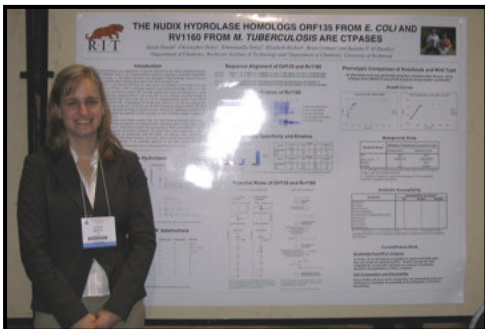


Thanks to a travel grant from the ACS Rochester Section, I had the honor of attending the April 27th – May 2nd 2007 American Society of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology as part of the Experimental Biology Conference to participate in both judged undergraduate and formal topic based poster sessions. In a group of 8, we traveled from Rochester, NY to Washington, DC. We arrived to a gorgeous, sunny day, a nice vacation from the cool and cloudy Rochester.



Sarah Denial in front of her poster at the Undergraduate Poster Competition

The meeting began on Saturday with the judged undergraduate poster competition. Two or three judges analyzed and dissected each undergraduate poster, gauging what the student knew and how comfortable they were with the material. Knowing that this would be my last undergraduate poster session, I was more relaxed than ever before. I focused mainly on preparing the underclassmen in my lab and just enjoyed having good conversations with the judges who came to my poster.

Over the next few days, I had the opportunity to hear some amazing lectures from top-notch researchers from all over the world. I spent most of my time in the RNA seminar room. I learned about Internal Ribosome Entry Site regulation, riboswitches, miRNA, snoRNA, and many other small or catalytic RNAs. I took the opportunity to check out other rooms discussing enzymology or enzyme structure. I was trying to see if any subject piqued my interest more than the others to help focus my research interests for graduate school.

I will be starting graduate school in the fall at Cornell University in their program of Biochemistry, Molecular and Cell Biology. While at the meeting, I took the opportunity to network with some of my future peers. Two BMCB graduate students were at the meeting, one giving a talk and the other presenting a poster. I had the opportunity to learn even more about the research they are doing at Cornell as well as introduce myself and increase the number of recognizable friendly faces for when I start in the fall.

On Tuesday was the topic based poster session. I feel like these sessions are the most helpful part of the whole meeting. At these sessions, you get a chance to network, have great conversations with people and get some advice or suggestions about your project. This was the first major poster session for some of my lab mates, so we had a great time presenting and talking to the other scientists.

Overall, the meeting was a huge success. I learned so much about many different topics, my research, and more about my own interests. I am very fortunate to have been able to attend the meeting. In addition, I would like to thank the American Chemical Society again for helping to make my journey possible.



The O'Handley Lab at the Topic Based Poster Session

-Sarah Denial