

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem – Staff Training 06.06.2017 – 20.06.2017

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Campus of the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment in Rehovot.

Preparation:

After finishing my master's thesis where I already collaborated with Dr. Antonella Di Pizio from Prof. Masha Niv's lab, I was asked if I would like to come and visit the laboratory at the Institute of Biochemistry, Food Science and Nutrition, Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment in Rehovot, Israel to learn more about their scientific methods. Prof. Niv, Prof. Peter Gmeiner (FAU) and I arranged the period and duration of the stay within a few days and we then developed a schedule for the time in the lab.

After all the organizational preparations were clarified, I booked flight (SWISS Airlines) and accommodation (Reisfeld Guesthouse which is directly located on the campus).

Arrival:

My plane took off on 5.06.2017 at 7:05 from Nürnberg Airport with stop in Zürich to Tel Aviv-Ben Gurion Airport, where I landed at 14:35 local time. From there I took the train via Tel-Aviv to Rehovot Train Station. After a five minute walk from the train station to the faculty, I finally arrived at my apartment. Later that day two of Masha Niv's students picked me up for dinner and a first short tour through Rehovot.

Training:

My first training day started on 6.06.2017 at 9:30 with a meeting at Prof. Niv's laboratory where I was introduced to the other people in the working group. After that we went to the Weizmann Institute of Science, which is located directly on the opposite side of the faculty, to listen to a lecture of Prof. Brian Shoichet from the UCSF. Later that day we had a picnic on the beautiful campus where I got to know my colleagues a little better. Then we went back to the lab and I was shown my workplace for the next couple of weeks.



Working Group of Prof. Masha Niv June 2017: f.l.t.r. Dr. Antonella Di Pizio, Yaron Ben Shoshan-Galeczki. Prof. Masha Niv, Dr. Einav Malach, Lior Peri, Ido Nissim, Nathalie Ben Abu, Lukas Waterloo (FAU) and Ava Xue.

The next day, my lab colleagues and I went to the 14th Annual Meeting of The Medicinal Chemistry Section - Israel Chemical Society which took place at the Weizmann Institute of Science where I was allowed to present a poster with the content of my master's thesis. There we had the opportunity to listen to lectures from both academia and industry by Israeli as well as international scientist.

On the third day, we started with our joint work where Dr. Di Pizio introduced me into bioinformatics, the main focus of the lab. We were talking about the development of the 3D model which was used as the starting point for my work in Germany and I received a few insights how

she virtually built it, using computational chemistry techniques. I then investigated a few days on my own gaining some experience with the programs she uses.

On 14.06. I had the opportunity to present the results of my master's thesis to Prof. Niv's working group after which we talked about further goals of this collaboration.



Institute of Biochemistry, Food Science and Nutrition.

For the rest of the stay, Dr. Di Pizio and I were working together on our project and I gained more knowledge in computational chemistry techniques.

On the weekends, I was able to visit Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem. Travelling around there is easy, though inconvenient, as the public transportation system such as busses and trains do not operate from Friday afternoon until Saturday night because of Shabbat. I had to get to the cities by sherut, a large taxi which follows the standard bus routes mostly operated by Arabs. As there is no direct connection from Rehovot to Jerusalem via sherut, I had to go to Tel-Aviv first and from there head to Jerusalem.



Erasmus+



View over Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives.

Conclusion:

Taking part in this program was an enrichment in a scientific as well as in a cultural way. I learned a lot about the methods used in the laboratory, which could help me to improve my own work at the FAU. In this exchange I was able to strengthen the collaboration between our two working groups, to establish contacts abroad and meet a lot of interesting new people. Furthermore, I got an insight into the Israeli/Jewish culture. Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv are breathtaking cities which offer a variety of historical and religious significant places one definitely should visit. I highly recommend everyone who has the opportunity to visit this beautiful country.