

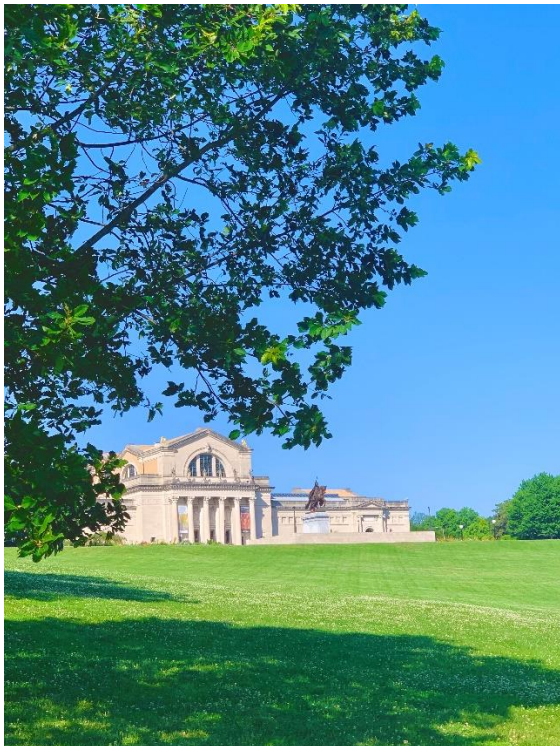
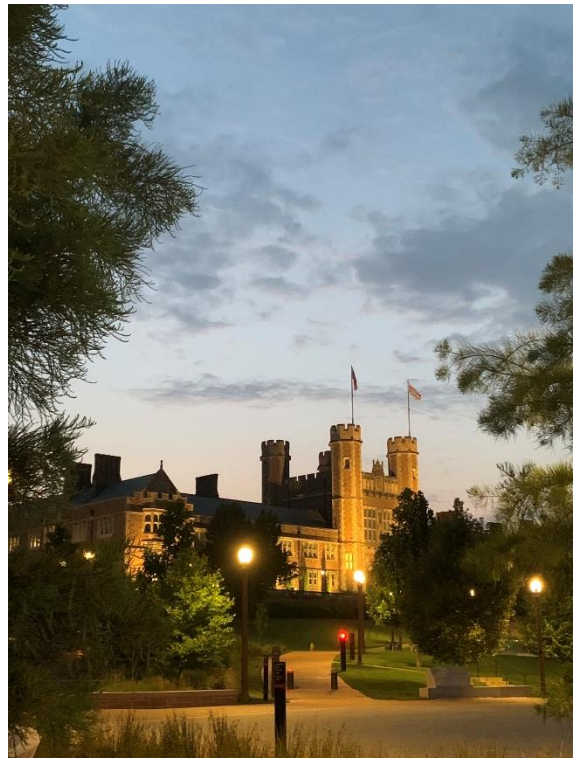
McKelvey International Students Research Internship Program at Washington University in St. Louis Experience Report



My name is Gun Yi Park, from the Department of Chemical Engineering. I am going to share some experiences when I went to the summer research internship in summer 2023, for two months. I would say, it changed my whole perspective of viewing how the research works in the United States, along with my future choices of choosing the graduate programs.

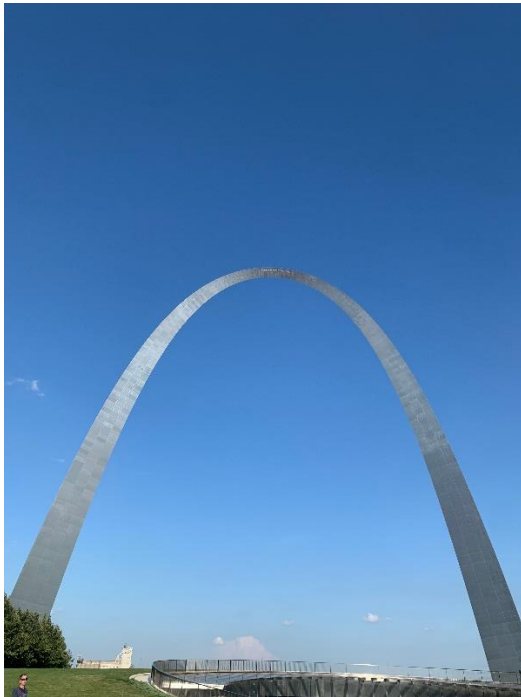
Life in St. Louis

You might think that St. Louis is not the best city in US, it might be dangerous as you have to be careful every time you go outside. That was me. Since it was my first time going to US and what I found in the internet about the city St. Louis (it was not familiar to me) was scaring me. But after two months in there, it is quite different. The city was peaceful, not too much people, not too much noises since it is not a tourism city, which was perfect for me since I do not really like crowded places. In addition, especially the places near the school were beautiful, I really loved to walk the campus and the park place in the afternoon or in the morning. If we don't go to some places where people said it's quite dangerous (such as downtown or east St. Louis) it is really a beautiful and calm city.



