

Graduate Women in Science **Fall 2015** Travel Report
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I extend a huge thank you to the Graduate Women in Science organization for the generous support to attend the Gordon Research Seminar and Gordon Research Conference on Phosphorylation and G-Protein Mediated Signaling Networks. The conference took place in Biddeford, ME from June 4th – 10th. The GWIS funding allowed me to participate in the Seminar portion of the back-to-back meetings, and the Seminar is dedicated to trainees. It is organized by and for graduate students and post-docs, providing a unique forum for trainee presentations and feedback apart from that of principal investigators.

During the Conference, I presented a poster titled, “P2Y2 Regulation of CXCR4-dependent Migration and HIV-1 Infection.” I received valuable feedback both from my peers as well as more advanced scientists. Importantly, this Conference exposed me to many techniques that are cutting edge in the protein interaction field, and let me discuss with experts how these techniques might work for my project. I was able to meet with a researcher who focuses on binding sites of the filamin A protein, which is a potential scaffold for P2Y2. I also had a discussion with a protein structural biologist who has solved both ligand-bound and dimerized CXCR4 structures. Both of these scientists helped me better understand how my research fits into the broader context of the field and how FRET (Förster resonance energy transfer) experiments and x-ray crystallography data could move my project forward.

Being a Gordon Research Seminar and Conference, it placed high value on informal time to meet and mingle with fellow trainees and esteemed principal investigators. This was important to me for learning as well as expanding my personal network. The meeting was a great experience and is certainly helping shape how I proceed with my research project. As a highlight and enormous honor, I was nominated and elected Chair of the Gordon Research Seminar that will occur in two years, giving me the opportunity to serve as Organizer and return to the Conference to discuss my project's progress.