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***Travel Story 2016***

**Name:**

Anton Glenngård

**Year and line of study at KTH:**

Chemical Engineering for Energy and Environment, 4<sup>th</sup> year of studies

**Which university did you visit? (Name, city, state):**

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Time frame: June 6<sup>th</sup> - August 9<sup>th</sup>

Visa type: J-1

Insurance: Gouda – Leva utomlands

Scholarship: Paid by LSU 40 dollars/week

**Project description**

Can you describe the project you were working on? What subject area did it cover? How did the contact with the Professor/supervisor work? How long was an average day in the lab?

My project was in the field of chemical engineering – catalysis to be more specific. The project itself aimed to create a solid superacid catalyst for the direct catalytic oligomerization of CH<sub>4</sub> to hydrocarbons and H<sub>2</sub>. I came at the end of the project, so I mostly did analysis, sample preparation and other small things like assembling a glove box or read up about the area at hand and summarized my work in a final report.

Mr Spivey is a very busy man during the summer and travels a great deal; I did only meet him a few times during the whole summer. This was a shame because he was a very happy and encouraging man who took interest in what we did. My working hours varied a lot but no more than 8 hours. When I was done with my runs for the day I could usually leave, my supervisor didn't mind at all.

What new things have you learned during the project? Was your prior knowledge sufficient for you to handle the tasks presented to you? How much responsibility were you given?

I learned a great deal about catalysis and in case you didn't know what a PhD does, or how they do it, this is a way to experience it. It will either make you more interested in conducting research or less interested. I expected that I needed to have more background knowledge but in the end I was overqualified, maybe due to the confusion of what I was supposed to do when I actually arrived (this varies greatly depending on who you get as a supervisor). I had full responsibility over my assignments, even though I asked for help multiple times.

## Campus life

Since it was in the middle of the summer, the campus was kind of deserted. There were not that many people moving around and the huge car parks were almost echoing. It was a very sports oriented university, with a lot of big arenas and training complexes including 2 pools and indoor running track. I encourage you to buy the gym card for the summer; it will include access to the pools as well as a gym and their courts for basketball, badminton and more. So, most of my "campus life" was training due to the lack of people. There is a centre for international students, I did not find this until a couple of weeks in for some reason but they had trips to the city and events. We did for example have a barbeque on 4<sup>th</sup> of July and went into the city in the evening together to watch the fireworks. If you are looking for trips together with locals or other international students you should be really quick to check out UREC's webpage, they have trips but the early bird gets the worm... Otherwise if you want to go anywhere on your own, such as a swamp national park or the beach, a car would be the best way to travel, so try to get American friends! Traveling to New Orleans is possible by bus, but the transit system is kind of bad so it is best to stay 1 or 2 nights in the city if you decide to go.

**How much did it cost living in your city? How did you finance the stay in the U.S? Scholarship or private funds? If you received any scholarship, did you need to send any documents to the university in order to receive the funds?**

The prices were quite close to back home with what I can remember the exception of vegetables which were selectively cheaper. I did receive pay from my university, the rest I paid from my own funds. I did almost break even in the end making it a fairly "cheap" CHUST visit.

**How did you find housing during your stay at the university and how much did it cost? How satisfied were you with the housing situation?**

I found housing through the university, called ResLife. It is very expensive but it's safe and located on campus making it less tedious going to the lab (trust me - you want to live close by). I lived in the WCA complex, with a 3 minute walk to the closest pool and about 10 minutes to the lab.

## Application

Were there any problems that did arise during your stay that you think future students need to know about? In such case, which problems did you encounter?

I had some issues receiving the papers I needed from my university which were needed to visit the embassy in Stockholm. Since I received my papers really close to my departure and I believe you should really push the person in charge to get them quick just in case and not end up sweating buckets like i did. There was also a paper sent to me which needed to be filled in concerning insurance – don't forget to get it signed.

What documents did you need to send to the university and what did you need to bring to the embassy in order to get your visa approved?

I was sent a document to fill in and sign through e-mail from the university which they needed to send the papers I needed for my VISA. The documents needed for the VISA are very clearly listed on the embassy's web page.

**May we publish your travel story on the official CHUST webpage ([kongligkemi.se/chust](http://kongligkemi.se/chust)) so that future exchange students can be helped by the information?**

Of course...!

**Thank you for taking the time to fill out this form and share your story!**  
**Name the document according to: “University – Your Name” and send it as a PDF to**  
[\*\*chust@k.kth.se\*\*](mailto:chust@k.kth.se)

Best regards,  
CHUST committee 2015/ 2016