DAAD RISE PRO Internship Report

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This program represented my third summer in Germany and was by far the most impactful. Some three years ago, I stepped off the plane to experience Berlin, and by extension Europe for the first time. I immediately fell in love with the language, cuisine, and culture there. Unfortunately though, my study abroad program had only budgeted two weeks to explore eastern Germany, which left me with the feeling that I hadn't truly experienced life here beyond basic tourist activities.

So I set a goal for myself that I would return within a semester or two to spend a whole summer here. Two whole years later, that opportunity finally arrived in the form of the DAAD UROP with RWTH Aachen. I had kept up with my Duolingo, so this time I would be well prepared to navigate life outside of only my American and Canadian friends. The summer was fantastic! I got to work on an experimental bioprinter, practice my German by playing Werewolf with local students, and visit the Netherlands along with Belgium on an almost daily basis. I had so much fun that I knew I would have to return yet again.

Which brings me to this summer. I applied and joined in as a part of the DAAD RISE program. This was a whole different ball game compared with the previous two summers. It was up to me to navigate housing, immigration, public transit, and virtually every other aspect of daily life independently. Let me tell you, the feeling that you get when you can move to a new place, learn the language, and really start nailing the daily life is like nothing you have ever felt before. Anywhere I travel now, I can figure out the restaurants, transit, passable phrases, and make new friends. You cannot put a price on how valuable that confidence is to go somewhere completely new, and make it really, really feel like home.

Speaking of home, I am incredibly grateful to Myotwin GmbH along with my supervisor Dr. -Ing. Jan Pietras for making me feel welcome in Göttingen. Throughout my internship I was able to improve my skills in CAD, 3D printing, and electronics, whilst also learning new skills with CNC and data processing. It was incredible to be able to work so closely with the leadership team of a cutting edge startup here. To see the decision making process, and watch how my work really helped to shape the direction of the development of a novel cardiac screening platform.

I think the highlight of the summer was the Heidelberg conference. There I got to meet over a hundred other RISE interns and present part of my work as a poster. Whether it was meeting people at dinner, touring the castle, or playing catan in German at 2 am, every new memory felt better than the last. Here's to next summer and new memories.

"I agree that my report and accompanying pictures may be used by the DAAD in printed materials, presentations, and on websites in order to inform funding organizations, sponsors, and students about the RISE program."