The Researchers Initiative

Established in 2007, the Researchers Initiative, a program within University Housing, introduces undergraduate students residing in the Urbana South Living-Learning Communities to various aspects of research by pairing them with faculty mentors. Living-Learning Communities are organized around any number of themes and provide curricular and co-curricular programming for a designated group of students living in proximity to each other. Such communities are designed to foster students’ shared sense of purpose related to the themes of their communities, which, in turn, sustains their sense of belonging and academic persistence. The Living-Learning Communities provide an excellent point of contact for first- and second-year students where an invitation to participate in research is integrated into their everyday experience. The Researchers Initiative extends the notion of community to include a community of researchers.

Goals

When students are accepted into the Initiative, they work with faculty members on various projects broadly related to the theme of their specific Living-Learning Community or to their majors. Faculty members mentor students, act as role models, prepare them for graduate school, teach them technical skills, and help them develop theoretical frameworks to create research questions and designs and to interpret data. They also acquaint them with the process of research as a whole. The ideal is for students to continue working in the faculty members’ labs beyond the one semester afforded by the Initiative.

The Researchers Initiative is guided by the principle of providing information and access to research opportunities for a diverse student body. In addition to introducing undergraduate students to research, the Initiative facilitates their access to faculty members early in their college career. It is also designed as a retention tool, as sophomores are given priority. Finally, the Initiative can serve to deepen the students’ involvement in their own disciplines or expose them to research topics and practices outside of their disciplines.

Contact Information

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The Living-Learning Communities

Women in Math, Science, and Engineering (1996)

Women in Math, Science, and Engineering (WIMSE) is designed to foster community among women who major in traditionally male-dominated fields of study. Research shows that women benefit from a supportive network of fellow students who share similar academic interests. Academic courses and support, along with social programs, provide 135 women majoring in mathematics, science, and engineering with the resources to build a positive foundation for a future career. Nearly 50 percent of the women are enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, while about 40 percent are from Engineering. WIMSE occupies three floors of Trelease Hall, located in the Florida Avenue Residence Halls.

Global Crossroads (2000)

Global Crossroads, located in the Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls, is designed to challenge and motivate students whose interests, experiences, and aspirations have a strong international component. Both academic and co-curricular programs support the students’ sustained engagement across cultural differences. The community of 120 students has about equal numbers of international and domestic students. Just over 50 percent of the students have majors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, followed by 22 percent from Engineering. Another five percent each come from the College of Business, Fine and Applied Arts, and Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences.

Intersections (2004)

Intersections introduces undergraduate students to diversity issues in the United States through the experience of living in a multicultural community and opportunities for academic engagement. Its purpose is to foster interpersonal and intellectual skills, and knowledge to live and work in a multicultural society. Intersections houses approximately 110 students and is located in the Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls. Since its inception, over half of the students have come from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, while about 20 percent come from Engineering. Another seven percent come from the College of Business and five percent from Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences.

Health Professions (2007)

Health Professions brings together undergraduate students who are preparing for careers in the health fields. It provides relevant academic courses and support, career development opportunities, and skill-building programs for students to consider working with underserved populations. Health Professions houses approximately 110 students and is located on two floors of Oglesby Hall in the Florida Avenue Residence Halls. Sixty-seven percent come from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, with biology and chemistry most heavily represented. Ten percent of the students come from Applied Health Sciences. There are also students with majors in the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, as well as Engineering and other colleges.
Program Administration

Who can apply

The Researchers Initiative is administered by the Program Director for the Urbana South Living-Learning Communities. Students residing in the Urbana South Living-Learning Communities are eligible to apply to the Initiative. Any faculty member of the University who can supervise undergraduate students in research endeavors may participate.

How to apply

Both the student application and faculty request forms are available online in the fall. Students rank and provide explanations as to why they wish to work with their chosen faculty members. Faculty members fill out a one-page form indicating their research projects, what types of work they would like the students to do, and any other relevant criteria.

How students & faculty are matched

In mid-fall, the Program Director reviews all applications and matches students with faculty members based on these factors:

- Clarity and cogency of students’ responses
- Students’ ability to meet faculty requirements regarding meeting times, etc.
- Giving as many students as possible their top choices
- Priority to sophomores
- Relative balance of number of students from each of the four Communities
- Faculty preferences for particular students

After students and faculty members are notified of their matches, students are required to meet in person with the faculty member. Faculty members have the final say in whether or not they will accept a particular student in their labs. If accepted, students then must fill out formal payroll paperwork before they can begin work. All paperwork is completed in the fall so students can start work at the beginning of the spring semester.

