



# My internship in AME: an unforgettable journal in my life

Paul-Henry Schoenhagen

Department of Computer Science, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA, USA

Correspondence to: Paul-Henry Schoenhagen. Student, Department of Computer Science, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Massachusetts, USA. Email: phscho33@gmail.com.

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My name is Paul-Henry Schoenhagen, and I will never forget Guangzhou. I am twenty years old and that makes me the youngest of three children. I am studying Computer Science at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), and I'm fairly certain that I'm the first American on both sides of my family. Before interning at AME I had never been to China, let alone Asia. It's difficult trying to find the right words to describe the incredible experience I had. It's difficult because I will never truly capture how much I've been affected by my internship. My time with AME was one of the best experiences of my life and I will never forget the places I went, the people I met, and the things we did together.

I didn't know what to expect when I first arrived, my idea of China was limited to movies I had seen and what research I had done prior to arriving. Truth be told, the first night I felt overwhelmed and out of place. These feelings quickly dissipated the first day of the internship, after meeting everyone I realized that they were just as excited for me to be there as I was. I naturally fit in with the group, not once did I feel like an estranged foreigner. We got lunch together, played badminton together, went shopping together, saw movies together, it was really my coworkers that made my time in Guangzhou so special. Looking back my only regret is not staying longer, but during the short month I spent in Guangzhou I experienced so much. I saw the significance of WeChat in everyday life, and I still use it today to keep in contact with the friends I made. I was able to observe a lung surgery from within the operating room (*Figure 1*), and I quickly learned that China's metro system vastly outclassed the one in the United States. Despite it being crowded almost always the public metro made it extremely easy to travel between districts, also for the first time ever

I able to travel via bullet train. The train took us to and from Changsha, where we visited the theme park Fantawild Dreamland. More importantly, while in Changsha, I was able to attend AME's 8<sup>th</sup> gala dinner. During the Changsha trip I met even more people from different offices, some as close as Hong Kong and others as far as Australia.

Other than learning about China, I learned enough Chinese to feel comfortable ordering dinner from street vendors, and I learned even more about Computer Science. While working on ABER I dealt with both front-end and back-end technology, learning not only how to make a website but also how to make it work. I learned how to make a webpage with HTML, how to style it with CSS, how to make it interactive with JavaScript, and I gained a deeper understanding for SQL databases. Learning how to make a database dynamic with Eclipse so that an average user can make changes to it directly from the website. I was taught better coding practices, such as better techniques for troubleshooting, and when to make data dynamic or static. Furthermore I became more experienced in searching for solutions to the problems I have, and consequently choosing which solution is the best one for implementation.

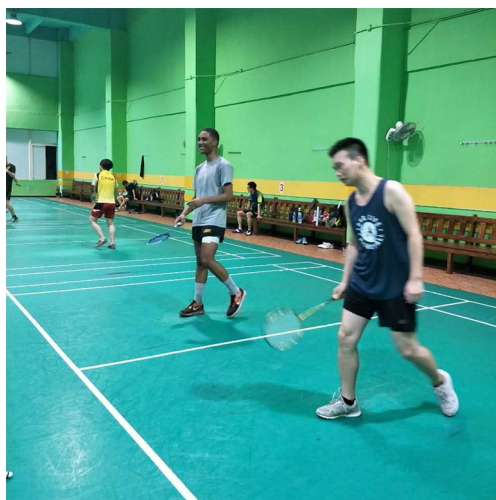
Writing this was difficult not because I hate writing or that the topic is difficult, but because it makes me realize how much I miss Guangzhou. How much I miss my friends, how much I miss the city, and most importantly how much I miss the food (*Figures 2,3*). Instead of wallowing in my sadness, I'll use my trip to motivate myself to learn more Mandarin so I can come back in the near future. From the bottom of my heart, thank you everyone from AME for making my time and experience in Guangzhou unforgettable.



**Figure 1** Observe a lung surgery in First Affiliated Hospital of Guangzhou Medical University.



**Figure 2** Enjoy Cantonese cuisine with AME's friends.



**Figure 3** Play badminton with AME's friends.

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## Footnote

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