My Semester at Howard University by Song-Lak Kang

As a part of the NCAR/Historically Black Colleges and Communities (HBCC) partnership program, I visited Howard University for four months from September to December 2009. My primary purpose for participating in this program was to gain some teaching experience in a university. Initially I had some hesitation about participating in the program. There were several reasons why I hesitated. First, I have a family. The four-month period was not long enough to hassle with moving my family from here to there. That meant that I would stay there alone. However, thanks to the program I was able to come back for the Thanksgiving week. So, the four-month period separated from my family did not feel like such a long time. Second, I was concerned about moving my family from here to there. That meant that I would stay there alone. However, thanks to the program I was able to come back for the Thanksgiving week. So, the four-month period separated from my family did not feel like such a long time. Second, I was concerned about my research being slowed down. At the time, I was working on two papers that I planned to submit within several months. My concern was founded to some degree. Even before going there, I had to spend time looking for a place to live in Washington D.C. Also, after arriving, I had to spend a significant amount of time designing a course, and preparing and giving lectures. But still I could find some time to continue my research although the progress was very slow due to poor network performance at Howard University in addition to the limited time. However, given that the four months away are not counted as part of the original two-year ASP fellowship period, the slowness of my research for the four months away was still a good deal for having teaching experience in a university, I think.

In addition to teaching experience, I personally

(Continued on Page 2)

Fellows Retreat in February

Join us for a half-day NCAR Fellows retreat the afternoon of February 22nd at CG1. We’ll start with lunch at 12:00 in the lobby and then move on to discussions about NCAR, Career, or any other items that are of interest to you. If you have any suggestions for retreat agenda items, please let Paula know (paulad@ucar.edu).

Items can include issues, concerns, Career-development ideas, brainstorming sessions, etc. All postdocs and grad students at NCAR are encouraged to attend.
February Fellows Socials

You will have two opportunities to enjoy the company of your fellow Fellows in February. More details will follow by email.

HAPPY HOUR
Thursday February 11th at 7:00 pm at the Draft House

POKER NIGHT
Thursday February 25th at 7:00 pm at Chuck Bardeen's House

Semester at Howard (continued from page 1)

had some good opportunities to advertise my research. I gave two seminars and participated in one meeting in Washington D.C. that resulted in an ongoing collaboration. As a scientist at an earlier career stage, having the seminars and meetings were good for gaining footholds for future collaborations as well as an advertisement of my research. I also initiated a long-term collaboration with a student at Howard. One concern about this collaboration is that my ASP Fellowship will end this May. My unstable situation after this May could cause some concerns in the collaboration. As a result, I recommend that postdocs pursue this experience early in their fellowship term.

Also, if you plan to participate in this program, you need to arrive before the semester begins. Professors and students don’t know who you are and what you are studying. So, before posting your course, have enough time to make yourself known to them. I regret not doing this. At almost the end of the semester, several students said to me that they should have taken my course. I arrived at Howard University one week after the semester began partially due to the difficulty of finding a living place. There was no time to introduce me and advertise my course. In summary, my comments to other postdocs considering this opportunity are as follows: 1) if you don’t have any teaching experience but have a plan to apply to a faculty position, this program could be an option for getting the experience. 2) if you would like to participate in this program, you should plan to have the four-month experience at an earlier time in your postdoc term. 3) In order to have enough time to introduce you and your research, you should plan to arrive sometime before the semester begins.

If you are interested in spending a semester at a minority serving institution, please contact Maura or Paula, preferably before February 16th.

The Tipline: Advertise Your Research by Communications

Are you doing research that you think would make for a good article in Staff Notes Monthly? Perhaps even the media would be interested, or maybe reporters are already contacting you? UCAR Communications wants to hear from you. Please feel free to contact Rachael Drummond (rachaeld@ucar.edu; ext. 8604) in media relations or Nicole Gordon (ngordon@ucar.edu; ext. 8616) at Staff Notes with story ideas and newsworthy items, significant developments in your research, or assistance with requests from the media.

For more information, please see http://www.ucar.edu/news/services.shtml