

Personal Statement – CRA Outstanding Undergraduate Researcher Award
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I learned that to become a better researcher, spending time outside of research is as important as the time spent on research itself. Particularly, one cannot learn crucial research skills if all she does is read papers and program code – I've learned this firsthand.

For one, research is a collaborative effort; one encounters diverse mindsets. I learned this through my participation in the Business and Entrepreneurship group in the Binghamton University Emerging Leaders Program. Importantly, our group consisted of students of different majors and levels of expertise, hence, it was not easy to collaborate in the beginning. We concluded to make meetings as often as possible to stimulate team chemistry, enabling us to work smoother as the semester rolled on. Conclusively, we ran a food tour initiative to promote student foot traffic in downtown Binghamton and successfully raised \$300 to support local restaurants.

For another, researchers are writers. I learned this mindset after working as a teaching assistant for two mathematics courses. During this experience, I found that teaching is not as easy as I expected. Crucially, I found that holding office hours is easier than providing feedback on assignments. I often had back-and-forth email communication between students that had confusion regarding my written feedback – here I gained insight in how to better portray my message.

Lastly, research is inspirational. I presented a demo of our quadrupedal robot for the students at Vestal Hills Elementary. I vividly remember being surprised by the enthusiasm multiple students had regarding the robot - they questioned about the motherboard and motors inside the quadruped and how it differs from the Lego Mindstorms they used in class. Here, I learned that even these small moments can greatly influence the future generation's passion for innovation.