IBA students present posters during the SACNAS conference in Long Beach, CA

IBA sent four students to SACNAS on Oct. 13-15, 2016 in Long Beach, CA. The presenters were senior Maria Nuñez, junior Jorge Moreno, sophomore Zoe Horak and sophomore Callie Shannon. IBA Program Manager, Brinda Shetty, accompanied them.

At left, sophomore Zoe Horak presents her work from the LaLumiere lab to fellow scientists. At right, senior Maria Nuñez shares her work from the Shea lab.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: IBA GRADUATION CELEBRATION
FRIDAY, MAY 5TH 4-6PM

Last year’s graduating seniors pictured (right)

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REATIONS TO THE WINTER RETREAT FROM IBA STUDENTS

Freshman Camille Jaime

“For me, the retreat was shockingly relatable. I had never heard of Imposter Syndrome, but that presentation made me realize how much I fit its description. When the speaker mentioned procrastination to avoid failure as one of the symptoms, I had to laugh because that exactly describes me, and I never knew it. I think their suggestion to develop a new reaction to failure is very helpful and is something I am currently trying out, to see failure not as the worst but a lesson to do better next time.”

Sophomore Ashley Segura-Roman

“The IBA Winter Retreat was helpful in learning about and recognizing Imposter Syndrome within ourselves. Through this retreat I learned that Imposter Syndrome is a pretty common thing that many go through, and it is reassuring to know that.”

Junior Jorge Moreno

“Through our discussion about Imposter Syndrome, I learned that feeling out of place and as if I was never doing enough, was something that my peers may also be going through.”

Senior Paul Taufalele

“The retreat provided a great space for students to socialize and enjoy a healthy discussion about Imposter Syndrome. I had never heard of Imposter Syndrome before the retreat, but had certainly felt it to some degree. I learned that overwhelming majorities of people feel inadequate despite their achievements at some point in their lives. Awareness of the syndrome is the first step in overcoming and I hope to keep this awareness with me as I move forward into graduate studies. These IBA events provide beneficial information as well as camaraderie among the students and faculty. Pursuing graduate studies is a difficult task and a proper emotional support system is key to success.”

IBA holds an annual Winter Retreat that includes presentations and discussions on issues that could affect students now or as they prepare for graduate school. Previous topics at these retreats have included training in cultural competency, ethics, social justice, diversity consciousness and bystander intervention. This year’s retreat, which took place Sunday, January 9th at the Iowa Memorial Union, featured a presentation from the University of Iowa Counseling Service on Imposter Syndrome. From their presentation, students learned that, “Imposter Syndrome is insecurity about being in a professional or academic setting that involves: feeling that one lacks the necessary experience, feeling that one is not smart enough to do the work, and anxiety that others will realize these things and discover the person is a fraud.” Common signs of Imposter Syndrome include “depression and anxiety, low self-esteem or confidence and avoidance of work or work-related responsibilities.”

Photos by IBA Marketing Coordinator, Steve Kehoe
IBA STUDENTS PURSUE GRADUATE DEGREES ABROAD

Seniors Timothy Fuqua and Nicholas McCarty, both graduating in May, will be pursuing graduate degrees abroad. Fuqua will be pursuing a four-year PhD at The European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany. McCarty will be pursuing a one-year masters degree and is deciding between Imperial College London and the University of Cambridge.

Both students decided to look for opportunities abroad because they wanted a new experience. “I also applied to a lot of schools within the United States, however, after EMBL took me to interview, I immediately knew I wanted to study abroad. I was blown away by the cutting-edge science at the facilities, the diversity, and collaboration going on in Europe,” Fuqua said.

The diversity within the program was an important aspect for both Fuqua and McCarty. “During my interview at EMBL, the applicants were from 15 different countries, scattered on every continent (besides Antarctica). This is what I love about EMBL the most, the inclusion and diversity at the institution,” Fuqua said. McCarty is looking forward to collaborating with scientists from different backgrounds. “I wanted to have a new experience, both culturally and scientifically. The UK will present me with a phenomenal opportunity to engage with other researchers in an international setting. I am hopeful that this will foster ongoing connections overseas and enhance the research I perform down the line,” McCarty said.

The impressive faculty and innovative research attracted Fuqua and McCarty when deciding where to apply. “Ultimately [I] decided to go abroad because of the faculty members that I would have an opportunity to work with. Imperial College London is a world leader in synthetic biology and metabolic engineering – a field that I am eager to explore. This played a big role in my decision. University of Cambridge also has a stellar biochemistry department and mastery of drug design and crystallography. Both of these are appealing to me, but for different reasons,” McCarty said.

IBA has been very helpful to Fuqua throughout the application process. IBA covered the costs so that Fuqua could go to The Allied Genetics Conference where he met his future Principal Investigator who encouraged him to apply to EMBL.

The people who helped McCarty during his application process were Director of Scholar Development Kelly Thornburg, Fulbright Program Advisor Dr. Karen Wachsmuth, and Dr. Christopher Squier, who read through his applications and recommended programs in the UK.

