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RISE Report 2009

For a couple of weeks during last Christmas, I was thinking of something fruitful to do during the incoming summer holiday. I first thought of traveling around Europe, but in the end I came up with a better idea of doing internship. Therefore I started scurried searching for chemistry internship. I found the RISE program and carefully read through it. The program had potentially drawn my interest at the first read. Also I believed that the program would enable me to experience international scale of research, and submerge in new culture.

At that time I did not hesitate at all to apply for the RISE program. I then explored all the placements being offered on the list. In the end, I chose to settle myself down in University of Kiel, carrying out the synthesis of Metal-Organic framework material, which is totally new to me. I also contacted my potential project supervisors who were very helpful and provided me with more information. The RISE application process was quick and efficient. A month later, I was informed about being accepted and awarded the RISE scholarship.

In the mid of June, I took a flight to Germany straight after my final exams. After quite a long hour traveling, I stepped off in Lubeck airport, where my new adventure had begun. A number of questions suddenly arose in my head: will I be able to adapt myself to a new environment? will I be able to socialize with others as I couldn't speak German at all? Luckily, at the airport, I met two friendly German girls living in Kiel and just came back from Britney Spear's concert in London. They helped taking me to Kiel by train. Thanks to them, I did not realize before hand that they do not have English announcement on local train, without them I would have to struggle getting to Kiel on my own. From my first experience, I realized how nice and friendly German people are. This relieved all my anxiety I had before.

It was about 10 am. when I arrived in Kiel. My PhD supervisor, Antje Reher, picked me up from train station and took me to my accommodation that had been nicely arranged. Thereafter, we went to laboratories and offices. University of Kiel is a campus university which is unlike my home university with collegiate system. There, I was very welcome by Prof. Norbert Stock and other collaborators. Labs and offices were very modern and fully equipped.

Before setting off to Germany, I only knew that my project involved novel solid synthesis based on combining metal ions and organic ligands to produce porous materials, which a lot of applications such as gas storage, catalytic properties etc. could be brought on later. I was first provided with some journal readings to broaden my view and knowledge about the project. Then I was guided and looked after by experienced PhD supervisor on day to day basis. Soon after I was trusted to work independently when I settled down and got familiar with all lab works. Had carried out the project, I had chances to touch on various techniques used for solid analysis; hydrothermal solid synthesis, powder and single crystal X-ray diffraction, Langmuir isotherm surface analysis.

The great thing I really love about the lab culture there was that we all had lunch together every day so that we could share daily stories and catch up with the others, this eventually made such a very warm, joyful, relaxing atmosphere. About work, we had group meeting on Tuesdays, where brain-storm always happened to solve scientific problems that arose in our works. All the problems were challenging to me. What is more, no one had ever felt being left alone in our group.

Apart from working in the lab, I had a big chance to get around Germany and got to know German culture, lifestyle, scenery better than what stated in travel guidebooks. From my point of view, Germany consists of different geography from north to south which would results in varieties of cultures, foods and lifestyles, moreover, it also contain long history dated back to over hundred BD. As all stated, Germany is one of the very fascinating and worthwhile country to visit.

One more adorable thing to be mentioned about Germany that they have supremely good systems to deal with all environment

problems; recycle system, rubbish separated system, wide range of transportations, etc.

Finally, I would love to sincerely thank to the entire DAAD and RISE staffs, program for providing me such a golden opportunity to excel my aspiration as a chemist, as well as, experience world-recognized culture and lifestyle. I came back home with wonderful life-time experience which cannot be exchanged with anything! , and a camera filled with pictures of unforgettable memories.



This picture was taken on a Baltic sailing trip with all people from my working group - Prof. Stock group, University of Kiel.

I agree that my report and accompanying pictures are used by DAAD in printed materials, presentations, and on the website in order to inform funding organization, sponsors, and students about the RISE program.