



Universität für Bodenkultur Wien
University of Natural Resources
and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna



Field Report

Marshall Plan Scholarship

Research stay 01.05.2019 – 31.07.2019 at Lehigh University

Bethlehem, PA, USA

General impression of the research stay abroad

The research stay was a valuable improvement of the quality of my PhD project and I am really thankful that I had the possibility to work in a foreign country. I broadened my horizon regarding technical methods but I also found new contact persons who support me with valuable inputs regarding my research topic. Working at a different group and country, helped me to establish new contacts not only in the US but also worldwide which I consider as an enrichment for our further research approaches and my personal growth. Living in a different country and discovering new places was a wonderful experience.

Quality of the host institution

The campus at Lehigh University is in my opinion the most beautiful place in Bethlehem. The buildings are diverse and the old library is a good place to find a calm environment to write. I was working at the Department of Chemistry, which provides all basic but also advanced equipment in the laboratories. The different research groups focus on diverse subjects and the overall working effort was really high. Colleagues from neighboring laboratories were also really supportive when I needed help or special parts to conduct my experiments.

Contacts within the host institution

Jeanne Ma from the Office of International Students and Scholars supported me with helpful information regarding the Visa process and replied to my Emails quickly.

Marge Sawyers of the Department of Chemistry helped me with all the administrative tasks especially at the beginning of the research stay.

Dimitri Vezenov supervised me in the lab during my stay at Lehigh University and also supported me to plan and organize the research stay prior and during the three months. When looking for an accommodation, I would recommend to also contact the supervisor for advice since she or he might have a colleague or student who is looking for a roommate.

Claudia Gusenbauer

Recommendations for future Marshall Plan students and fellows

To all the students, who are interested in doing a research stay in the US, I would highly recommend to use that opportunity. The Marshall Plan scholarship is compared to other scholarships options a really attractive financial support. It facilitates the planning regarding accommodation rent, living costs and the journey to the US. Selis Schmidt from the BOKU-Center for International Relations supported us to apply for the scholarship and answered all my questions.

Another recommendation is to spend time on planning the research activities thoroughly prior the arrival, since it will help to spend more time on the real research work. If laboratory work is scheduled during the research stay, I also advise to prepare as much as possible before going to the US, since the time passes really quickly.

The application process for the US Visa might be a bit challenging, but I followed that guidance: <https://app.box.com/s/uk1jn6kbcza66yinapngm05i69d8lc3q>. It contains a step-by-step guide on how to prepare the documents, which are required for the Visa process, and helped me to prepare the documents.

I found my apartment on this website, which contains flat advertisements of several universities in the US :

<https://www.places4students.com/Places/School?SchoolID=eyio77NsUu4%3D>