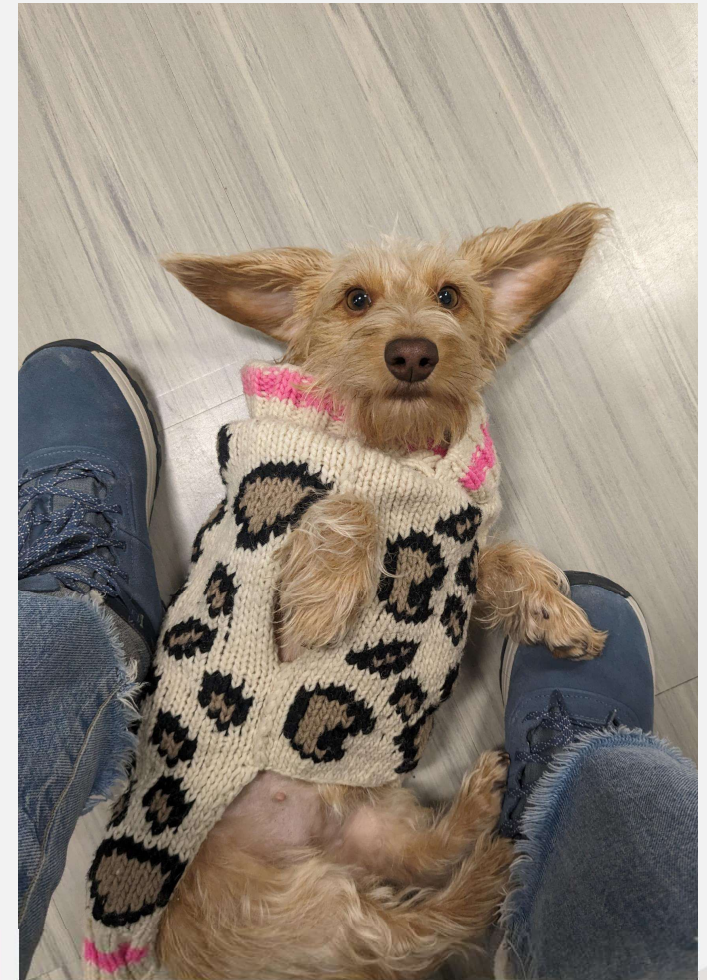


Background: My Exchange Program

- 6th semester Food Science and Technology student (Bachelor)
- At TCNJ from October 2023 until March 2024
- Research in the chemistry Department at the Laboratory of Dr. Sen
 - analyzing enzymes involved in insect metabolism
 - Goal: Protein extraction and transformation



Arrival and First Impressions



- Arrived late evening at Newark Airport
 - Luckily my new housemates rented a car and picked me up from the airport
 - I felt immediately welcomed by my housemates
- My very first Impressions of New Jersey:
 - It is huge!
 - The campus is beautiful
 - The international house looks small from the outside but is spacious in the inside
 - Deer! There are so many deer around, it's lovely

Overview of the College of New Jersey

- Located in Ewing Township
 - Accommodation approx. 15min foot walk distance
- Full campus life: 41 buildings on 289 acres
- Almost half as many undergraduate students as BHT
- Many resources available to students (see next slides)





Sports:

