

EDUCATION

UC San Diego PhD Bioengineering, GPA: 4.00	La Jolla, CA 2023–Present
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Visiting Scholar Biological Engineering	Cambridge, MA 2021–2022
University of Utah Honors BS Biomedical Engineering with Chemistry Minor, GPA: 3.98 Thesis: Importance Sampling Techniques for the Analysis of Genetic Circuits	Salt Lake City, UT 2019–2023
University of Utah Honors BS Applied Mathematics, GPA: 3.98 Thesis: Stability of Genetic Oscillators with Distributed Delayed Feedback	Salt Lake City, UT 2019–2023

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Researcher, UC San Diego Biodynamics Lab, PI: Jeff Hasty	La Jolla, CA August 2023–Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Constructed synthetic genetic circuits <i>in vivo</i> using genetic engineering and biotechnology techniques– Applied nonlinear dynamics techniques to rigorously study complex biological systems– Developed microfluidic chips for the visualization of genetic circuit behaviors on the single-cell level	
Research Software Engineer, CU Boulder Genetic Logic Lab, PI: Chris Myers	Boulder, CO May 2020–September 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Developed simulation tools for the computer-aided design of genetic circuits– Adapted variance-reduction techniques for stochastic simulation of genetic circuit dynamics– Developed novel stochastic simulation algorithms for the analysis of rare genetic events	
Visiting Researcher, MIT Synthetic Biology Center, PI: Ron Weiss	Cambridge, MA December 2021–December 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Constructed biophysical models of complex biological systems– Applied statistical and machine learning techniques to large omics datasets– Constructed and characterized neuromorphic genetic circuits	
Project Lead, Utah BioDesign Lab Magnetic Optic Nerve Stimulator Team	Salt Lake City, UT January 2022–December 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Developed a device which can magnetically stimulate the optic nerve for use during brain surgery– Led a team of engineers and guided project directions– Presented design reviews and updates to a panel of supervisors, following FDA design control processes	
Biostatistics Researcher, University of Utah Scientific Computing and Imaging Institute, PI: Tamara Bidone	Salt Lake City, UT August 2021–June 2022

- Developed biophysical simulations of E-cadherin dynamics
- Applied biostatistical methods to relate simulation results to biological phenomena
- Demonstrated the emergence cancerous phenotypes from simple models of E-cadherin dysregulation

Research Programmer, University of Utah

Division of Clinical Pharmacology, PI: Venkata Yellepeddi

Salt Lake City, UT

April 2020-December 2020

- Developed a Python library for rapid physiologically-based pharmacokinetics modelling of nanoparticle biodistribution
- Developed biophysical simulations of nanoparticle biotransport phenomena
- Validated pharmacokinetics models with results from animal models

Project Lead, InnovaBio

SKIP Project, PI: Mary Nelson

West Jordan, UT

August 2017-August 2019

- Utilized genetic engineering techniques to produce bioactive, recombinant human skeletal muscle and kidney-enriched inositol phosphatase in *E. coli*
- Trained interns in the essential techniques of biotechnology and genetic engineering
- Presented results and literature reviews to supervisors and lab mates

TEACHING AND MENTORSHIP EXPERIENCE

Tutor, High Performance Tutoring

Private Tutor

Salt Lake City, UT

August 2018-Present

- Tutored mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, and English from the high school to advanced undergraduate level
- Helped over 300 students apply for and get accepted to college and graduate school
- Developed ACT and SAT curricula

Graduate Instructional Assistant, UC San Diego

Private Tutor

La Jolla, CA

Spring 2024

- Wrote curriculum, homework assignments, and quizzes for an undergraduate nonlinear dynamics course
- Lectured course content to a class of around 200 students
- Developed individualized learning solutions for struggling students

BUMMP Mentor, UC San Diego

Biology Undergraduate and Master's Student Mentor

La Jolla, CA

October 2023-Present

- Involved undergraduate biology students in academic research
- Organized social and recreational events for around 100 students
- Guided URM students to find success in STEM

JUMP Mentor, UC San Diego

Engineering Undergraduate Student Mentor

La Jolla, CA

October 2023-Present

- Helped undergraduate engineering students navigate their program and career
- Facilitated program workshops on career and technical skills
- Fostered a sense of community by leading small-group social activities

