

Tyler Hines

Trip Report

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### ACS San Diego Trip Report

I would like to thank the members of the ACS Pittsburgh section for this travel grant award. I was able to attend the ACS San Diego conference along with five of my classmates from Washington & Jefferson College. Attending the conference was an incredible opportunity that I am extremely grateful for.

As an undergraduate about to graduate in the spring, I was excited for the opportunity to present my research on reducing spin-lattice relaxation times of aniline derivatives for solid-state NMR. This was the first time that I was involved in research which made me very proud of my work and added to my excitement to present it. Attending this conference gave me the much-needed experience in creating a poster and talking about my work with other members of the scientific community. At my poster presentation, I met a number of alumni from Washington & Jefferson College that were able to give me helpful advice for the future. One of the alum is currently attending the Colorado School of Mines, which at the time I was applying for their applied chemistry PhD program. I had a conversation with her about the school and their program. I learned a lot about the school, and it led me to become more excited about pursuing a PhD at the Colorado School of Mines. I have since been accepted and will be starting the journey to obtain my PhD in applied chemistry in the fall of 2022.

I am most interested in inorganic and environmental chemistry, but the first day I was in San Diego, I attended a variety of talks on different topics. I first listened to presentations on topics including organic chemistry, photochemistry, and medicinal chemistry. I found parts of these presentations interesting, but I was easily getting confused and struggling to focus at times. After testing the waters with these other disciplines, I went to the various inorganic and environmental chemistry talks and loved every second of them. Going to a variety of presentations helped me solidify that I want to work in the areas of inorganic and environmental chemistry in the future.

While the presentations were interesting, attending the poster sessions was the most significant part of the conference as it opened my eyes to the reality of the scientific community. I have always had the impression that at conferences like these, most people can understand any of the research they come across without much difficulty. This intimidated me and I was very nervous to ask questions and admit that I did not know something. However, through the poster sessions, I saw that most of the conversations were questions being asked due to a lack of understanding and that everyone was happy to teach each other. I was even able to teach a few people about solid-state NMR, which was surprising to me.

While at one of the poster sessions, I was able to catch up with an old friend who transferred from my college. We talked mostly about our respective colleges and our experiences related to chemistry. I feel like I learned a lot during this conversation due to the differences in our experience. Through re-connecting with this person, I realized how much can be learned through sharing personal experiences. Because of these experiences at the poster sessions, I am excited to attend more conferences in the future.

Thank you again to the ACS Pittsburgh division for providing me with support to attend this amazing event. It was an unforgettable experience and I look forward to attending future scientific conferences.