How many hours students can work

Students can work up to 75 hours for the semester but must work a minimum of 35. How the hours are broken down depends on the faculty member’s needs and the student’s schedule. The hourly pay is the standard University rate for undergraduates ($8.50/hr.).

How the RI is funded

Funds come from the Program Director’s discretionary academic budget, provided by the Office of the Provost.
Students and Faculty Involvement

Student Participation

Students must:

• Apply and be accepted to participate in the Initiative.
• Rank their preferences for the faculty members with whom they wish to work.
• Confirm with the USLLC Program Director that they have met with their preferred faculty member.
• Provide proper documentation for the I-9 form, which is required for employment.
• Attend an orientation on expectations for participation and how to use library resources.
• Attend 1-hour workshop on creating and presenting research posters.
• Attend two to three check-in meetings with USLLC program staff.
• Participate in a mini-symposium to present a poster of their work.
• Participate in an exit interview with the USLLC Program Director at the end of the semester.
• Meet faculty members’ expectations for attendance at meetings/events, work hours, and quality of work.
• Provide weekly updates to faculty mentor detailing completed work, work to be done, and questions.
• Work at least 35 but no more than 75 hours.

Faculty Participation

Faculty members are asked to commit to the following:

• Fill out one-page faculty interest form.
• Review student applications (not required).
• Confirm in fall semester that you and students have met face-to-face and agreed to work together.
• Engage in consistent face-to-face contact with the student, such as one-on-one or research team meetings.
• Respond to students’ weekly updates.
• Give clear expectations regarding type and quality of work.
• Provide verbal feedback to students on quality of students’ work.
• If comfortable, share more personal stories related to own academic and career path.
• Suggest events on campus that would augment the students’ learning.
• Where appropriate, introduce students to others to facilitate students’ academic career.
• Attend Mini-Symposium, Sunday, April 19, 2015, 4-6pm.

“I liked the hands-on experience [in Dr. Fraterrigo’s lab]. It’s different than class. I learned how you go through so many tasks for a whole research project. And, you are not just responsible for your own work. Other people depend on your work too.”

Tingxiao, WIMSE | Actuarial Science
Assessment

Students meet one-on-one with the Program Director throughout the spring semester to discuss their progress and they participate in an “exit interview” at the end of the semester. The Program Director also interviews faculty members about their experiences with the Initiative and solicits recommendations for improvement.

Student outcomes

To date, 109 students have completed the Researchers Initiative. Most students identified that working with and getting to know faculty members and working in a team environment were the best parts of participating in the program. Many also noted that they became familiar with the research process as a whole. Several continued to work with their particular faculty mentor and others pursued additional research opportunities. Many noted a general increase in interest in pursuing research and/or graduate school. All students reported that they appreciated learning about new subjects or enhancing their knowledge of their particular areas of study. Finally, they identified gaining the following research skills (not all students learned all skills listed):

- Literature review and organization
- Navigating University Library website
- Using academic search engines
- Using Refworks
- Writing annotated bibliographies
- Data collection, analysis, and organization
- Conducting ethnographic interviews
- Transcribing interviews
- Coding qualitative data
- Coding quantitative data
- Categorizing thematically
- Critical thinking
- Developing research questions
- Designing experiments
- Differentiating relevant from irrelevant data
- Making meaning of data
- Understanding research process as a whole
- Communicating respectfully with research subjects
- Empathizing with research subjects
- Becoming familiar with purpose of the Institutional Review Board
- Becoming familiar with safety protocols
- Organization
- Managing time better
- Improving typing skills
- Performing more precise work
- Honing technical skills
- Learning new file formats
- Learning software programs
- Learning how to set up experiments
- Administering research protocols

![Yearly Participation](chart.png)
Perspectives

student perspectives

The following excerpts are from interviews conducted by Shreya Gupta, student assistant for the Urbana South Living-Learning Communities, where two students reflect on their work and provide advice on how to get research experience.

