

Being in ARM this year has been an amazing experience for me this year and has broadened my horizons as not only a student, but as a person as well. ARM has provided me with the freedom to pursue my own interests and research the physical science behind those interests. Prior to this year, I had never pondered how heart attacks occur, and never understood the physical aspects that trigger an attack. However, my research this year has allowed me to dive into the knowledge surrounding the causes for heart disease along with dedicating time towards the realm of published research, dedicated to developing a therapeutic cure for this disease.

After asking a past ARM student about their experiences working with Dr. Jonas, I read some of her research papers and her work immediately piqued my interest. Ever since taking AP Biology in sophomore year, I knew that this field of research would be rewarding for me as it would grant me the opportunity to figure out if this is what I was interested in pursuing career-wise. At first, I was nervous to reach out to Dr. Jonas, given her status and respectable titles as a doctor and professor at a top-research university, however, I was ecstatic to find her immediate and thoughtful response to my first email inquiry. She not only welcomed me as a mentee, but seemed genuinely excited to work with me and immediately provided me with resources to begin with.

Working on my research project this year has taught me not only details in biological sciences that I would not have otherwise known, but has taught me how research in a professional setting operates. Working with Dr. Jonas taught me responsibility and diligence, and how to work through technological challenges throughout my project. Whether that be logistical challenges such as scheduling conflicts or technical challenges such as issues with the analysis software, Dr. Jonas helped me every step of the way and guided me through troubleshooting through these challenges. Additionally, I was able to further my communication skills, as throughout the course of this year, I went from asking Dr. Jonas vague questions to presenting solutions and results to her, along with follow-up clarifications towards the end of the process.

Although I was nervous initially, there was a clear transition from nerves to confidence regarding sharing my research this year. Presenting months of complex work to a diverse audience ranging from peers to parents to industry professionals felt daunting, however I was able to navigate through my poster and work and share my research to a variety of people. Ultimately, I believe that sharing my work became second nature and the rush of successfully communicating these complex ideas to others felt incredibly fulfilling.

Ultimately, the ARM experience was a positive one for me and taught me to get comfortable with unfamiliar knowledge and new topics of research. To make the most of this experience, I would recommend future students to ask questions constantly, embrace their mistakes, and take initiative regarding ownership of their project. I am immensely grateful for my time in ARM and even though my experience wasn't perfect, I can confidently say that I am able to walk away with the ability to navigate the professional research world in the future.