

I can't believe this program has come to an end. This was an unforgettable experience that has given me lots of new memories that I will always be grateful for. I am so glad I was a part of it and that I got to make so many new friends.

Sadly, our internship was concluded this Thursday. The short amount of time I spent with everyone was so valuable to me, and I know that the skills I have acquired will be carried along with me throughout my life. There were so many aspects of this internship that have made it so unforgettable. From camping at Pinnacles to getting together on Thursdays to writing and rewriting a paper, every moment here made my summer ten times better.

One of my favorite parts of this program, like many of the Biodiversity interns, was going to Pinnacles. Because it was my first time camping, I have nothing to compare it to, but despite this, I think that this trip was as unique as they come. As soon as we got to the camping ground, I remember that we were split into the groups we'd be sleeping in a tent with. The two people I shared a tent with were Ashli and Stephanie, and it was a tight squeeze in that 3 (2 if you like lots of space) person tent, but we created a method of being able to get in and out without stepping on anyone. It was so fun and funny to share a tent with them! I also remember how it seemed like there was always a constant amount of little fly-like things buzzing around us that we were always swatting away. And when we made dinner, the yellowjackets decided they wanted to join the party! I think that another one of the best parts of this trip, was staying out when the adults had gone into their tents, and watching the sky. I don't think I've ever seen so many stars at once before, and certainly not that many shooting stars. It provided a great scene for us all to get to know each other, too. I found out that Saket and Ashli have the same birthday! There were so many little things that I remember so well, but I think that that is what makes it so awesome- there are so many unique pieces that made it such a great experience that will be hard to forget.

Something else I really enjoyed was being able to hear the speakers on Thursdays as some talked about their path to science while others talked more about their research. Something I noticed about each person was that they each have their own one-of-a-kind roads to science. All of them were doing science, but they all came from completely different backgrounds. It was inspiring because it helps me to understand the idea that there is not one formula for becoming a great scientist, or in fact a great *anything*. What worked for one person might not work for me, and what might work for me might not work for someone else. Great minds might think alike, but they aren't cookie-cutter people all made the same way. I think that this was one of the biggest takeaways I had from those talks, which is why I'm grateful to have been given the opportunity to listen.

Likewise, the presentations I saw on the last day were so interesting, and taught me a lot about body size evolution (because I couldn't stay for the rest). They opened my eyes to so many new ideas and questions that I have about how the Earth works. For example, what other factors might be affecting body size? Besides ecophysiological aspects, are there other traits that could

be examined to answer this question? I got a little tongue-tied as I was presenting this, but from mine and my partner's research, I learned that air breathing marine genera tend to be much larger than water breathing marine genera. I also learned that having a closed respiratory system also helped to increase body size after breathing air. Without this experience, I never would've even thought about what a closed circulatory system *is*. I never would've learned so much about marine genera, especially because I wouldn't have known that the topic was something to be researched.

Ultimately, as an upcoming senior in High School, this experience has exposed me to so many new concepts, and has shown me what it is like to be able to research and develop a scientific paper. I am so thankful for being able to participate in this internship with so many amazing interns and mentors.

Thank you Noel, Jenny, and Nic for guiding us through this program and for helping us to become better researchers and scientists.

This was a great summer!