Learning outside your major: Erica Sheeran | English, minoring in Global Studies and Scandinavian Studies

Erica is a member of the Global Crossroads Living-Learning Community. Along with another student from Global Crossroads, Chidinma Anigbogu, Erica worked with Alma Gottlieb, Professor of Anthropology in the spring of 2013. Erica helped Dr. Gottlieb and her colleagues set up a non-governmental organization (NGO) to funnel profits from her book, Braided Worlds, to the community of Beng people in the Cote d’Ivoire about whom she wrote.

What was the biggest thing you learned?

I learned how to read legal jargon, especially as it related to setting up an NGO. I learned how to organize material since there are so many steps in creating an NGO. I also learned how to contact professors both on our campus and at other universities. I contacted a professor in Washington DC who was an expert international NGO’s. She was incredibly friendly and helpful. Along with that, I developed an ability to be professional in my communications.

What was the hardest aspect of the work?

I think contacting professors. On campus it was not difficult but off campus it was tougher because I needed to first get a referral. It usually doesn’t work to email someone out of the blue.

What was your favorite part?

My favorite part was presenting everything to Dr. Gottlieb. She relied on us to do the work and it was nice to have everything available for her so she could really get this NGO set up.

How was your experience related to your academic work?

It has less to do with the topic of the research and more to do with transferrable skills. Having to contact professionals and having to write in a professional and concise way were good skills to develop. Also, I came to find out how important it is to be patient. We were looking at setting up an international NGO. It was hard sometimes to find the right answers. I learned to step away from the problem and then try again.

How else might this experience be useful in the future?

Because of this project, I am more confident going into a new subject without any background knowledge, going in blind and pushing your way through it!
This academic work contrasts quite a bit with what you did this summer. Can you talk about that?

In the summer of 2013, I worked at a window factory 65 hours a week. It was hot and not air-conditioned! That overlapped with work I continued to do for Dr. Gottlieb through part of the summer. I remember times I couldn’t wait to get to the more academic stuff. It affirmed for me how education is important and gave me more motivation to work hard at school.

Would you do it all over?

Yes! Even though Professor Gottlieb was busy, seeing her get her excited about the work we contributed was worth it. I also made great friends with the other undergrads.

What are your future plans?

I plan to teach English internationally.

What advice do you have for other undergraduates getting into research?

It’s okay to get frustrated but always come back to the project. Always ask questions. And, don’t be afraid to ask for letters of recommendation.

The benefits of on-going work: Alex Horton | Sociology, African American Studies, and History

Alex is a member of the Intersections Living-Learning Community. Along with several other students Alex worked with Robin Jarrett, Professor of Human and Community Development, in the spring of 2013. He assisted with three on-going projects. 1) Social Capital and Community Gardening: A Study of Inner-City Residents, 2) Healthy Today, Healthy Tomorrow, development of a lifestyle curriculum used in a series of workshops with low income, inner-city mothers of young children, and 3) School Readiness of Inner-City Children.

How was your experience?

I got a good hands on approach to research. The experience also gave a great overview of the PhD process, since that is what I would like to do. I had thought about graduate school but after working with Dr. Jarrett, I am certain I want to go on to do a Ph.D.

Are you still working with your Principle Investigator?

Yes! I really like Dr. Jarrett’s work. It doesn’t really feel like work because it’s interesting. Further I was able to become a McNair Scholar* because of my research and continuing to do research.

What was the most important skill you learned?

I learned about the process of research and how to start from the beginning and go to the end. I also learned how to multitask and do the job well.
What did you get out of it?

I came to see that everyone has a different process of doing the same thing.

What would you tell a future undergraduate researcher?

Pick something you like! Don’t choose what you are supposed to choose but something that you’re interested in. Also, think about next steps. The RI is only one semester—what other opportunities are out there?

What qualities made the experience important to you?

Having some responsibility and being accountable for it. It was a good introduction to research. Overall the experience was great, positive and enjoyable. It was good because the work environment was very open and comfortable and that was made by Dr. Jarrett.

*The Ronald E. McNair Scholars Program provides research, mentoring, advising, and graduate school preparation for eligible sophomores, juniors and seniors from underrepresented groups to promote their academic excellence and pursuit of a PhD.

faculty perspective

Advice for students: Yi Lu | Professor, Chemistry

Professor Lu is passionate about chemistry. He describes his work as focusing on the “interface between chemistry and biology,” particularly on “developing new chemical approaches to provide deeper insight into biological structures and functions.” He is also intentional about helping undergraduates stay interested in the sciences by linking students’ interests with curricula. Incorporating undergraduates into the research group is one method to helping students explore their scientific interests.

