Kennedi Briggs

I have had an amazing time during my stay here in Karlsruhe. During my time here, I not only got to explore my academic interests (Industrial energy production), I also got to explore Germany and Europe as a whole. In addition to Karlsruhe, our student ambassadors, Frederick and Marie also organized trips to Munich and Berlin, and on my free time, I was able to travel to Switzerland, France and even Morocco. All in all, this has been a deeply influential experience in both a personal and professional sense.

I arrived here a week before the start date of the internship. During this time, students who visited UNC-Charlotte from KIT in previous years met with us and showed us around the city. They showed us good places to hang out around campus, eat, and introduced us to other students. We also met other students from UNC Charlotte that were in Karlsruhe for a different exchange program. At the end of this first week, the German students who visited UNC-Charlotte in the past and the UNC-Charlotte students that were visiting Germany decided to create a group chat where we shared information about events happening around the city. This chat was also a huge help because we were able to ask questions about banking and transportation to visiting students who were there longer than us.

My internship was very interesting at perfectly aligned with my goals. The first week I spent learning more about the theory behind my project and choosing an application to use for the duration (MATLAB or Python). There were some issues getting me a license for MATLAB, so I ended up using Python which I was less familiar with. I am glad this happened because I ended up learning so much about Python beyond what I've learned in some of my courses. There were a few moments that I got really frustrated, but my mentor/supervisors were always there to support me and help me when needed and provide useful feedback. My project was something that would be used once I left to facilitate research on energy grids. So, it was great knowing that the work I was doing was important. Ultimately, I was able to finish, and all was right with the world.

I appreciate the organized trips to both Munich and Berlin. While in Munich we visited the BMW museum, Palace of Nymphenburg, and ate traditional German food at a Bavarian restaurant and Beer Garden. On this trip, we learned about Bavarian culture

and saw some beautiful architecture. The Nymphenburg palace was one of the most beautiful places I've seen and is now one of my favorite places to visit. While in Berlin we went to a museum that focused on the communist side of Berlin after the split. We also went to the German parliament building where we learned about the breakdown of the German government.

On my free time, I was able to travel to Morocco where I visited a few cities and did some shopping. Flights to Morocco were very cheap from Karlsruhe on the airline Ryanair. Later on, I spent a weekend in Geneva, and went to a beach that was 40 min away in France.

In addition to the UNC-Charlotte exchange students, I also befriended a group of exchange students from all over the world. In Karlsruhe there is an exchange student network that hosts events every week so that exchange students can meet one another. Every Tuesday, they choose a restaurant, and a bunch of students gather to eat and mingle. Also, on Wednesday, they have a "language café" where you meet with other students and practice any language. I am trying to learn German, so I went every week to practice speaking and listening. They also host other events like hikes, trips to lakes, and views of the city. I spent most of my time with students that I met from the ESN, and we meet up all the time to hang out and play boardgames, which is not something I thought I would be interested in.

Ultimately, Karlsruhe Is an amazing city and, in the summer, there are always events fun for all interests. This summer we have been to the circus, several summer festivals, and a carnival. After my summer here, I am now considering seeking employment in Germany.