



CHUST – Chemical U.S. Travels



Travel Story 2016

Name: Hanna Tano

Year and line of study at KTH: 5th year, Medical Biotechnology

Which university did you visit? Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.

Time frame: 10 weeks

Visa type: J1

Insurance: HTH Insurance. Brown University required a specific type of insurance.

Scholarship: CHUST scholarship and KTH Allmänna resestipendium

The project consisted of optimization of short fragment DNA extraction with paramagnetic beads in a microfluidic chip. The main subject area was microfluidics. I was introduced to the supervisor during the first week, which I had contact with on daily basis during the first 3-4 weeks of the project. Later on, supervision approximately once a week was sufficient for proceeding with the project. My prior knowledge was sufficient for the internship and I was free to make many choices on my own and was given a lot of responsibility. The professor and supervisor were stressing that it's important that the CHUST students learn new things and have fun during the internship. The project was quite simple in terms of lab bench techniques. However, the professor and supervisor were open to show and teach how to use instruments and methods that weren't necessary for the project, but available in the lab.

The professor was very nice. He had many recommendations for sightseeing and was very satisfied with previous students from KTH. He stopped by the lab a few times a week, but was more focused on other projects rather than the one I was working on. The lab consisted of approximately 10 people (excluding the CHUST students). Everyone in the group was very kind and generous, either with help in the lab, or with invitations for activities after the lab. There was only one lab meeting in the lab group during the 10 weeks I was working. I spent approximately 6 hours per day in lab.

Providence is a very nice town. It's quite small, but there is still some stuff to do and the location is good if you want to do some sightseeing. There is a lot of great restaurants in Providence and the public transportation is good compared to many other places in the US. If you go by bus, you can visit Pawtucket (where they have some nice breweries – e.g. Crooked Current, and McCoy stadium – where you can watch baseball), Narragansett (where you can find a very nice beach), and Newport, to mention a few places. If you take the train from the train station you can go all the way to Boston. While in Boston, I would highly recommend going for whale watch. Tickets can be bought from Boston Harbour Cruises, and it is definitely worth the money spent. I would also recommend a trip to Portland in Maine. Together with the two other KTH students in Providence this year, we rented a car from Enterprise for one weekend and drove up north. Instead of driving the whole way on the interstate road, we drove on scenic byway 1. The trip took us a longer time, but the nature we saw on the way was stunning. A trip to Cape Cod is also highly recommended. Provincetown have plenty of nice

galleries. I was staying in New York for 10 days before going home to Sweden, and I also had time to visit the Niagara Falls (9 hours by bus from New York).

During the internship I shared a flat with another CHUST student. The rent for the apartment was 1500 dollar per month. Our sublessor didn't include nor mention the costs for the utilities when we signed the contract. It is apparently quite common that utilities are not included in the rent. The costs for our utilities showed to be rather expensive, so make sure to have clearly stated in the written agreement what exactly is included in the rent. The stay in Providence were covered by both scholarship and private funds. It is possible to get away quite cheap in Providence if you want to. The costs for the apartment was the biggest expense.

Also, if you want to be covered by an insurance during the whole trip, make sure to check with your insurance company at home how long you are covered abroad, and extend the insurance before the insurance ends. I forgot to do this and was without insurance during my last 9 days in the US.