Below are his responses to an interview with Supriya Kulkarni, WIMSE Graduate Assistant, and Shreya Gupta, student assistant for the Urbana South Living-Learning Communities, where he offers his perspective on the value of research experience for undergraduates.

Why participate in research as an undergraduate?

Students these days, they see trees and not the forest. They are not aware of why they come to college. Their motto is grades are what matter rather than realizing why they are in college. Research makes them get the reason for their course work. Having interest and passion for the subjects you study are the key to be successful! Explore your interests and find what you are good at. Research finds identity and finds passion. Motivation comes from learning about something you like! Some people think it’s negative and some take it positive. It doesn’t matter if you end up loving it or hating it, just try it!

“I enjoyed the actual lab work and making things on a small-scale level. My major is focused on large-scale projects and [working in Dr. Lu’s lab] has led me to look into environmental sciences.”

Chidinma, Global Crossroads | Chemical Engineering
What types of research are valuable for freshman?

Research is a big word. It has many levels. Freshman – literature review. Read the news, the paper. Do online searches exploring the concepts. Go through the process, to the laboratory. It also helps to write essays on subjects you choose, not what the professor tells you. The second year, give presentations. Formulate a hypothesis and write proposals. Contribute something. This is how I run my class, CHEM 199.

What does a student need to have in order to be successful? What qualities make a student interested?

“Spark in the eyes!” You need that passion to do research. Doing research is more than getting a recommendation or a grade. Be Passionate. Research is not always fruitful. It may have certain failures. Negative results may put you down, especially for students who are not passionate. But passionate people always take negative results as a way to work more towards the success.

How would an undergraduate approach research opportunities without programs like the Researchers Initiative?

Try to use these kinds of programs because they are easier to make connections. Connections are important. A professor may not have time to read emails, so talk to teaching assistants or to friends who work in research study. Talking in person or getting recommended by someone works better than emails but not always. Find a niche.

What is the average day for you as a researcher?

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, I teach. I am an evening person. My whole day is filled with appointments—seminars, speakers, students, staff, students’ seminar, journal club, recent things, discussions. Research is life and career. Changes in techniques have made my students better than me. I have less time. The Postdoc and people with different expertise contribute to the research. The big thing is I wish I was in lab more than I am now.

How important is it working in an interdisciplinary way?

All research is interdisciplinary now. There are opportunities to make a difference and get funding by doing new things.

It fosters discovery–gives answers to the questions. You have to keep updated in latest research in your fields and it gives you broader knowledge. It also makes you more marketable–makes you unique and thus there might be a higher monetary reward! It involves exploration and provides ways to think about and gives a focus to future choices.

Any other advice, comments, or experience you would like to share with us?

There are many careers that can come out of research experience. It is an exploration process. Think of alternate careers--national labs, research labs, writer for research magazine and science writers, journal editors, Congressional Science Fellowship—you can advise Congress! Try to explore your interest early. Good grades, interest, and passion equal a good graduation and a well-rounded person!
### 2014 Students & Faculty Mentors

**Nancy Abelmann, Anthropology**

**Student Researchers:** Cassandra Phelps, Linguistics; Yiying Wang, Economics; Wenting Zhu, Economics and Industrial Engineering

**Project:** Chinese and South Korean Students in Changing University of Illinois Demographics

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**Aaron Barbey, Speech and Hearing Science**

**Rachael Rubin, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Beckman Institute**

**Student Researchers:** Jason Ginzkey, Molecular and Cellular Biology; Ana Tinoco Martinez, Molecular and Cellular Biology

**Project:** Nutrient Biomarker Patterns, Cognitive Function, and MRI Measures of Brain Aging

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**Bethany Cutts, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences**

**Student Researcher:** Vinisha Doshi, Undeclared

**Project:** Political and Media Action on Childhood Lead Poisoning and Gardening Activity in the Urban Environment

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**Jennifer Fraterrigo, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences**

**Student Researchers:** Taylor Cascia, Undeclared; Tingxhiao Chen, Actuarial Science

**Project:** Insect-Infested Hemlock’s Effects on Soil in Southern Appalachia

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**Robin Jarrett, Human & Community Development**

