

BioGENEius Awards: In Ling Jin's Words

Committed to presenting ideas and projects that address global healthcare, sustainability and environmental issues, the Champions of Science Storytelling Challenge—BioGENEius Edition invited alumni of the Biotechnology Institute's BioGENEius Challenge to share stories of their innovative and impactful work. Recognized in this year's contest, read the essays of these runner-ups.

As an international microbiology major undergraduate, this is only my second year to be connected to science but I enjoy a lot in the biology field. To be honest, I face a hard time when I first come to the science field. I am a so-called excellent student in my country who pass the Gaokao, known as The National College Entrance Examination in China, and then go to the top university in China. I choose my major just by a chance because I lack an understanding of the difference between majors. I used to imagine that lab means a dream place that excellent students gather together to talk about the new ideas and make it come true. When I first attend a lab, I realize that doing an experiment is not a romantic work.

When I had such doubts, I always asked myself if I should continue to be in this field. Then, I remember my father, who is a geologist and always come to do experiments in the unmanned area of the 6000m or above, told me that it is not money that makes your life worthwhile, but the contribution you made to humanity and society. Science is one of the most important jobs that aims to explore something new for the society. You are involved in the work not only because you need this work but also because others need you to do this work.

Currently, I transferred to America and luckily have a chance to work in a lab doing research for my interesting topic - genetics. We are working on figure out the evolutionary law. Once there is any breakthrough, we would be able to determine species or even human's evolutionary direction and helps the society to develop rapidly and harmoniously. I enjoy my work a lot, I love my kindly colleague in my office and I also love my cute little nematodes in my experiments. The feeling cannot be replaced that I finally use repeated experiments to prove the conclusions I have inferred from a large number of past papers before.

Telling stories of science is not to encourage everyone to join scientific research without reason, but to help others, especially those who are interested in science, learn more about what researchers exactly do and what kind of skills they should prepare before investing themselves in scientific research. Becoming a scientist is not an unreachable goal. Actually, science also cannot be separated from life. In other words, everybody is related to science. I share the same distress as you that could science helps me live in a

better life or gain a high reputation. However, now I realize the importance to pursue a STEM career is not the result itself, but the process that you raised a question and try to figure out a way to solve it.

As a scientist, the best thing for you is that you will feel life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you going to get.

The content and views presented here are those of the individual Challenge participant.