

# **Colorado School of Mines – Field Report – Marshall Plan Scholarship**

by Katharina Gruber

## **General Impressions**

I am a student of industrial environmental protection and process engineering and I was given the opportunity to write parts of my master thesis at Colorado School of Mines. Financially, this wouldn't have been possible without the Marshall Plan Scholarship, for which I am extremely thankful.

I have never been in the US before this stay and I wasn't really sure what to expect. But the time abroad surpassed my expectations. There are quite some differences from a cultural point of view but that's exactly what makes this stay so precious to me. I was not only given the opportunity to improve my scientific skills but also was able to meet lots of interesting new people, not only from the US but from all over the world.

I can only recommend to everyone given the opportunity to seize it and go abroad. The skills you will get from a stay abroad can simply not be gained at home!

## **Host Institution**

Colorado School of Mines is located in a small town called Golden. Golden lies between the Rocky Mountains and Denver and is therefore a perfect location for a research stay abroad. The university is relatively small which makes it easier to be integrated and to be part of the "Mines community". Everyone is very open-minded and tries to make you welcomed. Especially the international office is extremely helpful. Mary Cook, the head of this department, helped me a lot concerning visa, housing, and academic issues. She and her team has always an open ear and tries to make your stay as comfortable as possible.

The campus is really nice. The academic buildings offer a lot (big library, lots of study rooms, laboratories, ...). In order to make sure that you are well balanced, there are also lots of recreational buildings on the campus. You can not only go swimming for free, but also an indoor climbing wall, a free gym and much more is all located on campus.

Living on the campus is not cheap (700 USD), but I would still definitely recommend it. You are more integrated and get to meet lots of new young people. Moreover, there are furnished apartments, so you don't have to worry about anything.

The quality of the host institution is very high. They demand a lot, but that also guarantees a high-quality outcome. Moreover, not only your language skills but also your academic skills improve a lot. A special thanks to my supervisor Professor E. De Moor. Without his guidance and advice, the outcome of this research stay would not be what it is today.

## **Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows**

I can only recommend to everyone who has the opportunity to go abroad: SEIZE IT! You will definitely not regret it. Yes, it is true that staying at your home university might be an easier way, but what you learn from being away from home and living in another country, will for sure compensate all efforts.

I would recommend showing some initiative. If you find a topic you're really interested in, try to find a professor at your home university who supports you and then write emails directly to the professors of potential host universities. Maybe you are as lucky as I was, and you'll find a professor who is willing to support your project. I would start with all of that soon enough, at least half a year upfront. There are lots of things to organize despite finding supervisors. You have to apply for a visa, you need an insurance, housing, a flight, and much more. So, if you are interested, just go for it! You won't regret it.

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