As other US cities also are, but it is quite hard to move around without cars in there. The hardest part was going on the grocery stores, we have to take metros going to there and bringing those stuffs back to the dormitory was not an easy thing. But it was a great experience too. At least we can still reach to those stores with metros. And the prices for foods and stuffs was not that expensive as coast area of US like California or New York city. It is definitely affordable and stable.

I highly recommend to go around some places. McKelvey school will have several activities of going out of the schools such as golf, watching baseball games, etc. It is your choice to participate or not but I highly recommend to participate. You can understand why St. Louis is an adorable city there, and of course, you can more enjoy your intern life in US! Adding more, I also recommend you to go out with your friends (maybe friends that go to the internship together from NTU, or your lab mates etc.) to other places that school does not take you to. We also visit a lot of places that was not included in the activities by ourselves, and it was so fun which feels like exploring St. Louis by yourself. Of course, you have to be careful of going out without knowing directions but it would be fun too!



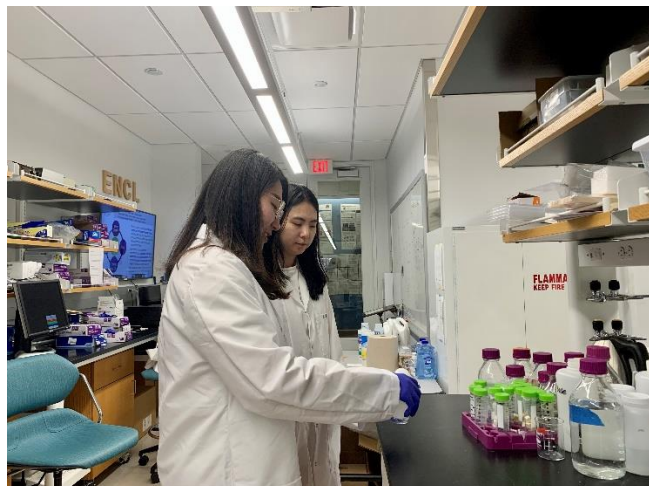
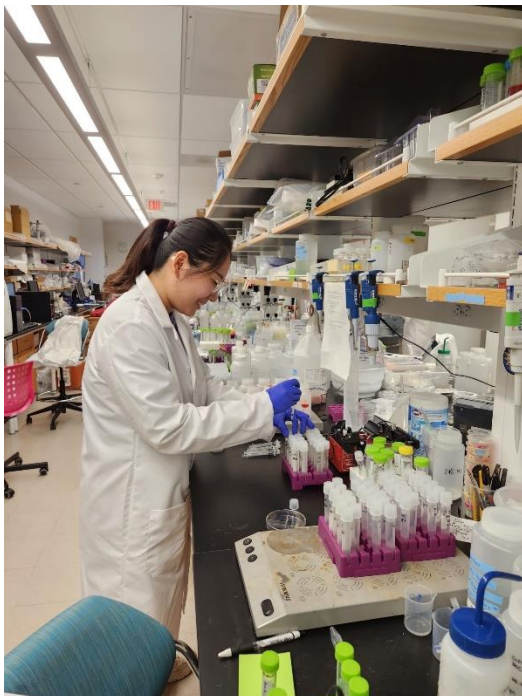
St. Louis has lots of delicious food places too, mostly those are either American or Mexican. School activities will bring you to some good places (including meals) but I also recommend you to go and buy (or cook) by yourself! For me, I went out with my lab members to Ribs place and it was so good. St. Louis is really famous with Ribs; you have to try it out!

My friends from NTU, their professors were chill enough, so they went to several trips to other states during the internship (there will be some holidays such as Independence Day etc.) My lab was really strict that sometimes I had to work until 9 pm or even weekends, so I could not go to trips with other friends but it is your choice! It might be a good experience if you go out too (little bit expensive though including flight tickets, renting cars etc.)

