

MARSHALL PLAN SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

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1. GENERAL VIEW OF THE RESEARCH VISIT

My Marshall Plan scholarship research visit to the University of Houston was dominated by a productive and friendly environment. I was very well integrated in the research group from day one. Our joint collaboration allowed me to submit part of my work to an internationally renowned mathematical journal, which is currently under review. Further, it is my pleasure to announce, that we are planning to work together on future projects. I also want to emphasize how warm and welcoming the majority of the Houstonians were. The common phrases about southern hospitality are certainly true.

2. THE QUALITY OF THE HOST INSTITUTION

My host, Prof. Matthew Nicol, arranged for me to have my own office. Considering the lack of office space, that the department of mathematics has, this was an absolute luxury. Hence, it was possible to work uninterruptedly and welcome my colleagues frequently to hold mathematical sessions. Additionally, the IT-support center provided me with a computer working station and I had unlimited access to a scanner, printer and copier. Aside from the facilities in the office the University of Houston has a fantastic recreational center, which I used to reload my mental and physical batteries. The only flaw that I noticed was that even though the campus has a lot of eating possibilities, none of them offers healthy meals, which means non processed food. As a solution I mostly brought my food from home.

3. CONTACTS AND INTEGRATION WITHIN THE HOST INSTITUTION

I already knew my colleagues and the University of Houston from former short research visits and scientific conferences. The integration happened immediately. The dynamics group has grown since my last visit and its most recent addition to its roster is Alan Haynes, who focuses primarily on the connection between ergodic theory and number theory. In addition to the local mathematicians I was able to extend my network of mathematical contacts during the dynamics summer school, which the University of Houston hosted in end of May 2018. Many PhD students, Postdocs and researchers were invited to discuss and enjoy distinct lecture series from high caliber mathematicians.

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4. THE ORGANIZATION AND LOCATION OF THE HOST INSTITUTION

The mathematical department of the University of Houston is located in the heart of the city center of Houston. It is easily accessible from all directions and has the most prominent highways close to it. A few decades ago the neighbouring district called Third Ward had a high crime rate, which definitely raised thoughts of concern. However, due to the ongoing gentrification these thoughts were put to rest. I could only observe the slick organization of the mathematical department and especially our research group, when it came to seminars and joint research meetings. Hence, there is not much additional outside information I can provide.

5. RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE STUDENTS/FELLOWS

I lived about 7km away from the University. I conducted the experiment to buy a bike from Academy Sports and commute with it. Since I made it back physically and mentally unspoiled, riding by bike definitely had the benefit of getting a light portion of cardiovascular exercise done. I would in any way pay special attention to drive mostly on not highly frequented streets and never on highways. The heat wave starts from April until September makes it necessary to carry an additional set of clothes in a backpack. Having the opportunity to take a shower at work is almost a necessity. I used the recreational center for the latter.