

My name is Chenggang. I am a PhD student in the Computer Science Department. Professor Schmolze had been my advisor for six years. Over these years Professor Schmolze taught me many things besides how to do research. He taught me how to be a better person. I have a daughter with severe autism and mental retardation. At one point I devoted almost all my time in getting her appropriate education and medical treatment, and I had little time for research. I became very distressed, so he wrote to me “You are facing an incredibly difficult situation. I think it admirable that you have done as much as you have in your research given the demands of your daughter.... Please do not feel bad about not spending more time on your research. It is clear to me that you are very capable of doing research, so I am not worried about the eventual outcome of your education. But it may take a longer time that you wish it to take given your other responsibilities. It may take a lot longer. But here is a thought. Think about how you would feel 10 or 20 or 30 years from now if you had to say “my daughter may have suffered but I had to do my research.” I think you’d prefer to be able to say “my research may have suffered but I had to help my daughter.” ” Along the way he had been very supportive and understanding. Had it not for his guidance and support, I would not have pulled through this difficult time in my life.

Professor Schmolze was a very enthusiastic researcher. All last summer we were working with Professor Khardon and Saket on first order Markov decision processes. One day we had a discussion for almost four hours. He sent out a summary of the meeting shortly afterwards. At 10:30 pm, he sent out a corrected version of the notes he sent earlier and progress he had made after the meeting. Then at 7 am the next day, he sent out the notes about more progress.

I will always remember Professor Schmolze for his wisdom, kindness, and understanding. I will miss him, but he will always be with me.