**Student Researchers:** Ricardo Amaya, Molecular and Cellular Biology; Allison Hollatz, Molecular and Cellular Biology; Marina Shah, Applied Mathematics

**Project:** Social Capital and Community Gardening: A Study of Inner-City Residents and School Readiness in Inner-City Children
Aaron Johnson, Speech and Hearing Science
Student Researcher: Jacob Bowers, Undeclared
Project: The Effects of Vocal Use and Disuse on Neuromuscular Junctions in the Aging Voice

Yi Lu, Chemistry
Student Researcher: Chidinma Anigbogu, Chemical Engineering
Project: Developing Novel Biocatalysts for Alternative Energies

Deana McDonagh, Art & Design
Student Researcher: Liam McHugh, Aerospace Engineering

James Miller, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences
Student Researchers: Magdalena Gusztyn, Animal Science; Roshan Kumar, Biochemistry
Project: Effects of Human Activities and Management on Forest Ecosystems

Raksha Mudar, Speech and Hearing Science
Student Researcher: Sopirinye Diri, Molecular and Cellular Biology
Project: Neural Markers of Strategic Attention and Learning

Helen Neville, Educational Psychology
Student Researchers: Zheng Yun (Linda) Ji, Economics; Shree Modi, Business
Project: Meta-Analysis of the Perceived Satisfaction of Interracial and Interracial Couples (Shree Modi) and Evaluating the Effectiveness of Diversity Training on Police Recruits' Racial Beliefs (Linda Ji)

Safiya Noble, Media and Cinema Studies
Student Researchers: Christina La, Broadcast Journalism; Brea Thompson, Communication
Project: Race and Digital Media
Lissette Piedra, School of Social Work

**Student Researchers:** Anna Fischer, Undeclared; Sandy Perez, Undeclared; Hannah Adekale, Pre-nursing

**Project:** The Effects of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Depression and Parental Self-Efficacy in Latino Immigrant Mothers

Zoi Rapti, Mathematics

**Student Researchers:** Chiho (Christopher) Moon, Actuarial Science; Sneha Shrivastav, Mathematics and Psychology

**Project:** Social “Epidemics” on Networks: Mathematical Modeling of the Growth of Twitter Posts

Carin Vanderpool, Microbiology

**Student Researcher:** Monal Patel, Molecular and Cellular Biology

**Project:** Genetic Regulation in Bacteria

**Past Participating Faculty**

Mark Aber, Psychology

**Project:** Students’ understanding of race as it changes in public school settings

Angela R. Black, Kinesiology and Community Health

**Project:** Pregnancy, Asthma, and Daily Life Management for African American Women

Tony Clark, American Indian Studies

**Project:** Settler Micro-aggressions: Dismissing, Marginalizing, and Trivializing the Allegations of Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes that Fraud Accompanied Transfers of Land from Indians to Non-Native Americans

Antonia Darder, Education

**Project:** The Role of Grass-Roots Initiatives in Reducing Disparities and Inequities in Education Related to Immigration, Identity, Language, Race, and Social Class
Alma Gottlieb, Anthropology

**Project:** Diasporic Cape Verdeans with Jewish Heritage Negotiate Their Multiple Identities as Cape Verdean-Americans with Spiritually Mixed (Jewish/Catholic) and Ethnically Mixed (European/African) Ancestry

Chris Grindrod, Speech and Hearing Science

**Project:** Language and Communication in Stroke Survivors

Julie Hengst, Speech and Hearing Science

**Project:** Nature and Functioning of Repetition in Stuttering

Princess Imoukhuede, Bioengineering

**Project:** Statistical analysis of endothelial heterogeneity

Ellen Moody, Anthropology

**Project:** Damascus Encounters? Transnational Affect and Global Transformation through short-term Christian Mission or Service Trips

Ramona Oswald, Human and Community Development

**Project:** LGBT families and communities in non-metropolitan areas

Kathy A. Perkins, Theatre

**Project:** Africans and Diaspora Theatre Artists
Edna A. Viruell-Fuentes, Latina/Latino Studies

**Project:** Dr. Viruell-Fuentes examines the disparities found in health services for immigrants. Her recent research projects have included examining the impact that migration has upon health in immigrant-sending communities.

Robert Warrior, American Indian Studies

**Project:** Dr. Warrior is the Director of the American Indian Studies Program and the Native American House. His research and past publications have focused on Native American literature, poetry, intellectual history, and religion.

