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AY 2015-16 All-S.T.A.R. Fellow

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During my PhD program, I was serving the Geology Department as a TA and RA. My teaching experience was very challenging as I needed to explain established geological theories and hypothesis to non-science students. It encouraged me to use interdisciplinary approaches and integrate my experiences in geology, chemistry, biology, and physics to answer the questions about the evolution of life on Earth and its various stages of atmospheric and oceanic transition. Teaching has helped me to discover what gaps I had in my knowledge and to expound upon my research interests. Being a research assistant under the supervision of my distinguished mentors established my personal and professional skills towards being a successful scientist. I was taught how to produce, interpret and synthesize high quality data. My involvement in different projects related to my research interests benefited from working with members of the scientific community outside UMD. Such connections opened opportunities to establish future scientific relationships and integrate myself into the scientific world. Last year, when my first paper in Science journal came out, I experienced the integral process of peer-reviewing and publishing my own work. With the publishing expertise of Heather Dewar, a science writer for UMD, I published a press release for my paper, the process of which I found very interesting and exciting. This aided me in distributing my findings to general public. Overall, I am truly grateful for the opportunities this graduate program has given me, and I know that I will exceed your expectations as I have my own.