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Beckman Scholars Program

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BECKMAN SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Beckman Scholars Program, established in 1997, is an invited program for accredited universities and four-year colleges in the US. It provides scholarships that contribute significantly to advancing the education, research training, and personal development of select students in chemistry, biochemistry, and the biological and medical sciences. The sustained, in-depth undergraduate research experiences and comprehensive faculty mentoring are unique in terms of program scope, content, and level of scholarship awards. The University of Kentucky has been invited to apply for the program twice, and was selected to participate for three years beginning in 2002. The University will be invited to reapply in the fall of 2004 when its current award is completed.

The Beckman Scholars Program provides support for no more than three outstanding undergraduate researchers per year. Scholars receive support for two summers and the intervening academic year, including a generous scholarship award plus stipends for supplies and travel. Scholars must conduct their research in chemistry, biochemistry, the biological and medical sciences, or some interdisciplinary combination of these disciplines, in the laboratory of and under the mentorship of a University of Kentucky faculty member approved by the Beckman Foundation.

Being named a Beckman Scholar is an extraordinarily high honor. The process by which a scholar is selected is quite rigorous. The selection is conducted by a committee of research faculty members each with a strong record of mentoring undergraduate researchers. The selection process evaluates 1) the ability of the candidate in both written and oral communication by considering a required research essay and conducting an interview of each finalist; 2) the past achievements of the candidate by reviewing the entire undergraduate transcript, academic honors received, and all previous research experience; 3) the candidate's intellect, character,

and potential to excel as a researcher by appraising a required written research plan and at least three letters of support from current and prospective faculty mentors; 4) the candidate's potential for a career in research by evaluating a required written statement of educational and career plans.

To apply to become a Beckman Scholar, a student must be a sophomore or junior at the University of Kentucky, majoring in Chemistry, Biology, or a closely related discipline (such as chemical engineering or agricultural biotechnology), and have already completed at least one semester of research experience.

The Beckman Scholars for the year 2003-2004 are Anna Rothert (mentored by Professor Sylvia Daunert) and Megan Flynn (mentored by Professor Robert Houtz). During the year 2002-2003, the University's Beckman Scholars were Garrett Sparks (mentored by Professor Robin Cooper) and Robin Petroze (mentored by Professor D. Allan Butterfield). In the following articles, the 2003-2004 Scholars explain and discuss their research, and their mentors reflect on the experience of mentoring undergraduate researchers.

The Beckman Scholars named for the year 2004-2005 are Stephanie Logsdon (mentored by Professor Robin Cooper) and Brandon Sutton (mentored by Professor Diane Snow). For more information on the Beckman Scholars Program at the University of Kentucky, visit www.uky.edu/beckman.



Anna Rothert



Megan Flynn