Finding a Summer Lab Science Internship: Tips and Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are summer lab science internships? What are the advantages to lab science internships?

- Temporary work in a science or medical laboratory to gain research experience and hone critical thinking skills
- Provides lab/clinical experience
- Possibility for publication
- Valuable and unique experience in preparation for future graduate studies and/or medical school applications

Q. What can you expect from an internship?

- Assist in a current ongoing research project
- Can be anything from advanced project to supportive laboratory tasks which may include:
  - Aliquoting
  - Extraction
  - Centrifugation
  - Instrument preparation and loading,
  - Administrative tasks
- Potential to perform pre-analytical functions
- Observe high-complexity testing
- Participate in a variety of educational topics to expand clinical laboratory knowledge

Q. How/When to start looking? What can you expect?

- The application submission window is usually January to February
- Contact the volunteer office at the institution, contact people at outreach programs offered by the institution, and/or contact your school advisor about potential opportunities
- Write a *personalized, lab-specific* email inquiry
- Find a current research topic that *really* interests you
- MS Society webpages or NIH website will inform you of currently funded projects
- Find current information at www.Pubmed.com
- Inquire about topics the lab is publishing on

Q. What do I include in my CV?

- Education
- Career Objectives/Personal Statement
- Prior experience
- Showcase your passion, strengths and transferrable skillset
- References

Q. What are other points of consideration?

- Will you consider an unpaid internship?
- What is your time commitment?
  - Hours and time frame (e.g., May -> August)
- Institutions may require drug screening (allow ~2-3 weeks) and safety training (allow ~1 week), as well as training specific to working with lab animals

Q. Once you're in a lab…

- Attend lab meetings
- Keep accurate lab notebooks and records
- Engage in networking and seminars

Q When you leave a lab…

- Leave your freezer samples and notes organized
- Continue to network
  - Connect with people on LinkedIn
  - Connect with people who are willing to write reference letters (PI, post-docs) for your future career