

Visiting China was a very enlightening experience because I could see what it was like to live in the country rather than how the news and media portray it. Before coming to China, I thought it would be a very strict country with lots of complex laws and not much individual freedom. I felt that the Chinese citizens would hate their government, and I didn't even bring my laptop because I read online it was unsafe to bring it and access the wifi. China was almost the exact opposite of my expectations. Not only is it easily the most beautiful country I've visited, but it was also the friendliest and most welcoming country. The people always loved talking to me and showing me their culture and how much they love their country. Traveling was easy and simple even though China is a huge country. We were able to take tours of tea houses, hospitals, factories, and other universities, but my favorite part was learning about and doing scientific research in China.

While in China, I was able to further my career as a research scientist by networking, listening to research talks, and of course, working at the Shandong University of Science and Technology. Before starting work, I had no idea what to expect, and I became nervous after seeing the work culture in Japan was poor. Work culture in China ended up being a pleasant surprise. I worked in Dr. Yuan Chen's lab, and it was always very welcoming. It felt like I could talk to Dr. Chen or any of his students at any time. Even though some did not speak English, they would not let that stop them from helping me in any way possible. The work environment was very laid back, and everyone took naps halfway through the day.

When I got to Shandong, I had no prior knowledge on my research topic which was creating carbon-coated silicon oxide anodes for lithium-ion batteries. The first week

my research mentor gave me over 10 research papers to read, and some videos to watch. I made sure to read every paper and take notes. I had to read even more because I didn't know anything about lithium-ion batteries and how they work, so after reading about anodes, I read about the basics of how lithium-ion batteries work. Despite how slow I was at finishing the articles, my research mentors were very patient and understanding, and I was always comfortable with the amount of work I was given. Overall I loved China, and I felt this program has helped prepare me for my career as a research scientist. Now I know I can even work internationally as a scientist.