

### *Tidbits on traveling to conferences / visiting grad schools:*

- Know where you are going to stay. You can get much cheaper rates if you book online. You may also be able to stay in graduate accommodation if you will be in the area for a few days.
- Remember taxes
- A large percentage of the interstates on the East coast have tollbooths and you may have to pay up to \$5 to travel one-way.
- Check out the weather. I visited Philadelphia and found the humidity to be 86 degrees. The weather was just horrible and it apparently doesn't change. Do you really want to feel hot and sticky for two years while you get your Masters?

### *Money*

- Sometimes the most expensive grad schools are the cheapest as they provide more financial aid
- Even if your father is Bill Gates and you own Japan, you should still apply to be a Research Assistant, Graduate Assistant or Teaching Assistant. All are classed as an informal Honors Program. The Graduate Assistant is the least prestigious but pays the same, and you don't have to be assisting in your area of study (a lot of students who help teach foreign languages). The RA is probably the most prestigious, and you approach individual faculty members for the position. Expect to be teaching between four and six lessons a week as a teaching assistant (personally, I sit in on three lectures and lead three discussion groups). Your GPA and tutoring experience will help get you this position.
- Other money can come from Grants, Waivers and Loans. Also check for all the scholarships that are available. Some are very obscure (e.g. for red headed women who are over 6 feet tall!)
- Full waivers are sometimes issued for full time PhD students.
- Apply for at least four scholarships, even though you may have a very slim chance of getting them. It teaches you how the process works.
- Its is better financially in the long-run to go to Grad School full time and take out loans, than go part-time and work your way through school.