DAAD-RISE  
A breath of fresh air from Philadelphia  
Neuroscientific research internship at the RUB

The American Bachelor student Asher Hollenbeak has completed a research internship at Ruhr University Bochum. PhD student Richard Görler served as his mentor – a collaboration both students benefitted from.

The American student Asher Hollenbeak decided to spend summer 2017 not at his home university in Pennsylvania but as a DAAD-RISE intern in Germany. He conducted a research internship at Ruhr University Bochum and assisted the doctoral student Richard Görler with his neuroscientific PhD project. Asher is doing a Bachelor’s degree in Microbiology at Pennsylvania-State University. The RISE-programme of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) offers summer research internships in German universities for North American, British and Irish undergraduate students. For Asher his time in Germany was all the more exciting because it was his first visit outside the United States.

"I was particularly impressed by how self-dependent the students over here work and how much they support each other with their projects. This team spirit is something I would like to take back with me", Asher tells us. His impression was confirmed outside the university – he experienced the Germans as open-minded, friendly and helpful. Another thing he loves about Germany is the architecture: "We’ve just returned from a trip to Heidelberg. It’s an amazing town with so much history!"

His mentor Richard Görler investigates how episodic memory influences the learning of semantic representations. Together they worked on the algorithmic model Richard is using in his research. Richard particularly appreciates Asher’s interdisciplinary input: "When you’ve spent so much time and work on a project such as a PhD project, you really welcome someone approaching it from a new angle and bringing a breath of fresh air into it." It is Richard’s second time as a DAAD-RISE-mentor and he is hoping to participate in the programme again next year.

Funding:  
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Further Information:
www.daad.de/rise/en/rise-germany/
www.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/sfb874/integrated_research_training_group/irtg.html

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