

The 28<sup>th</sup> annual meeting for Society of Behavioral Neuroendocrinology (SBN) was an incredible experience that provided a multitude of beneficial opportunities for undergraduates like myself to experience. This 4-day conference was full of innovative ideas and cutting-edge research that was shared by experts in the field of neuroscience. From the professional development workshops, symposiums, keynote speakers, and poster sessions, SBN came with colossal insight on both professional and academic levels to keep in mind as I plan for the next steps of my future.

The first day of the conference consisted of professional development workshops and keynote addresses. I attended two workshops that opened my eyes to ways I can not only be a better scientist in and out of the lab, but also a better colleague, friend, and overall person. In these workshops, I was provided with tips on how to grow and maintain healthy leadership and how to become a role model for those around. More directly related to science and my work in the lab, I also learned about novel AI machine learning tools that are currently allowing research to be taken to the next level. There was also a discussion on the topics of sex and gender and how to ensure both your science and scientific writing is inclusive to all individuals. As a conference for scientists at any level, I am truly grateful to have experienced these talks and learn ways to garner a healthy mindset and relationship regarding my work in both the lab and the classroom at such an early time in my career.

There were seven symposiums that consisted of oral presentations from advanced scientists sharing their current work in neuroendocrinology. It was inspiring to see all of the fascinating roles that hormones have and the important mechanisms they regulate for individuals to be happy and healthy. These presentations provided a better understanding of how unbalanced levels of hormones affect the brain and the consequential behaviors that are displayed because of

it. After attending these symposiums, I am now aware of how crucial hormone research is and should continue to be in order for us to have a better understanding of how hormones influence social behavior, motivation, sickness, plasticity, etc. and how we can regulate the crucial bodily processes that hormones drive.

While the poster session was a great opportunity for me learn how to develop and put together a research poster, I also fostered skills on how to present my research to scientists at all levels. This was my first time having to create and present a research poster of my work and I had a great time sharing it with fellow scientists. It was exhilarating to display the work I have been applying so much of my time into and watch people connect with it to provide feedback that will further my project. I also got to spend time at other individuals' posters and see the work they have been conducting. As an international conference, it was enlightening to see the research that is being done all around the world and I am beyond thankful that I was able to participate in the experience.