

## Life in Michigan

**Name:** Tatsuya Kitabayashi

**Affiliation:** Department of Mechanical Science and Engineering,  
Graduate School of Engineering, Nagoya University

**Participated program:** Long term (Spring to Winter), 2013-2014



**Research theme:** Micro-droplet sorting utilizing an on-chip dielectrophoresis device

**Advisor at Univ. Michigan:** Prof. Katsuo Kurabayashi

**Affiliation:** Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Michigan

To begin with, I want to express my appreciation for the program. My experience at Michigan means a lot to me: not only in doing research, but also in learning the culture, which broadened my outlook.

My research at the University of Michigan involved the simulation and fabrication of the droplet sorting device. I came across many barriers in my research, but I learned how to manage my research and gained a lot of new knowledge through those experiences. I enjoyed discussion with laboratory members and they were always kind in instructing me, so I did not have to worry about what to expect before going to the United States. Upon arriving, I discovered that the communication wall between laboratories is pretty low compared to Japanese laboratories. Discussion happens everywhere over the wall and they share problems and equipments to achieve their goals. I don't see this situation happening as much in Japan and I think we should adopt this practice.

In terms of my life in Michigan, I moved to the North Campus Co-Op after living in Michigan for half a year. The North Campus Co-Op is a kind of dormitory. I met many students from not only the U.S., but also foreign countries. Eating dinner together and sharing housing experiences with those who have different backgrounds are precious experience for me. Additionally, the Co-Op held several parties like a Halloween party, movie shows, and so on. Such events were helpful to understand the culture of the U.S., and I really enjoyed it. In addition, the environment of Ann Arbor is perfect to concentrate on studies. It is very cold in the winter. The temperature sometimes dropped to  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , however it's warm inside the building and the university's buses run around the university frequently, so I didn't have any problems with the cold winter. In summer, Ann Arbor is a really comfortable place because of its dry climate and beautiful nature. I hope to go back to Ann Arbor in the summer someday.

The University of Michigan has many systems to help foreigners learn English. I found a conversation partner and joined a conversation circle. Such programs helped me to study English and make friends. I had a good time talking about daily life, hobbies, going out to eat, and sharing fun things. I have many enjoyable memories.

I also enjoyed traveling. I visited some famous places in the U.S. The trip to New York is one of my favorite experiences. I visited landmarks of New York, for example, the Statue of Liberty, Wall Street, and the Empire State Building. I could feel the atmosphere of the center of the world and the melting pot. I'll never forget them.

In conclusion, I'm thankful for JUACEP program and people who supported me. Everything in Michigan inspired me so much and I will make the most of this experience for my future.



## Findings through JUACEP

**Name: Kazuma Kato**

**Affiliation: Mechanical Science and Engineering, Nagoya University**

**Participated program: Long 2013**

**Research theme: Driving Adaptive Behavior with Cell Phone Usage**

**Advisor at Univ. Michigan: Dr. James R Sayer**

**Affiliation (Dept.): Transportation Research Institute**



Hello, my name is Kazuma Kato. I was working in University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI). UMTRI is one of big automobile research centers affiliate with University of Michigan. I was working in Human Factors Group where naturalistic driving data is analyzed. My research was also driving behavior projects funded by Ford. I was allowed to work pretty flexibly and had discussion with some researchers every day. We also had regular meetings with the company people every three weeks to report progress. They all got PhD in the US and working with such great people were totally challenging. I learned how tough it is to maintain my motivation in this experience. But unfortunately there are no students but researchers who already has their own family so I could not make students friends. I had to find the place to interact with students by myself. This is one of what I was struggled with to make it.

So, as for interaction with students my American roommate was pretty friendly and introduced me to his friends group. Also, I had a band with some American undergrad students. We worked on lots of stuffs to have people know our music, such as composition of songs, making our poster, making demo CDs, etc. We collaborated with each other to accomplish our common goal. Furthermore, there was a language exchange partner system in U of M, which can introduce students who are learning Japanese and can speak English to Japanese students like us. Then we teach our own language to each other. Teaching Japanese and communicating with students who are already interested in Japan were really interesting experiences. Of course, thanks to them, I got my English improved as well. I also did volunteer, a staff of Japanese cultural festival and international conference for engineering fields.

I also met up with some Japanese people who are also studying in U of M. Most of them has already started working in Japanese company and their career story totally motivated me to

think about my own career. Now, I finally decided to go back to work in the US someday after several years working for Japanese company. I could not come up with that future if I didn't take this program.



## Precious Experience in University of Michigan

Name: Naoaki Saeki

Affiliation: Mechanical Science and Engineering, Nagoya University

Participated program: Long 2013

Research theme: Human-Computer Interaction for Part Selection in  
Product Design

Advisor at Univ. Michigan: Prof. Panos Y. Papalambros

Affiliation (Dept.): Department of Mechanical Engineering



I was studying for one year as a member of Optimal Design Laboratory (ODE) in Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Michigan. Based on design engineering, this laboratory studies multidisciplinary researches. The research topics include not only design engineering, but also information technology, optimization theory, machine learning, marketing, and psychology. It was totally new research field for me. Though it was tough to understand the basic knowledge of the researches, this experience brought me a lot of useful knowledge. As my research topic in ODE, I applied optimization theory and machine learning techniques to part selection problem in product design. I could find some interesting results and have chance to present the work in a conference, because of a lot of kind supports from all ODE members. Of course I enjoyed research, but I also enjoyed the life in ODE. Sometimes they took me to dinner and parties, it was interesting to have Americanized Japanese dishes and to talk with a lot of people. Especially, it was a good memory of me to work in midnight with some members. (Of course we focused on our researches but sometimes) I enjoyed conversation.

My daily life in University of Michigan was also a great experience, though I spent most of time in laboratory. Living by myself in USA, surviving in severe winter, travel around..., they are all precious experiences, especially I remember the people I met during this stay. I joined some communities such as Japanese Student Association (it holds cultural events related to Japan) and Language exchange partner program (it provides opportunities for international students to learn/teach their language each other). I enjoyed talking in both Japanese and English with the members of Japanese Student Organization. They were great teachers to teach me Native American sense. And I introduced Japanese culture as a volunteer of *Matsuri* style event with them. I saw a lot of people who are interested in Japan. And I met some American friends who are studying Japanese through language exchange. They helped me to improve English. Moreover, they invited me to a lot of parties, it was so nice time to feel real American culture. Some of them are now in Japan, or will be in Japan. I hope we can see again.

Through these experiences, I became more interested in multidisciplinary researches and cross cultural communication. The wide knowledge I learned will definitely improve my research in Nagoya University. And the cross cultural communication skill I learned will also facilitate better understanding with people in the world.

I greatly appreciate all ODE members, all my friends in Michigan, all JUACEP staffs, and all members in Yamada Laboratory to giving me wonderful experiences, kind supports, guidance and encouragement.



ODE members



Japanese Student Association



Language Exchange