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2013, Chemical-Biological Engineering Internship at Max-Delbrück Center for Molecular Medicine Berlin, Germany

Between learning an immense amount of molecular biology and experiencing a culture I had only previously experienced through textbooks, I couldn’t help but love every minute of the summer.

The project:
I studied the role of small RNAs in gene regulation using planaria as a model organism. With the ability to regenerate an entire worm from a small piece of tissue, planaria provide insight into cell development. Such understanding can be used in combating human diseases like Touretts’s syndrome and even cancer.

The host:
My host lab (PI Nikolaus Rajewsky) uses computational and experimental methods to understand gene regulation. The more than 20 researchers from around Europe have varying backgrounds in physics, math, and biology. With their enthusiasm and excitement I couldn’t help but learn tons and enjoy every minute.

Life in the city:
With 700 years of history, today’s post-reunification Berlin is only two decades old and full of dichotomies. I never tired of things to see and do. Plus, the hospitable Germans make you feel right at home.

What next?
A summer surrounded by excited researchers has reinstilled my desire to pursue an MD. Additionally, after seeing the enthusiasm of German scientists sharing research with the public through an annual open-house event, I am inspired to organize a similar event for Boston/Cambridge. My experience was nothing less than fantastic so I have every intention of returning to Germany and traveling elsewhere to experience more.