

## **Michael Pui, Michigan State University**

As an American student in the 2019 Science and Engineering program, I had an outstanding experience. To begin with, this is my first time coming to Europe, so experiencing the German culture was an exciting three months of my life. I did experience the downside of the culture shock for a few days, but I learn to adapt and enjoy the new culture. The city of Hannover is bigger and hosts many public activities such as carnivals, bars, and music concerts. Compare to where I live back in America, this was fun times because there were a lot more activities, especially carnivals and festivals, in Hannover than my hometown. The cuisine culture was very interesting, especially the drinking part. I can legally carry around beers and drink them in some public areas, something that I cannot do in America. I also enjoyed consuming unique variations of German food such as the schnitzel and variations of currywursts. The cars, as I expected, were mostly hatchback cars. I would describe it as imaging most cars in America as hatchbacks. I would also see a lot people more well-dressed than what I wear which embarrassed me a little bit. However, the best experience, in my opinion, was how convenient it is to travel around Europe due to excellent long-distance transportation services. I traveled to some nearby countries as much as I can, so not only do I get to travel in Germany, but I also traveled to other European countries. As for my work experience in Hannover, it was also an interesting moment experiencing German work culture. From where I worked in the university, my co-workers and I would greet each other by shaking each other's hands. In America, we only shake hands when we meet new people for the first time, so this was a unique experience to adapt with. Small talks, as I was told before, don't happen very much, but my colleagues are nice when a conversation is going on and some will try to start a small talk to me. Another work experience is the coffee breaks where we go on a break in the afternoon by drinking coffee or tea while chatting to each other. I normally associate coffee for morning drinks to wake up for the day, but now, I enjoy drinking coffee in the afternoon. Overall, I had a great time being in the program, and thus, I plan to come back to Europe not as a student in an exchange program but as a tourist traveling and enjoying my time in the continent.