV) and a class of students learning French in their first year of Management studies at the University of Thibodaux. It worked really well because they were mature and taught our students many things about Louisiana and their studies.



► Unfortunately, many American teachers expressed interest in organizing correspondences but did not follow through. Nevertheless, **my multiple trips to Louisiana, visiting important places like the state capital Baton Rouge, the Tabasco factory (the only one in the world), and the bayous with alligators, were incredible experiences.** They allowed me to bring back many original documents that I now use in my classes. If I could give any advice, it would be this : **don't hesitate to contact both consulates and embassies in America as well as in Europe.** If you want to receive maps or tourist information, you can also contact the tourist offices of each country in Paris.

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