Provide an overview of the organization/research project and a summary of your responsibilities, tasks, and/or projects.

I spent the summer working in a genetics lab in Yale's School of Medicine. My lab was investigating the molecular genetic causes behind Autism Spectrum Disorder. I was responsible for a lot of the preparatory work and experimental design required to begin looking at my lab's experimental questions. This included designing and building brand new CRISPR/Cas9 plasmids and a cell culture pilot experiment.

During your internship, what did you accomplish or how did you make a difference? In what ways did you grow in your professional and technical skills?

I was able to successfully complete all of the preparatory work my lab assigned me. This allowed me to learn in depth about the new cutting edge genome editing technology, CRISPR, as well as how to use it. Most of my summer was spent designing and building plasmids for CRISPR, and now I could do so in my other labs.

Describe a problem that you helped to solve at your internship. What skills or knowledge from your education at Sewanee helped you address the problem?

Our biggest challenge during my time in the lab was probably just confirming our plasmids were correct. I was able to use some great techniques I had learned in Molecular Methods to do so like restriction enzyme digest and Sanger sequencing analysis. Things would have taken much longer had I not already known these techniques.

In what way were your teamwork skills strengthened?

What I loved about my time at Yale was that my mentor made me feel like her partner instead of her inferior. We did almost all of our work together and side by side at the bench. This allowed us to work efficiently and complete quite a lot in just 8 weeks, despite my need to learn all of the techniques...
and procedures as well. For example, we could prepare an enzyme digest reaction with more than 15 samples together in half the time it would have taken me to think it out and do it alone.

**How did your internship affect your career plans?**
I think my time at Yale deepened my respect and appreciation for research, and now I am considering pursuing an MD/PhD rather than just an MD.

**In what ways did your internship cause you to encounter people of different backgrounds from your own? What steps did you take to communicate effectively with such persons? What did you learn from such persons’ perspectives?**
A lot of people in my lab were from outside of the US. This wasn't too much of a challenge, but there were times where I would use an idiomatic expression and the meaning of it would be misinterpreted. Otherwise, communication between us all was great. It was really great just to hear what it's like being a scientist, medical student, or doctor outside of the US. It was more different than I would have thought.

**Words of advice for future interns (housing, transportation, etc.)?**
Don't be afraid to do it all!!! Make the most of your time there. Eight weeks in shorter than you think. If you want to do something new, different, or extra, ask!! The people there are great and will do almost anything for you. Also, the Yale Shuttle service is a huge lifesaver and convenience, use it!

**Words of thanks to your internship funding donors:**
Experiences such as this one can play a pivotal role in someone's life and career path. During my time at Yale, I learned and grew more than I ever thought possible in two months. Thank you very much to the funding donors behind this internship. Your monetary contribution facilitated a priceless experience.