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Home University: **Pennsylvania State University, USA**

Subject: **Biology, Biochemistry**

Guest University: **Ruhr-Universität Bochum**

Project title: *"Modeling semantic learning driven by episodic memory"*

PhD student/supervisor: **Richard Görler**

Time frame: **May 15, 2017 – July 28, 2017**

1. The RISE internship let me learn from some of the top scientists in Germany while giving me a deeper appreciation for German culture that won't be found sightseeing in Berlin for a day or two. I became friends with the people, learned the language, fought with the bureaucracy, and truly lived in Germany, all around a life-changing experience.

2. I had a friend tell me "it's funny how you can know some people for years and waste all that time, but you can meet some people for a short time that you may never see again that will change your life completely." While playing sand volleyball with some of the local German friends I made during the internship alongside some of the other interns from the States, I realized that 2 months previously, I hadn't known these people and now they were some of the best friends I've ever had. Set aside the research, the location, the money, and at its core, RISE is about connecting people from other cultures to help everyone grow. The people made the program and my experience in Germany the great experience it was for me.

3. I had not stepped foot outside the United States before I left for Germany, and knew rudimentary French, and no German. As I have now finished my internship, I can say that the complete immersion was intimidating at first but the most rewarding experience of my life. For those of you like me who are science-minded and only recently found a desire to see the world, this is a perfect way to start. The perspective gained from living in another country combined with the skills and knowledge gained from working with some of the top minds of Germany and the world all sums to a summer more enriching than I can put into words in a single paragraph. I left Germany a more skilled, interesting, and open-minded person than I was when I arrived.