

Joy Barnes  
Johnson C. Smith University  
Box 914  
Charlotte, NC 28216

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Christina M. Johnson  
AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY  
1325 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Tina:

Thank you so much for affording me the opportunity to attend ASM '90. Looking at the experience retrospectively, the lectures, special topic sessions and poster presentations were all extremely important in improving my understanding of and appreciation for microbiology, not to mention my networking skills!

Of the many important components of the conference, the special topic discussion on "Minorities in Microbiology" was by far the most thought provoking and informative. (It is always less difficult to perform quantitative research in a specific area than to determine the whys and whos behind the technology). To gain an understanding and insight to the various vantage points of the misdirected and under-represented makes a world of difference in trying to combat the inadequacies in minority science programs. Good advice was given by the scheduled speakers as well as interested ASM members and other professionals.

Networking with the other students as well as the new contacts made were equally important. The exhibits gave me further insight into the latest technology. I felt especially comfortable with the poster sessions. Not only could I understand much of what was presented, but also I gained new research ideas and approaches. I was ecstatic when at my own poster session, I was approached by other presenters, doctors and corporate representatives who were interested in our results.

The society is to be highly commended on the conception of this program. It is both exciting and informative--A program to definitely be replicated and expanded in the future to include even more undergraduate students...after all they are the most ripe and receptive to opportunities in and innovations of the sciences.

I consider myself to be extremely fortunate among the travel award recipients because, I was introduced to things that I had never before heard and I was introduced to people that I doubt I would have met before. To hear Dr. Salk and others like him was what I will most remember--it's really inspirational to meet men of such caliber. As I said before, I also look at microbiology in a totally new light--One never knows how exciting it can be, nor the options made available to them through microbiology.

It was wonderful!!!!!!!!!!

THANKS SO MUCH!!

Sincerely Yours,



Joy M. Baynes

CC:

Ana Maria G. Linares  
Sacred Heart University  
Santurce, Puerto Rico

APPENDIX II

(Rising Senior)

MY EXPERIENCES IN THE SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM AT UMASS

I thought that participating in the Summer research program was going to be a great experience, but it turned out to be much more than that. This Summer has completely changed my outlook on the field and on graduate studies.

When I first arrived I was informed that the work done in the lab was in the Immunological field, which was very ironic to me since I had always avoided courses in the area. At first it was somewhat difficult to understand and relate to the concepts of the experiments but this was the best part, it was a challenge, one that I believe I succeeded in.

This Summer I realized that I was not prepared, in the technical aspects, to pursue graduate studies in this field. I learned much more than I thought I would and all thanks to Karen Troidle who patiently worked with me for the two months.

I also had the opportunity of speaking with members of other laboratories in the department who had interests such as Microbial Ecology and Neuroscience. I was overwhelmed by the dedication and fellowship of all the students and Doctors, and they taught me how rewarding graduate school can be.

In addition to all that I learned in the laboratory I learned a lot about the people and their way of life. They are all very special to me, each one of them taught me something. I had the opportunity of visiting Boston on the fourth of July and it was a day that will remain very dear to me.

There are no words that could express my gratitude for this opportunity, it really changed my life and I think that every student should be able to participate in a program of this sort. Thanks for everything and I hope I did not bother you too much.

*Ana Maria G. Linares*