

IMPACTED

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Jynene Black | Alaska INBRE Reporting and Outreach Coordinator

Ariane in Wonderland



Ariane Jasmin is a Fall 2020/Spring 2021 INBRE Undergraduate Research Assistantship in Dr. Kristin O'Brien's lab at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. When I read her answers to my questions, I kept thinking of *Alice in Wonderland* because she said she fell down a rabbit hole. What brought her to Alaska from rural Québec, Canada? Well, it wasn't following a rabbit down a hole. It was her love of dog mushing. Ariane is a dog musher of 12 years and an outdoor enthusiast!

When Ariane is not studying, she can be found in the wilderness enjoying fishing, hunting, gardening, biking, and skiing. She also herds kids, which I assume to be hers. She is addicted to jigsaw puzzles and hopes to someday compete, with the ultimate goal of attending the World Championship in Valladolid, Spain.



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When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?

Ariane

Not until I was 24 and pregnant for the first time. Until then, I was a high school dropout with a GED. I became fascinated with the pregnancy and birth process and must have read the entire library section on the subject. I kept digging deeper into the evolutionary implications of human birth and the scientific history that lead us to today's maternity care.

In other words, I went down a rabbit hole and never came out! My fascination for science and medicine

grew from that point on, and I decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Biology and explore related career options.

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What is your current research?

Ariane

I am learning to use molecular biology techniques to characterize the hypoxia response in *Notothenia coriiceps*, an Antarctic fish species. While I don't intend on pursuing fish-related research specifically after I graduate, I find cell and molecular biology fascinating. This research is key to understanding biological processes on the macroscale, and I enjoy being a part of it. I look forward to using this knowledge in my future medical career!

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How did you end up in Dr. O'Brien's lab?

Ariane

I was looking for research opportunities. My Genetics lab TA, Iris Cato, let me know that Dr. O'Brien was looking for undergraduates to join her cell and molecular biology lab. I got in touch with her, and here I am, nearly two years later.

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Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Ariane

I will be starting medical school next fall. In 10 years, I see myself practicing medicine in a semi-rural area. My interests within medicine are broad for now. Still, I can picture myself working with patients who suffer from chronic illnesses—for example, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases—and more complicated cases that are tougher to diagnose. Knowing patients who have experienced an undifferentiated chronic illness was the main thing that drove me to medicine, so I'm looking forward to taking an active part in patients' lives. I want to make patients' lives more manageable.

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Can you tell me how INBRE has impacted you?

Ariane

As a non-traditional student with a family, it was vital to be well supported through extra-curricular activities. INBRE has allowed me to engage in independent research under the mentorship of Dr. O'Brien and develop my research skills, gain knowledge, and develop critical thinking skills. While navigating COVID-19, INBRE has helped me feel a sense of community: during the retreat and seeing people walking around with INBRE logos on their masks or pens or shirts, I feel a part of something.

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