



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

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JADIN

GAINS IN THE EDUCATION OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE & RESEARCH & ENGINEERING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM ALUMNI

I'm a senior in high school. I am beginning at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign next year where I plan to study material science engineering.

WORDS OF ADVICE

The moment you find the AEOP program that's right for you – you should apply! I have attended both GEMS and REAP through AEOP and both times I had amazing experiences!

The best thing about REAP was that we got to work with our mentor every day and we were able to ask him many questions.

BEST THINGS ABOUT THE PROGRAM

My favorite part about Gains in the Education of Mathematics and Science [GEMS] summer program is that I was able to learn and explore STEM with other middle and high school kids my age at an Army Research lab. It was a great experience learning how to work with a group and solve different problems. After my great GEMS experience, I was inspired to apply for – and was accepted into – the Research & Engineering Apprenticeship Program [REAP], where I spent a summer as a research apprentice. My friend and I were both interns in clay minerals research. I really enjoyed learning how to use different types of spectroscopy, X-ray and iron analysis techniques. The research we conducted will allow other researchers to more easily identify various properties of iron. They used the spectroscopy, x-ray, and iron analysis techniques to find the recoil-free fraction in iron samples. The best thing about REAP was that we got to work with our mentor every day and we were able to ask him many questions.

AS A RESULT OF THE PROGRAM

REAP introduced me to material science engineering, which is the field I now plan to study next year. Until I attended REAP last summer, I had been planning on going into bioengineering as I had an interest in infectious disease research. However, as the summer progressed I learned that I would be able to have a broader base through material engineering research. I also discovered just how cool this kind of engineering is.

HOW PARTICIPATING IN AEOP INSPIRED YOU TO ADVANCE IN STEM

GEMS prepared me for many advanced science classes in school, and it prepared me to explore different types of opportunities. My summer as a GEMS participant inspired me to become a camp counselor at Camp Invention, mentoring younger students and inspiring their love of STEM. GEMS and REAP also gave me the courage to reach out to professors at the University of Illinois in search of a mentorship for my upcoming freshman year.