**Researchers Initiative Poster Symposium**

The Researchers Initiative Poster Symposium is now part of University of Illinois’ Undergraduate Research Week. At the end of April, students present posters on their work, which address the nature and goals of the project, their specific tasks, and any results and conclusions that they can draw. They are also asked to reflect upon what they learned and what value such research has for wider society. The Symposium also includes brief presentations by students who previously completed the RI and have continued with research as a way to encourage current students to pursue on-going research.

Faculty members are invited to attend the Symposium; their presence is deeply encouraging and meaningful to the students as they introduce their work in a public forum, perhaps for the first time. It also helps students develop a sense of a “researchers’ community.” A catered dinner occurs during the Symposium to celebrate the students’ accomplishments and informally continue the conversation. Students also receive a certificate of completion for the Researchers Initiative.

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Jason Ginzkey (Health Professions) and Ana Tinoco Martinez (Health Professions) helped in a project examining the relationship among nutrition, aging, and cognitive functioning.

**The Tests:**

- **Wechsler Memory Scale**-memory assessment in adults. It provides composite scores for Immediate Memory, Delayed Memory, and Total Memory, and consists of the following 4 subtests: logical memory I and II, and family pictures (card)

- **Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale**-a psychometric test of intelligence, learning, and memory. It provides scores for Verbal IQ, Performance IQ, and Full Scale IQ, along with four secondary indices

- **California Verbal Learning Test**—provides a detailed assessment of verbal learning and memory using a multiple trial, list-learning task.

- **SF-36 Health Survey**—a survey that measures eight domains of health: physical functioning, role limitations due to physical health, bodily pain, general health perceptions, vitality, social functioning, role limitations due to emotional problems, and mental health.

As research assistants, our role was to score data that will eventually be used to answer the research questions posed. The overarching goal is to investigate the influence and effect of one’s diet on the aging brain.

**Nutrient Biomarker Patterns, Cognitive Function, and MRI Measures of Brain Aging (Test Scoring)**

By: Ana Tinoco Martinez & Jason Ginzkey
under supervision of Dr. Aron Barbey
Director of the Decision Neuroscience Laboratory at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology

**The Semester’s Work:**

During this semester we scored 45 subjects’ tests. A total of five different tests had to be scored per subject. Some (such as WMS) were scored manually, while others were scored using computer programs such as PsychCorp.

**Results:**

As a result of the longitudinal design, results are not available at this time. The tests, however, will give a full assessment of memory and learning in subjects.
Chiho Moon (Global Crossroads) and Sneha Shrivastav (WIMSE) used an infectious disease mathematical model to identify social media patterns related to racialized and sexualized comments about the University’s Chancellor.

Shree Modi (Intersections) helped conduct a meta-analysis of studies looking at satisfaction in interracial relationships.
This was my first exposure to research. [Professor Johnson] was laid back and flexible and willing to explain things to me. He gave me structured things to do yet also some freedom. I learned the process of research can be tedious but also can be rewarding.

Jacob, Health Professions | Community Health

I really liked how I was doing something not just theoretical but something that actually influences and predicts phenomena in the real world. It was also challenging to learn [from Dr. Rapti] how you have to let go of so much data and that you can’t use everything.

Chiho, Global Crossroads | Actuarial Science

I am going into pediatric nursing. By working [with Dr. Piedra] I saw how things at home can affect a child’s interaction with healthcare workers.

Hannah, WIMSE | Pre-nursing

I really liked the whole process of it. I saw how so much time and work goes into research, especially since [Dr. Cutts] is collaborating with other schools. You have to see the goal to keep you going.

Vinisha, Health Professions | Molecular and Cellular Biology

[Dr. Neville’s lab] really felt like a team. Everyone communicated with each other, were encouraging. The atmosphere of the lab was great. Professor Neville, the graduate student and others were open to my ideas and never made me feel excluded.

Linda, Intersections | Economics

**apply to the Researchers Initiative**

The Researchers Initiative is open to students residing in Global Crossroads, Health Professions, Intersections, and Women in Math, Science, and Engineering Living-Learning Communities.

**Application Links available fall 2014**

Students apply at http://go.illinois.edu/ri_student_ap

Faculty members apply at http://go.illinois.edu/ri_faculty_ap