

Tetimonials for REU CAAR 2016

Pascal Sturfels

REUCAAR significantly progressed my knowledge in the design and analysis of algorithms. Along with three undergraduates and my mentor, Samir Khuller, I studied the field of scheduling algorithms, a subset of optimization algorithms; Although I had never done research in theoretical computer science, or taken classes related to scheduling/optimization, I learned a great deal both about the specific subject, and more generally about how to read and analyze publications in that subject, and use them for one's own research. By the end of the summer, my group and I had developed new results in scheduling theory, and were discussing with Samir where to submit them.

Outside of academics, the REUCAAR program was also a great deal of fun. I lived with likeminded undergraduates interested in research, went to trips to DC on the weekends, and thoroughly enjoyed the game nights that the REU program coordinators hosted. For any undergraduates reading, I encourage you to apply to this program! It was a great experience, both academically and socially.

Prayaag Venkat

Prior to CAAR REU, I had some interest in attending graduate school. After the REU, I am now very confident that I would like to go to graduate school to study subjects similar to what I worked on over the summer. There were several aspects of the program that I liked in particular. First, I felt that the research process for my team and I was very collaborative; we spent a lot of time working with each other and also had frequent chances to speak with our advisor and some graduate students.

Second, I was genuinely interested in the project that I got to work on. As the summer passed, the specific problem we were working on evolved and we ended up giving improved algorithms for problems that we did not even intend to work on in the beginning. Further, by the end of the summer, we had made enough progress that we were able to plan to write up our results and submit to a conference. During the fall semester, my team and I stayed in touch and continued to collaborate on writing a paper, which we then submitted. I believe that this experience has been overwhelmingly positive for me, and I would highly recommend future students who are interested in potentially attending graduate school to participate in this opportunity.

Nichole McNabb

REUCAAR was my first exposure to computer science research, and certainly a careerchanging experience. In addition to learning technical subject matter in combinatorics and graph theory, the REU taught me fundamental research skills on how to approach new problems, solve them with a team, and present our work at a conference, all in a relaxed and supportive environment with invaluable mentorship (my mentor was Bill Gasarch). The REUCAAR experience motivated me to attend graduate school in computer science, and gave valuable insight into and preparation for graduate research.