

## **Field Report**

During the summer 2017, I had the opportunity to take part in a 3-month research stay in the United States of America. I was at the University of Tennessee at the “Center for Renewable Carbon”. All the staff members there were very supportive and friendly and have been a great source of help, especially during the first weeks. They helped not only with paperwork, accommodation and the first steps in the foreign country, they also involved us in the daily life and work.

I had the honor of working with Prof. Dr. Adam Taylor my supervisor during the stay, who works in the field of Forest Products Extension. He was very approachable, encouraging and supporting. Because of his vast and diverse knowledge and the versatile area of responsibility, the projects I was involved in were very interesting and instructive. The projects were about decay testing with fungi, drying of a Hawaiian type of wood, different kinds of lignification of Chestnut oak and my main project was about the interaction of Boultonizing and through-boring of Douglas-fir. The working area was mainly at the workshop and the laboratory, but we – other students of the Salzburg University of Applied Sciences and me – had the opportunity to join different field trips. We went for instance to Virginia for cutting and picking up pieces of chestnut oak for a project and for using a testing machine, we visited the University of Alabama in Auburn.

At the weekends, we had some time for visiting the nearby areas and cities, colleagues invited us also for parties or trips.

I learned a lot there about specialized topics and also about their culture, it was a great and productive experience for me.

The preparation of the stay abroad needed time, the recommendation for future Marshall Plan students and fellows is to start early to get everything done in time and prevent problems due to unexpected delays. It needs also time to organize everything after arrival in the US. Until you get the social security number can last long time and getting accommodation can be very difficult. If possible talk to people that already experienced the host institution, because locals often don't know about restrictions for foreigners.

A big thank you to my host institution, my supervisor Prof. Dr. Adam Taylor, Prof. Dr. Timothy Young and all my colleagues.

At the end, I want to thank the Marshall Plan Foundation for the big support. Without this financial assistance this experience would not have been possible for me.