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Research Profile: Kathy Larrimore

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RESEARCH PROFILE: KATHY LARRIMORE

Kathy Larrimore graduated from the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences in May 2010 with a B.S. in Biology and a B.A. in Philosophy.

How did you begin working in a lab?

One afternoon I was looking at the Honors College blog and there was a post by a researcher, Dr. Carina Barth, who was looking for undergraduate honors students to do research in her lab. I was interested in finding a lab around that same time, and the projects she described on the blog looked interesting so I decided to email her about the positions.

What were the main ideas of your undergraduate research/honors thesis?

I worked on two main projects when I was an undergraduate student. The first involved researching how alterations in endogenous vitamin C content in Arabidopsis (a model plant commonly used in plant physiology research) affects flowering time. The second project which became my honors thesis involved determining whether constitutive defense priming found in vitamin C deficient Arabidopsis mutants is dependent on hydrogen peroxide, salicylic acid and certain pathogen related defense genes.

What are your post-graduate plans?

I will be a graduate student in the Molecular and Cellular Biology PhD program at Arizona State University. My focus will be protein engineering with an emphasis on the use of plants as novel expression systems.

How did your experience in the lab influence your undergraduate academic experience?

I think classroom lecture and textbooks are an integral aspect of education but real world experience is invaluable. The research gave me technical laboratory skills but also taught me experimental design, proposal writing, time management, presentation and manuscript formulation. Research brought a new level of experience in laboratory science I wouldn't have gotten otherwise during my time as an undergrad.

How did your experience in the lab influence your post-graduate plans?

I had been planning on doing research in graduate school before I was a freshman but until I did research I had always planned on going into a Masters program after graduating. After doing research in the lab I felt more confident going straight into a Ph. D. Program after graduating. I couldn't be happier with my decision, and I think the skills I gained in the lab and being active attending national and international conferences helped me have a well-rounded application to graduate school.