

## **Field report – San Antonio**

### **General impression:**

My general impression of my 6- months research stay at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute is excellent. It was a very educational experience and I learned a lot. Dr. Ruth Ruprecht was my “external supervisor” of my Bachelor thesis project and she did an excellent job. I was given a great, very interesting and important research project to work on independently. A postdoc of her lab showed me the bench work of my project at the beginning. Afterwards I was performing all experiments on my own. However, I was always welcomed to ask any scientific questions.

### **Quality of host institution:**

The quality of the host institution is very good. Before I started working in the laboratory I had to attend a safety training. They taught me for example how to handle infectious material, to wear always protective clothing, what to do in case of an emergency, etc. Furthermore, they gave me my own safety glasses and provided me a lab coat. Everyone was friendly and cooperative.

As contact I will give you the email address of Ruth’s assistant. He takes care of everything. Name: Juan Esquivel, Email: jesquivel@txbiomed.org

### **Recommendations:**

I would definitely recommend a research stay in the United States. A stay abroad is enriching in many ways. If you stay there for at least 6 months you will experience how a foreign language, English, starts to feel like your mother tongue. You don’t have to think about speaking in English anymore. It’s “automatic.” Furthermore, you get to know so many different cultures, which is very interesting.

You also have to organize everything on your own in a foreign country, which is a good thing and it makes you more independent.

### **Visa:**

Before travelling to the United States for a research stay you will need a so called J1 Visa. Be aware that if your research stay will be more than 6-months, a ban will apply that does not allow you to get another J1 visa for the next 2 years. Of course, you can travel to the USA as a tourist within those 2 years, but not for a research internship.

Start to apply for the J1 visa early! You will have to organize a lot and it will take time.

### **Living in San Antonio:**

Unfortunately the public transport system is not good. There is a “bus system”, but it can happen that you need for a route, which takes 20 min by car, 1.30 hours by bus. So I won’t recommend using the bus. The best way to get around is a car. Either you

buy and later sell the car for your stay or you have to organize a ride to work with friends and coworkers every day. In my opinion renting a car is too expensive for 6 months.

Everything else is easy to manage and San Antonio is a nice city to live in.

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