- Dance Team, free gym, sport clubs, tournaments and games



Entertainment

- Club events, movie nights, observatory



Activity

- Brower Student Centre with Game Area, Outdoors Club



Food

- Campustown, Traditions Restaurant, Eickhoff Hall

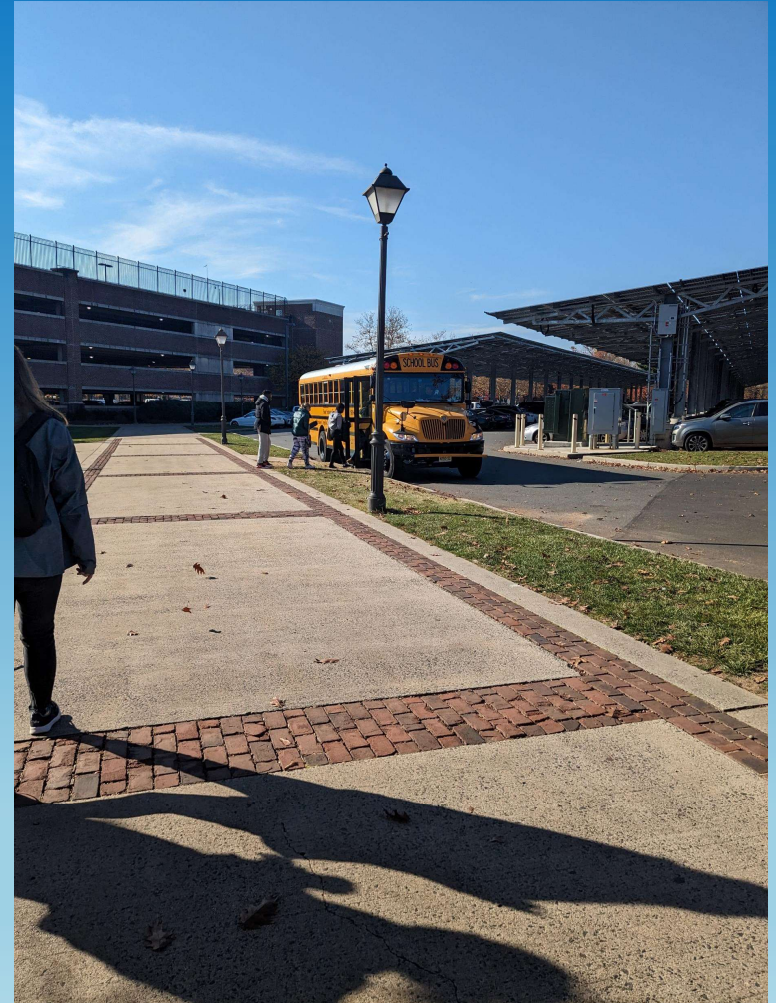
Immersion into the Sen Lab



- Sen's laboratory shared with another professor who does research
 - Both joined by a group of undergraduate students who help out in their free time and gain research experience (always a bonus on CV)
- Lab with attached Write-Up-room
 - 50/50 time in lab/write up room
 - interaction with other lab students
- First two months deep dive into Biochemistry
 - Learned everything from scratch: PCR, Protein Prep, Gel Electrophoresis, Purification
- Next four months more and more understanding
 - Necessary steps for protein extraction
 - Transformation to E.coli for activity measurement
 - Transformation to Yeast cells

Highlights of My Experience

- The *Dancers of New Jersey* Dancing rehearsals
- Multiple trips to NYC
- TCNJ Lions Homecoming game
- Swae Lee concert on campus
- Ice skating trip with TCNJ Outdoors Club



Cultural Exchange and Challenges

- Interactions with American students is very easy, they are very friendly and open minded
- loved the water fill stations everywhere
- facilities and activities offered for students soo much more than in Germany, you can find a Club for anything
- Meal portions and serving size are very big
 - Takeaway possible in every restaurant
 - Tipping culture
- High demand on cars, only a few bike lanes, pedestrian walkways are less used and cared about
 - Almost every single student owns a car
- Generally, less cautious on environment

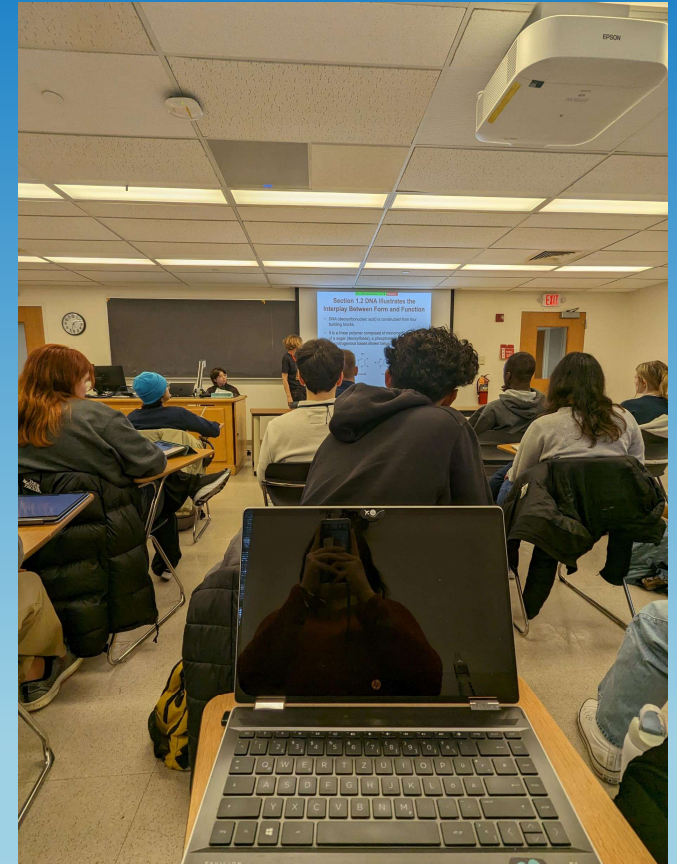
Trips on holidays

- Whenever Dr. Sen was not in lab for a few days and I did not have any work, I was able to take some days off and use for travelling
- Thanksgiving in Montreal
- Winter Break in Boston
- Spring Break in LA



Activities and Social Life

- I usually went to the lab from 9 AM until 5-6 PM, sometimes, I went on the weekends or later in the evening to check growing cells
- I joined the *Dancers of New Jersey*, short DONJ and had rehearsals on Wednesdays and Tuesdays
- For a month, I participated in an indoors Soccer Tournament
- I frequently checked out events from different Students Associations and joined whenever it awakened my interest



Conclusion: Reflections and Takeaways

- Personal growth
- grateful for the possibilities in Germany
 - Free education, health insurance, public transport and more
- Gained a lot of experience in lab and research work
 - No similar option at BHT provided
- Traveling, exploring new places, people and cultures
- Best decision, can only recommend
- Seek discomfort and go abroad!

