

Personal Statement:

To pursue a career in science is to venture into a field of endless opportunity. With each new discovery, scientists raise the bar as to what we consider the human potential. Things thought impossible mere decades ago are now common practice with modern scientific advances. The need for these advancements is most evident when it comes to health care, as we attempt to prevent and cure diseases such as Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG). The need to develop new therapies and techniques, while endlessly expanding personal knowledge in the process is what has driven me towards investigating and understanding this disease.

To become a well-rounded scientist and gain valuable experience in the industry, I chose to pursue a co-op distinction while obtaining my Bachelors of Science. This first lead me to positions at both the Region of Durham and AGAT Laboratories, expanding my chemistry based skills. Soon after, I was given the privilege of working at the Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Centre at the Hospital for Sick Children under the leadership of Dr. Cynthia Hawkins. This has introduced me to DIPG and the elements of the disease being studied. I was able to observe and participate in many procedures and techniques to develop the skills necessary to continue research into this disease. Most significantly, I was able to directly contribute to the advancements in understanding this disease, with the ultimate goal of one day leading to its cure.

Upon being introduced to DIPG and cancer research at large, it became evident that this field is where I belong. Spending the past 8 months in research has taught me the value of self-motivation, dedication, and my desire to always find an answer. As I progress into the final four months here, I wish to continue investigating the causes behind this disease. Upon completing my undergraduate degree next year, I fully intend to return to this field as a graduate student.

My dedication to the science field is evident in my undergraduate courses and extra-curricular participation. Biology and Chemistry have provided an analytical aspect of learning, Calculus and Physics helped develop the logical problem solving skills essential in research, while Psychology has added the human element to my studies. I am enthusiastic to further develop my science based involvement. At university, I have held vice-presidencies on the Science Council for the past 3 and have held coordinator positions on the medical responders team, to further my experience in the medical field.

Outside academia, I have represented my university as a varsity athlete, alumni committee member, and president of several on-campus clubs. I also enjoy reading, playing baseball, organizing and participating in various charitable events, and travelling the world for human rights purposes (Kenya in 2009 to build a school and Peru in 2011 for earthquake disaster relief).

In conclusion, I consider myself a well-rounded aspiring scientist with the desire and motivation to continue with DIPG research for many years to come. With your support, I can continue exploring this disease through the proposed experiment – maintaining my passion, igniting a future in the field, and aiding in developing the knowledge required to cure this disease.