

INTER STORY

Meet Reagan Melhorn

Sophomore

Biology and Psychology

Dr. Brian Ellis's Research Lab

ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

In Dr. Ellis' lab we carry out motility assays using *C. elegans* as a model organism for soil transmitted helminths. We do so utilizing alternative and novel drugs in hopes to find an effective choice to help combat the current drug resistance seen to albendazole. As the lab manager, I not only run experiments, but also coordinate other lab members, help them trouble shoot, and keep things running smoothly within the lab.

FAVORITE PART

The most fulfilling part of this position has been being able to contribute to data on alternative anthelmintics. Considering the worldwide effect soil transmitted helminth infections have, it has been exciting to help find new drugs to challenge the current drug resistance observed with albendazole. Being the lab manager has also given me the opportunity to grow as a leader, which will be a focal skill throughout the rest of my career.



HOW YOU FOUND YOUR INTERNSHIP

I joined Dr. Ellis' research lab in my freshman year after hearing about it during freshman biology orientation. I was later promoted to lab manager as a sophomore and have held this position since then.

NEW SKILLS GAINED

It is difficult to pin down one single most useful thing I have learned. Participating in this research has grown my skills in basic lab practices, leading and delegation, and cooperation with many others while working toward the same goal.

A CHALLENGE

The most challenging aspect was just getting comfortable enough to be myself around the kids. I was so nervous and lacked the confidence of being a coach, but being around them more and getting to know them I created confidence and relationships. I also gained a ton of knowledge about coaching and writing programs. Personally I felt I also became stronger in my faith life, this I never expected, but being at a religious school we could talk more openly about religion and I felt god's presence throughout my work there with the kids. I overall feel more fulfilled and close to God from this experience.

ADVICE FOR OTHER STUDENTS

I would recommend to freshman to learn more about research even if you don't think you are interested. I was not looking to join a research lab during the start of my freshman year, and now I am so glad I did. It has been such a fruitful experience!

ANY LAST COMMENTS

Thank you for the opportunity to share more about the worm lab!

