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Dr. Robert Goldberg, instructor of my Genetic Engineering class during my sophomore year, urged us to ask questions, formulate hypotheses, put forth ideas, and think critically; everything a physician must do everyday and precisely what I love about science. During Dr. Goldberg's subsequent Gene Discovery Lab class, I recall taking my first gel electrophoresis photo and being giddy and anxious to see the results of my hard work. From interpreting unexpected results to perfecting techniques in molecular biology, I learned patience and determination and developed valuable problem-solving skills.

Now, as a Teaching Fellow for these very same genetic engineering courses and as an undergraduate research assistant in his lab, I have gained another set of skills that I believe will even transfer to my future ambitions in the field of medicine. My responsibilities as a teaching fellow include leading discussion sections, giving lectures on major concepts and lab techniques, and guiding and mentoring students in the lab as they carry out their own experiments in which they analyze specific genes and the roles of these genes in seed development of Arabidopsis. While research has taught me how to think critically and creatively, teaching has taught me how to communicate more effectively. I have learned the importance of being articulate and connecting with people on a personal level, whether it's leading a class discussion or meeting with students individually.

My experiences in the Goldberg Lab have taught me many invaluable lessons about myself and have greatly impacted the way I think about science. Dr. Goldberg urged me to teach my students in the Socratic method by constantly asking questions, which helped me to always think creatively, rationally and on my feet. Teaching has also improved the way I think in terms of helping me to think in a more conceptual manner. I also learned that I take pleasure in teaching others, which I believe will be important in my career as a physician since it is a doctor's responsibility to not only treat patients, but educate the community. My experiences have also reinforced why I love and respect science and research. I admire the creativity, dedication, curiosity, patience and hard work that all of the researchers in the lab radiate everyday and I have even begun to see it within myself. I have also learned that a career in science is very demanding, but also undoubtedly rewarding.

Sincerely,

Kristin Gill