Fuqua leaves the US in July and McCarty will be leaving in September. The hardest thing for McCarty to leave behind is his
research project. “I have grown very fond of glucose trafficking,” McCarty said. The hardest thing for Fuqua to leave behind is the friends he has made at the University of Iowa. “While I know that I will see many of them again, it was a surreal moment after I booked a one-way ticket to a country on the other side of the world,” Fuqua said. Fuqua added that EMBL is helping to make the transition a smooth one. “[EMBL is] paying for my travel to get back to Heidelberg, providing housing for me in their pre-furnished guest home for my first year, and has given me a start-up fund in addition to my salary. If you are thinking about applying to an international program, you need to ask about these things, because otherwise moving is going to be incredibly expensive and stressful,” Fuqua said.

Both Fuqua and McCarty have advice for students considering doing research abroad after they graduate. “Start early and seek out help frequently,” McCarty said. Fuqua recommends not letting the language or expense stop interested students from exploring universities outside of the US. “Many international PhD programs are taught in English, and it is the primary language spoken at the facilities. Do not let a language barrier be an excuse for studying outside of the US,” Fuqua said. “If you get the interview, most facilities reimburse your travel and accommodation, so finances should not be a concern for applying. Additionally, Europe is doing incredible research in the basic biological sciences, and I think you should keep an open mind to getting out of your comfort zone in the US.”

As Fuqua and McCarty get ready for a new adventure, they each are looking forward to the new
experiences they will have abroad. “I am most looking forward to doing cutting-edge research at EMBL. The Heidelberg station for EMBL has been acclaimed as "Europe's Flagship Research Station" and they take that title very seriously. The facilities thus have cutting-edge technology, including super-resolution microscopes. Their title also means that many conferences and important scientific events are held at EMBL, where I hear it is not uncommon to meet a Nobel Laureate,” Fuqua said.

McCarty is planning to explore the history while in the UK. “I am really looking forward to exploring some of the Roman ruins in the UK,” McCarty said. “I have taken several roman history courses just for fun, and it is a topic I enjoy learning about. I can’t wait to see some of the old temples to the god Mithras and wall structures in London (the Romans named the town Londinium). I am also eager to experience a different culture, try new foods, and meet new people.”

IOWA BIOSCIENCES ACADEMY SCHOLAR SYMPOSIUM

The IBA Scholar Symposium was held December 3, 2016 in the Kollros Auditorium. Presentations by upper classmen showcased the research they have been working on. Topics presented by undergraduates at the symposium included: biology, physics, environmental health, nursing, pharmacology, biochemistry, psychology and biomedical engineering. There were sixteen presenters in total representing ten different majors. Featured above is senior Nicholas McCarty giving a presentation on his work in Dr. Abel’s lab in the Department of Internal Medicine. Photo by IBA Marketing Coordinator, Steve Kehoe

IINSPIRE LSAMP PROGRAM

2016-2017 Annual Conference Cultivating STEM Identity for Student Success Feb. 3-4, 2017

This year’s conference featured participation from many IBA and LSAMP students and faculty:

Preparing and Applying for Graduate School Session
Moderator: Dr. Vincent Rodgers
Panelists: Rondine Allen and Franklin Bright

Making the Most of Your Research Experience
Speaker Dr. Lori Adams

Student Poster Presenters:
Sean Easler and Brian Leal

Conferences attended this Fall 2016 with the financial support of IBA:

ABRCMS Nov. 8-11, Tampa, FL: junior Angela Olvera

Autumn Immunology Conference Nov.
18-21, Chicago, IL: senior Maya Amjadi

Global Medical Microbiology Summit & Expo Nov. 28-30, San Diego, CA: graduate fellow Franklin Bright
IBA SOCIAL ACTIVITY: STUDENTS GO BOWLING

(Top) Junior Angela Olvera, junior William Narhi-Martinez, junior Nicole Cady and junior Sadie Moore enjoy bowling together.

(Bottom) IBA student shows off her skills at the bowling alley. The event took place Sunday, March 5th from 1-3pm at Colonial Lanes in Iowa City. Photos by Assistant Director Meaghan Rowe-Johnson.

got summer plans?

Consider applying for the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program that supports active research participation by undergraduates in any areas of research funded by the National Science Foundation. Find out more information about upcoming deadlines:

https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5517

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

March 3 Maya Amjadi
March 7 Vincent Parra
March 18 Nicole Cady

Not Pictured:

March 11 Paul Taufalele
March 17 Se Jin Kim
March 30 Crystal Padilla

Microbiology: https://medicine.uiowa.edu/microbiology/events

Biology: https://biology.uiowa.edu/about/seminars

Physics: https://physics.uiowa.edu/resources/events/calendar

Chemistry: https://chem.uiowa.edu/news/colloquium-seminar-schedule

Psychology: https://psychology.uiowa.edu/

Biochemistry: https://medicine.uiowa.edu/biochemistry/news-events/seminars

SEMINARS BY DEPARTMENT