- Conducted STEM outreach and education events at local high schools
- Mentored undergraduate engineering students in the Engineering Scholars program
- Organized Engineering Day at the University of Utah for over 1000 students annually

- Tutored children ages 3 to 14 in mathematics and reading
- Graded student homework assignments

AWARDS

- **Teaching Assistant Excellence Award, 2024** Every year, the UCSD Bioengineering department confers a TA Excellence Award upon an Instructional Assistant that demonstrated exceptional professionalism, innovation, and dedication to their students. The award is based on student and instructor evaluations.
- **Hertz Fellowship Semifinalist, 2024** The Hertz Fellowship is a highly selective and prestigious graduate research fellowship. I was considered as a semifinalist among around 10% of the best PhD candidates from the top 55 engineering schools around the country.
- **Undergraduate Research Scholar, 2023** The Undergraduate Research Scholar Designation (URSD) recognizes a student's commitment to their development as a researcher during their undergraduate career. The URSD appears in the awards section of the transcripts of graduating students. URSD awardees receive a white research cord from the Office of Undergraduate Research to wear at convocation and commencement.
- **Kennecott Engineering Scholar, 2022** Kennecott Scholars are excellent engineering students at the University of Utah who have the opportunity to live in an engineering themed living-learning community.
- **MIT Visiting Scholar, 2021** Visiting Scholars conduct academic research at MIT for a period of one week to one year. I was a visiting scholar in the Weiss Lab at the MIT Synthetic Biology Center.
- **UROP Awardee, 2021** UROP provides funding for students who assist with a faculty member's research. I was granted a UROP award for my work simulating E-Cadherin dynamics with Tamara Bidone.
- **Goldwater Scholar Finalist, 2021** The Goldwater Scholarship is the most prestigious undergraduate scholarship in the natural sciences, mathematics, and engineering in America. Four students are nominated for the award by participating institutions each year.
- **University of Utah Presidential Scholar, 2019** The Presidential Scholarship is the most valuable merit scholarship offered by the University of Utah. Presidential Scholars receive a full tuition waiver and housing stipend for eight semesters of undergraduate study.
- **Sterling Scholar: Science, 2019** A Sterling Scholar is a high school senior who is publicly recognized and awarded for the pursuit of excellence in scholarship, leadership, and citizenship in the State of Utah.
- **National Merit Scholar, 2019** The highest level of distinction given by NMSC, given to students who have been judged to have the strongest combination of academic skills and achievements, extracurricular accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous university studies.

- **National AP Scholar, 2018 and 2019** The highest level of distinction given by AP, granted to students in the United States who receive an average score of at least 4 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams. Won twice.

CONFERENCE AWARDS

- **NonaWorks Software x Biology Hackathon Winner, 2023** Each year, Nona hosts a hackathon event where students have the opportunity to work as a team to develop software to solve open problems in the biotechnology space. I led a diverse team of five students to solve an advanced biosecurity problem and win first place in the competition.
- **SB³C Student Paper Contest Winner, 2022** Each year, the Summer Bioengineering, Biomechanics, Biotransport Conference (SB³C) selects 2 undergraduate papers from its international applicant pool as winners for an undergraduate paper competition.
- **Utah's Next Top Model Winner, 2021** The University of Utah holds this mathematical modeling contest annually. I led a team of three students to win first place in the competition.
- **SLCC SME Symposium First Place, 2018** First place prize at the annual Salt Lake Community College Science, Math, and Engineering Symposium in the Team Technical Poster Category. Awarded for my team's research on the expression and solubility of SKIP in E. Coli.

