

Berger, Kiera R

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Education	PhD, Bioinformatics School of Biological Sciences, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, GA Bachelor of Science, Genetics, Cell Biology and Development College of Biological Sciences, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Minneapolis, MN Coursework Includes: Genetics, Molecular Cell Biology, Bioinformatic Analysis, Biochemistry, Immunology, Molecular Biology of Cancer, Neuroscience, Microbiology, Animal Behavior, Medical Terminology	August 2016-Present May 2014
Notable Coursework	Protein of Unknown Function Investigation, Bioinformatic Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">Proposed possible functions of the human protein TMEM63C in an extensive report using data gathered over the course of the semesterGained experience using bioinformatic databases and tools to characterize novel genes and proteinsLearned skills to carry out DNA and protein sequence analysis, sequence alignment, molecular evolution analysis, expression analysis, promoter analysis, and basic structure prediction and analysis Therapeutic Nanoparticle Design Proposal, Cell Biology <ul style="list-style-type: none">Designed a potential nanoparticle for the treatment of Follicular Lymphoma with a team of 9 studentsPresented nanoparticle therapy proposal to peers in a scientific poster symposium. I was responsible for creation of all graphics used to illustrate the nanoparticle pathwayProject elements included background on the disease, selection of specific cell surface markers to target, choosing a target gene for therapy, and a proposed mechanism for cellular entry and detection in the patient Protein Interaction Research Project, Foundations of Biology Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Collaborated with a team of 4 students to conduct a yeast two hybrid screen and identify protein interactions in <i>C. elegans</i>. Laboratory work was performed with limited guidance from TAs, which encouraged exploration of research materials and promoted a collaborative environment Genetically Modified Organism Project, Foundations of Biology I <ul style="list-style-type: none">Worked in a team of 8 students to propose a novel solution to a real world problem using a genetically modified organism.Drafted a research proposal for genetically modified oceanic bacteria that would break down BPA leeching from plastics in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Created a poster and presented in a symposium for peers. Won class award for Most Interesting Problem	Spring 2014 Fall 2013 Fall 2011 Spring 2011
Skills	Laboratory Techniques: Aseptic technique, Polymerase Chain Reaction, Sanger Sequencing, microscopy, microbial culture, gel electrophoresis, various assays Computer Skills: Windows & Macintosh Operating Systems, MS Office, Adobe Acrobat, ChemBioDraw, ChromasPro, JSI Sequence Pilot, SoftGenetics Mutation Surveyor, various alignment tools & genetic databases such as Alamut & HGMD Attributes and Interpersonal Skills: Creative, Inquisitive, Leadership, Organization, Listening and Communication	
Experience	Clinical DNA Testing Laboratory Technician PreventionGenetics, Marshfield, WI <ul style="list-style-type: none">Technician Responsibilities:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Followed Standard Operating Procedures and CAP/CLIA guidelinesPerformed PCR and Sanger sequencing of clinical DNA samplesPerformed gel electrophoresis of PCR productAnalyzed DNA chromatograms, scored gene variants, and drafted report of sequencing resultsAdditional Tasks:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mutation Surveyor: Performed a secondary analysis of DNA chromatograms to confirm results and check the work of scoring technicianWet Lab Training: Trained new technicians in wet lab processes including PCR and Sanger Sequencing. Developed documents and guides to aid in training as necessary.2-Step PCR Team: Performed long range PCR followed by nested PCR for genes where independent amplicon sequencing was difficult due to pseudogenes or highly repetitive regionsProvider Information Document: Maintained an Excel database of ordering healthcare providers and their credentials to reduce search redundancy and increase efficiency when drafting reportsPreviewer: Performed a preliminary assessment of AB1 sequence file quality before loading files into patient folders and the sequence analysis program for technicians to score	June 2014 – July 2016

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Experience cont.

Quality Assurance Student Assistant/Environmental Monitor *Molecular and Cellular Therapeutics*

University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, St. Paul, MN

April 2012 – May 2014

- Followed Good Manufacturing Practices and Standard Operating Procedures
- Completed environmental monitoring of clean rooms including non-viable air and viable air and surface testing.
- Maintained documentation of results and generated reports and metrics for building and program staff.
- Assisted Quality Assurance personnel with clerical work including scanning and redaction of clinical research Batch Production Records, organizing and maintaining records, and other duties as requested

Commercial Lending Project Team Member

AnchorBank Capitol Square Branch, Madison, WI

June – August 2011

- Collaborated with a team to develop and implement a standardized process for creating, storing, and monitoring 140 commercial loan files
- Contributed to weekly team meetings to identify issues and opportunities for process improvement

Activities

Freelance Artist and Cake Decorator

<http://www.kieraberger.com>

June 2010 – Present

- Provide high quality specialty cakes for events including weddings, graduations, and showers
- Fine Art created by commission for clients

PreventionGenetics Second Annual Art Show

October 2015

- Worked with a fellow artist and others to organize and host an Art Show sponsored by PreventionGenetics to raise money for Arts in the community
- All-day art show open to the public showcased local artists and accepted donations for admission as well as participation in art activities including pumpkin painting, a collaborative mural, and a silent auction

Marshfield Rotary Winter Wonderland Volunteer

December 2014

- Worked a one-night shift collecting donations for local food pantries at the annual winter light show

East Bank Emergency Department Volunteer

University of Minnesota Medical Center, Minneapolis, MN

January 2013 – May 2014

- Communicated with nurses, staff, and patients to assess their needs and assist with caregiving
- Conducted lab delivery of patient specimen

Achievements

Georgia Institute of Technology President's Fellow

2016

PreventionGenetics Marketing Design

Spring 2015 & 2016

- Created artistic genetic designs for the PreventionGenetics Marketing Department to use on marketing products given away at the 2015 and 2016 ACMG conference

Outstanding Student Employee Award

Spring 2014

- Awarded by the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities Student Employment and Leadership Program (SELP) to the top ten percent of student employees

"A Pipette and a Piece of Cake"

<https://www.cbs.umn.edu/blogs/cbs-connect/kiera-berger>

February 2014

- Featured on the College of Biological Sciences "CBS Connect" Blog in a Q&A about my perspective on the connection between science and art

Dean's List Spring Semester 2011

2011

Wisconsin 4-H Key Award

2010

- Awarded for consistent growth in leadership skills and involvement

Green County 4-H Leadership in Action Award

2010

- Awarded for a display exhibiting leadership activities

Interests

Interests and hobbies include backpacking and hiking, art and music including piano and ukelele, tennis and yoga, and reading for personal enjoyment