



## CHUST – Chemical U.S. Travels



### Travel Story 2017

**Name:** Philip Andersson

**Year and line of study at KTH:** 5<sup>th</sup> year, Medical Biotechnology.

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

University: University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

Time frame: June 6<sup>th</sup> – August 8<sup>th</sup>

Visa type: J1 – Exchange visitor

Insurance: ISP Trailblazer (UF insurance)

Scholarship: CHUST scholar ship from KTH School of biotechnology

**Please write about your travel, internship and time in the U.S. by answering the questions below as detailed as possible, in 1-2 pages. You may answer in Swedish or English.**

#### Project description

*Can you describe the project you were working on?* I was working with protein purification, trying to purify proteins related to the LuxR & LuxI family. The main work was trying to optimize protein purification methods. The primary thing I was tasked to do involved the French Press, IMAC purification, Western Blot, culture cultivation.

*What subject area did it cover?* Microbiology and Proteomics

*How did the contact with the Professor/supervisor work?* I had a bit of contact with Prof. Gonzalez in the beginning, as he helped us CHUST students with all the administrative stuff. However, after that both he and Prof. Lorca, were absent for most of the time. They would only occasionally come by the lab. The lab were run by the different post-doc and PhD students.

*How long was an average day in the lab?* The length workdays varied greatly. The post-doc that I worked with was new to the lab, and so the first weeks both of us had to learn the lab. This meant that I was at the lab from around 9AM-8PM every day. However, after a few weeks when I got more used to everything the days in the lab got shorter, and I was in the lab between 9AM-4PM.

*What new things have you learned during the project?* I have learn a lot, especially about protein purification. After about 3 weeks I basically did the whole process, from bacteria to protein, on my own. This gave me a great deal of lab experience.

*Was your prior knowledge sufficient for you to handle the tasks presented to you?* I had sufficient theoretical knowledge, though my practical lab knowledge was lacking. However, this something that I learn while I was there.

*How much responsibility were you given?* I had very little responsibility early on, but after a few weeks I did more or less all experiments on my own. The post-doc that I worked with did all theoretical work, and I did all practical work.

### Campus life

*What was life like at the university you visited? Campus life, nightlife and potential trips?* Gainesville is mainly a student city, and it was therefore quite empty during the summer. There are a lot of good restaurants in the area, recommended are *Sonny's*, *The Top*, and *Piano Bar*.

I, and the other CHUST students, together with some of the post-docs at the lab did go on a few trips, mainly on the weekends. We went to Clearwater beach, Blue Springs, Universal Studios Orlando, and St Augustin. Universal studios is highly recommended, it's a very nice experience if you haven't been there before, albeit quite expensive.

*How much did it cost living in your city?* I paid around 850\$ for 2 months of housing. Cost of living is similar to Sweden, perhaps a bit cheaper.

*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?* I got a scholarship from the School of Biotechnology, via CHUST. My other funding was via personal funds.

*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?* As mentioned previously, I paid around 850\$ for 2 months of housing. I stayed at a place called University Club apartments, which is the place where basically all of the previous UF CHUST students have stayed. It's a decent place, you share a quite large villa with 4 other students, each with their own room and bathroom. However, one important thing to be aware of is that there have been people on several occasions that have been forced to pay an extra cleaning fee months after moving out. I was one of them. In late October I got an email telling me I had to pay 120\$ extra cleaning fee. I called them, and they told me I had left stuff and cleaned poorly. This was not the case, however I had little choice but to pay.

I would suggest looking for housing elsewhere, there are a lot of student housing options in the town.

### 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?* The application is quite straightforward, quite a lot of steps, but it's easy enough to follow.

*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?* Everything which is required is very clearly stated by both UF and the US embassy. UF will provide you with all the necessary papers for you to fill in. Nevertheless, here is (hopefully) a complete list of things that was required:

**US Embassy**

- DS2019
- Personbevis Alla relationer (Skatteverket)
- Embassy appointment confirmation letter
- DS160
- SEVIS confirmation

**University of Florida**

- Insurance confirmation letter
- Letter of invitation
- Passport copy
- CV
- Verification of funding
- UFID request form
- DS2019 template
- Grade transcripts
- Paid processing fee

*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? Yes.*