

Marshall Plan Scholarship Field Report after Stay

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General Impression of the Research Stay

I greatly enjoyed the research stay at the DePaul University. Chicago is a wonderful city, with lots of opportunities to enjoy the life. I spent most of my time either playing my favorite sport Ultimate Frisbee or doing research with Prof. Iyad Kanj and his colleague Prof. Jonathan Gemmell at DePaul University. Even though Prof. Kanj was busy, we managed to meet nearly every day usually for couple of hours. Therefore, I can say that he supervised me very well during my research stay and the time spend in Chicago was very productive.

Besides DePaul, there is also University of Chicago and Toyota Technological Institute doing research in Theoretical Computer Science. Furthermore, these two institutions organize a weekly seminar with talks by top computer scientists from all around the world—mostly from the intersection of theory and practice. Hence, Chicago is a great place for a research visit for both theoretical and more applied computer science.

Finally, during my stay I also initiated new collaborations that led to new results and two submissions to highly rated conferences. First of the submissions has been recently accepted for publication in the proceedings of The Thirty-Second AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-18), which is considered to be one of the top conferences in the field of artificial intelligence.

Quality of the Host Institution

DePaul University is a large institution with a variety of different colleges and schools that focus on different areas of research. I was visiting professor Iyad Kanj, who is part of School of Computing within College of Computing and Digital Media. Prof. Kanj is a leading expert in the area of parameterized complexity. Besides a strong theory group with publications in top venues of theoretical computer, there are several groups doing more applied research in various areas of computer science including artificial intelligence, data mining, computational finance, database systems, security among others. College of Computing and Digital Media also organize a weekly research colloquium, with

talks by faculty, students and guests from the academic and business communities.

Contacts Within the Host Institution, Inclusion in the Organization

Arriving to DePaul University was very easy. The international office at DePaul was very helpful and clearly explained all the required procedures even before I arrived. After my arrival, I met with the secretary at the international office to finalize the paperwork and with the secretary of School of Computing to get an office, computer, and office supplies. Overall, the inclusion in the organization was smooth and straightforward. Afterward, I was mostly in contact only with Prof. Kanj and his colleagues.

Recommendations for Future Marshall Plan Students and Fellows

A research visit is a great opportunity to start new collaborations. I would definitely encourage everybody to make the most of this opportunity. I think it is better to work hard with your host professor and not choose many side projects with different groups/outside of research. Concentrating on the project with your professor will, with high probability, lead you to strong results and a good recommendation letter, when you need it after finishing your studies. Furthermore, it might end in a new friendship and promise of future collaboration after coming back from your visit.

Having said the above, you should also find some activity completely outside the research and university life, such as some sport, gym, or hiking to do every day or at least for couple of hours a week. This is maybe even more important to stay mentally healthy and be able to focus on your work.