Life in the lab

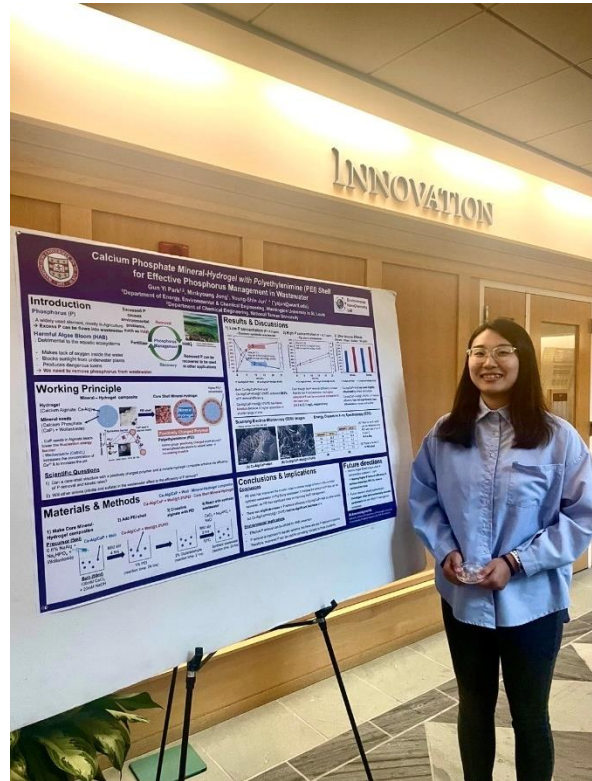
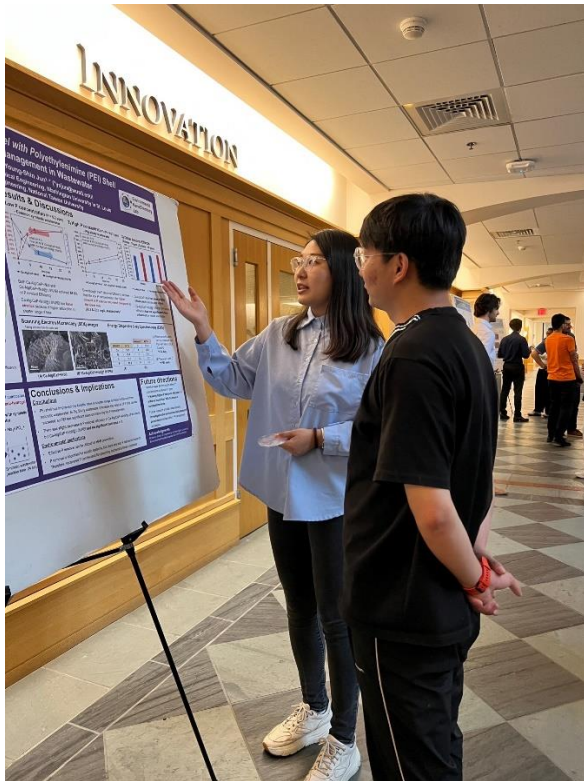
For me, I am majoring in Chemical Engineering, and my lab in WashU was about Environmental Engineering. Every lab might be different, some labs use coding, some labs have to be there (like me) to do your works. Some professors might be strict, some professors might be chill. As I mentioned before, my lab was very strict. I had my meeting every week and I had to do two times of Group meeting with all other PhD students, and one poster presentation.

It was not easy to do so, but overall, because of that, I learned a lot during those short period in US. It is like I experienced “pre-graduate student life” during two months, because my lab members and professor treated me not as “just an undergraduate student who came here with nothing” but they treated me as one of their lab members.



Especially when I prepared for my poster presentation, it was the hardest time since I had to prepare with my Group meeting at the same time but my experiment results were not really good. Poster presentation is optional, you are not obligated to do it. However, having an opportunity of sharing your works during the summer with others and listening to other people’s works was an amazing experience. Audience will ask you some questions that might

be helpful to develop your works in the future. I know it is optional, and it might be stressful and I highly recommend you to participate.



Finally, from processing visa, buying flight tickets, getting ready to go to the US right after semester ends, doing lab work, participating in several presentations, etc., everything is not going to be an easy thing, especially when you are doing this for the first time like I did. However, since you got this chance and already decided to go there, it would be a great opportunity, and it could give you further decision when you want to decide your next step after graduation.

Enjoy your internship!