

Ryan Engert

**Graduation Year:** Junior

**College:** Engineering, Science

**Major(s):** Science Preprofessional

**Minors(s):** Poverty Studies; Anthropology

**Scholar Group Membership:** No

**Did you received other funding for this project?:** No

**Could you have completed this project without CUSE funding?** No

**More details on CUSE funding assistance?**

**Project Title:** ASTMH Conference

**Project Location:** Atlanta, GA

**ND Faculty Mentor:** Michelle Whaley

**Project Type:** Conference - Attendance, Conference - Presentation

**Why did you undertake this project/experience?** Deepen your knowledge of a topic or issue, Prepare for professional school (MD, MBA, JD), Career discernment and/or preparation

**Did your funded experience help you:**

**[Deepen your understanding of your coursework or field of study]:** Very Much

**[Discern your interests and post-bac goals]:** Very Much

**[Become confident in your ability to set and achieve your goals]:** Yes

**[Gain a more nuanced view of local, national, or global communities]:** Very Much

**[Improve your written and verbal communications skills]:**Yes

**Tell us about your experience.**

While at the conference, I learned the most about injection techniques of embryos from a lab that works over in Harvard. The project PhD student, Amanda, spent a great deal of time with me going over all the nuances to inject that could better the fertility and survivorship of the mosquitoes I inject. Moreover, based on what I discussed with the PI of the lab, our lab has started a new side project to try and get a cloning/cross-mating project started to generate mutants with the Aedes.

**Describe the impact this project had, both on you as a student-scholar and on the people you worked with.**

I presented at the conference, and many people came by with hard questions that really pushed me to have to communicate well and think deeply so this was a new and unique setting for me to grow as a professional. Moreover, as I touched upon above, there were many people there whose contact information I now have in case I have more questions that I think they may be able to help answer.

**Describe how this experience is connected to your plans as a student or future professional.**

I am planning on pursuing a MD/PhD so I need to get used to attending conferences such as this one where people go to stay current on information and make contacts with other institutions. Going helped improve my understanding of the related work in the same field that I am in so this was a very valuable experience.

**What advice would you give other students who are planning to pursue similar projects?**

I would advise them to take advantage of all the opportunities they can at a conference like the ASTMH Conference. You can take advantage of such a conference by attending a ton of lectures, and more importantly hanging around to ask specific questions and open conversation with experts in the field. I made contacts for future opportunities, and I also learning technique-wise some of the new stuff people are trying with genetic engineering so it was really useful.

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