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A Golden Summer Research Experience

October 24, 2019

For international students like Jennifer Iwenofu (Biochemistry '22), finding a summer internship or research opportunity that provides some financial support can be difficult. Despite this obstacle, Iwenofu was able to find a program that also fit her research interests and helped her achieve academic goals.



Jennifer Iwenofu in the lab.

Iwenofu spent her summer researching nanoparticles in the Spectroscopic Characterization of Gold Nanoparticles with Proteins Project at Claflin University. Her days typically began at 9:00 am and consisted of completing specific tasks designated for each day. “The most unique part of this project was that we all had different aspects that we worked on independently, but in some way all of the results of these individual aspects overlapped to lead to the overall scientific finding,” Iwenofu said.

Iwenofu also enjoyed the rewarding feeling of seeing all of her work come together through a proven hypothesis. “One of my highlights was the day we put our gold coated nanoparticles and our bare nanoparticles in the Circular Dichroism spectrum,” she said. “It was exciting to see our hypothesis that the gold coated nanoparticles would have higher alpha helices in higher ionic strengths proven and reflected through our graphs.”

Through this experience, Iwenofu was able to learn how to rely on herself. While her mentors were available to her, it was her responsibility to solve the problems she encountered within her realm of the research. In this way, Iwenofu no longer had to rely

on her mentors to teach her how to do things as she was able to learn for herself while working through the challenges.

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