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### WHAT IS THE MOST BENEFICIAL/ INSPIRING PART OF THE MENTOR RELATIONSHIP?

During my own studies, I learned the most working one-on-one with my mentor in the lab. Now the roles are reversed and I am the mentor, but the experience is just as gratifying. When I see my students “get it,” I know they can go on to learn, discover, create and invent on their own.

### WHAT GOT YOU INTERESTED IN THIS FIELD?

I became interested in research at the interface between chemistry and optics after seeing an amazing presentation on the synthesis and characterization of molecules for nonlinear optics (NLO). NLO is used to control laser light in myriad applications, including imaging, telecommunications and sensing.

### WHAT SAGE ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A STUDENT JUST BEGINNING TO CONSIDER A CAREER IN SCIENCE?

I would say “read all you can.” We cannot underestimate how important it is to learn about science by reading the work of those who came before us. Reading about science and how problems have been solved is just as important as getting into the lab and doing experiments. It is also useful to not only read technical materials, but to also read histories of how scientists approached problems and the role science played in their lives. Reading about the lives of past scientists helped me realize how fulfilling a career in STEM could be.

### WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS FIELD?

I was very keen to be in a career in which I could create knowledge. Careers in STEM enable a person to generate new knowledge and to create in ways that benefit others. One can make a new molecule, discover something about how cells work, invent a new manufacturing process or find better ways to mathematically solve complex problems. The list of ways in which scientists and engineers create and contribute to society is endless! Although there are many rewarding and even lucrative career paths, few allow a person to leave behind a legacy of creation and discovery that is so fulfilling and enriching along the way.