

Post Report of the Weizmann Institute of Science Award by Rashad Prendergast, 2017

Throughout these past four weeks, I've had so many new positive experiences I never would have imagined prior to this program. This summer has been completely fulfilling academically, culturally, and socially. In the laboratory, I had the opportunity to study in the department of immunology. My research project involved the study of the role of autoimmune regulators in the DNA damage response. I learned many new things about the immunology field and concluded the program with a paper and oral presentation. But through observing my mentor and collaborating with my lab partners, I have also learned about the nature of scientific research and curiosity. I know what I have learned this summer will greatly benefit me as I embark on the next chapter of my life, in the fall, at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor.



Academics aside, I have also gotten the chance to experience Israel as a country. I had never been to Israel before this, so the program was a series of new sights from the Dead Sea to the Old City of Jerusalem to the beautiful Negev desert. I learned so much about the Israeli history and culture. My favorite part of the program was by far the six-day desert excursion where we spent one night under the stars and woke up at 4:30 a.m. every day for a new exciting hike. The hike up Masada was the most amazing because we made it up in time for the sunrise. I have experienced many things, but this program is by far one the best experiences of my life.



Lastly, the most rewarding aspect of this program was the friendships formed during the four weeks. I got to meet individuals from 16 different countries, each with their own amazing story to tell. Almost every night was spent learning about someone's culture or background and by the end of the program I felt that I had a family of 80 members. I know the friendships I've made in this program will be long-lasting, and I'd like to think that this is not the last time I will see everyone. The International Summer Science Institute was a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget, and I encourage anyone with the opportunity to go to take it.



