Testimonials for REU-CAAR Summer 2022

Ceasar Dai (Mentored by Auguste Gezalyan and David Mount)

I feel incredibly fortunate for the opportunity to attend REU-CAAR2022! Coming from a small liberal arts college, the program was a broadening experience. I worked with peers and mentors from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds, learned the research processes, and experienced the graduate school lifestyle. Most importantly, I made meaningful connections, which helped me solidify my interest in pursuing a graduate degree.

The mentorship for my group was simply awesome. Our mentor Auguste is very competent in his area of study, and we genuinely feel that he wants us to make the most out of this REU program. During the program, he showed us that research could be a fun and self-fulfilling process. Moreover, working alongside motivated peers and (famous!) professors is an exhilarating experience. I was not only able to learn about various fields of research in computer science from other mentors and students but also experienced the excitement they have for their field firsthand.

Last but not least, I want to shout out to our program coordinator, professor Gasarch! Whether a Monday morning or a Thursday night, he energizes the room with the tremendous energy he brings. This program would not be so awesome without him!

With all being said, the structure and organization of the REU are perfect, and I believe this is the best program for students looking to do computer science research that brings theory to life.

Nathan Hurtig (Mentored by William Gasarch)

Spending the summer at REU-CAAR was a valuable experience for me. I was given the independence to work on a real research problem, but my mentor (Dr. Gasarch) was readily available for guidance and made sure I had the tools I needed to succeed. The program was very well-organized; we had multiple activities a week that taught us more about research/grad school and exposed us to topics in computer science and math outside of our research areas. Over the summer, I've met and presented my work to many grad students and professors and I'm now writing a paper over it. It's a great experience and I highly recommend applying and attending.

Yang Hong (Mentored by John Dickerson)

The experience of REU CAAR is quite beneficial for me. I have participated in some research before, yet this is the first time for me to cooperate

with several team members. It is nice that I can have a deeper understanding of group cooperation. Though auction design as a topic was not familiar to me before, I have constructed a solid ground by reading several papers on such a topic. Our program includes both mathematical and computer science components. Meanwhile, our work has both theoretical and practical directions. That is nice as I am interested in all of these, and our group members can divide the work so that we all get the parts we are more good at. Other than our program, the routine lunch topics and Wednesday talks are also quite interesting events. Thanks to Professor Gasarch and all the mentors for holding such an REU program, and I would recommend it to anyone interested in computer science or mathematics (or muffins).

Abdulaziz Memesh (Mentored by John Dickerson)

I'm very thankful for having the opportunity to participate in REU CAAR. Given that it was my first research experience, I learned some invaluable lessons about the process of research and what doing research is like. No one told me what to do and when to do it, leaving me in a challenging situation where I wasn't sure where I was going or if anything I was doing would lead anywhere. However, this experience taught me to take responsibility and be proactive. Another plus about this program is that it's run by Bill Gasarch, a funny guy with infinite math shirts. He and his assistant Auguste Gezalyan created a very friendly environment, where I don't think of the other students as colleagues but as a family.