PUBLICATIONS

1. M Ahmadi, L Buecherl, **PJ Thomas**, CJ Myers, Z Zhang, C Winstead, H Zheng, "A Bounded Model Checking Approach to Analyzing Infinite-State Stochastic Models", *ACS Synthetic Biology*, [SUBMITTED]
2. **PJ Thomas**, "Stability of Genetic Oscillators with Distributed Delayed Feedback", *Range: Undergraduate Research Journal*, July 2023
3. **PJ Thomas**, "Importance Sampling for the Analysis of Genetic Circuits", *Range: Undergraduate Research Journal*, July 2023
4. Z Sents, TE Stoughton, L Buecherl, **PJ Thomas**, P Fontanarrosa, and CJ Myers, "SynBioSuite: A Tool for Improving the Workflow for Genetic Design and Modeling", *ACS Synthetic Biology*, March 2023
5. **PJ Thomas**, M Ahmadi, L Buecherl, C Winstead, CJ Myers, and H Zheng, "A Comparison of Weighted Stochastic Simulation Methods for the Analysis of Genetic Circuits", *ACS Synthetic Biology*, December 2022
6. B Shaikh, LP Smith, D Vasilescu, G Marupilla, M Wilson, E Agmon, H Agnew, SS Andrews, A Anwar, ME Beber, FT Bergmann, D Brooks, L Brusch, L Calzone, K Choi, J Cooper, J Detloff, B Drawert, M Dumontier, GB Ermentrout, JR Faeder, AP Freiburger, F Fröhlich, A Funahashi, A Garny, JH Gennari, P Gleeson, A Goelzer, Z Haiman, J Hasenauer, JL Hellerstein, H Hermjakob, S Hoops, JC Ison, D Jahn, HV Jakubowski, R Jordan, M Kalaš, M König, W Liebermeister, RSM Sheriff, S Mandal, R McDougal, JK Medley, P Mendes, R Müller, CJ Myers, A Naldi, TVN Nguyen, DP Nickerson, BG Olivier, D Patoliya, L Paulevé, LR Petzold, A Priya, AK Rampadarath, JM Rohwer, AS Saglam, D Singh, A Sinha, J Snoep, H Sorby, R Spangler, J Starrau, **PJ Thomas**, D Van Niekerk, Daniel Weindl, Fengkai Zhang, Anna Zhukova, AP Goldberg, JC Schaff, ML Blinov, HM Sauro, II Moraru, and JR Karr, "BioSimulators: A Central Registry of Simulation Engines and Services for Recommending Specific Tools", *Nucleic Acids Research*, May 2022
7. L Buecherl, R Roberts, P Fontanarrosa, **PJ Thomas**, J Mante, Z Zhang, and CJ Myers, "Stochastic Hazard Analysis of Genetic Circuits in iBioSim and STAMINA", *ACS Synthetic Biology*, October 2021

CONFERENCE TALKS

1. **PJ Thomas**, T Transue, Quan Huu Ho, Yehuda Binik, Phuong Khanh Tran, “BioGenius–Biosecurity for DNA Synthesis Cores”, *NonaWorks Software x Biology*, September 2023
2. **PJ Thomas**, T Transue, “A Learning-Based Approach to Inferring RNA Velocity Landscapes”, *IWBDA*, September 2023
3. L Buecherl, **PJ Thomas**, M Ahmadi, J Jeppson, A Gerber, E Reiss, C Winstead, H Zheng, Z Zhang, CJ Myers, “A Collection of Biological Models for the Development of Infinite-State Stochastic Model Checking Tools”, *IWBDA*, September 2023
4. **PJ Thomas**, “Importance Sampling for the Analysis of Genetic Circuits”, *University of Utah Undergraduate Research Symposium*, April 2023
5. **PJ Thomas** and TC Bidone, “The Role of Actin Coralling in the Formation of Cell-Cell Adhesions”, *SB3C*, June 2022
6. **PJ Thomas**, M Ahmadi, H Zheng, and CJ Myers, “A Comparison of Weighted Stochastic Simulation Methods”, *IWBDA*, September 2021
7. T Stoughton, L Buecherl, **PJ Thomas**, P Fontanarrosa, and CJ Myers, “iBioSim Server: A Tool for Improving the Workflow for Genetic Design and Modeling”, *IWBDA*, September 2021
8. **PJ Thomas**, “Production of Biologically Active Recombinant Human SKIP”, *SLCC SME*, March 2019
9. E Green, V Scott, and **PJ Thomas**, “Purification and Expression of SKIP”, *SLCC SME*, March 2018