

Taylor University

Pillars at Taylor University

2020 Website News Stories

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Senior Stories: Chemistry

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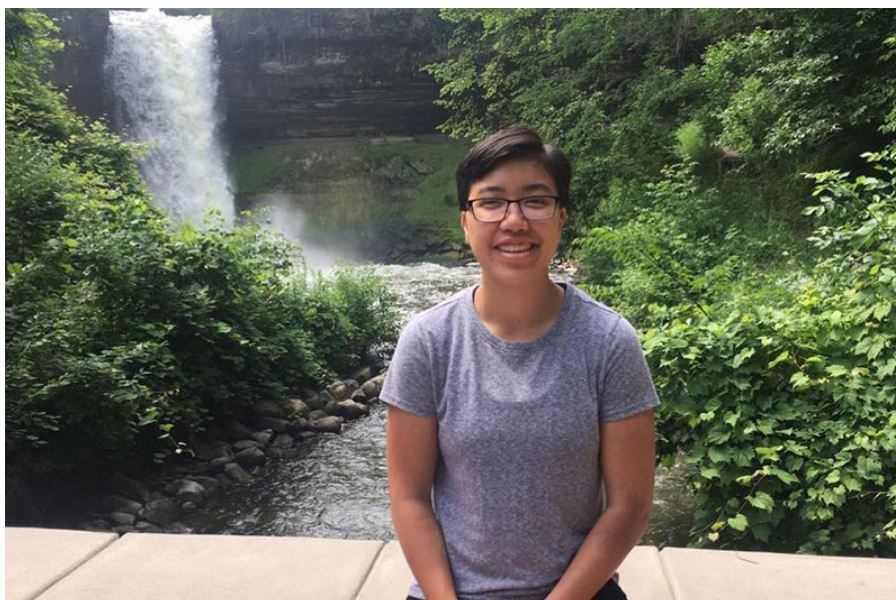
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Senior Stories: Chemistry

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Taylor wouldn't be Taylor without amazing students. Developing servant-leaders marked with a passion to minister Christ's redemptive love is why we are here. Students seeking to serve through many different fields and careers are participating in this Senior Stories series to share about how God has used Taylor in their lives.

Taylor's Chemistry Program

You might not think that the word "fun" would apply to studying [Chemistry](#) in college. But at Taylor, our Chemistry program is academically rigorous and it's also a highly rewarding field of study. Yes, we even have fun. We enjoy our labs. Our faculty are relationships. Students get amazing internships, even doing research at prestigious institutions like Princeton. Some win awards and attend conferences. And when our students graduate, they're prepared for their careers and have a community cheering them on.

Meet a senior graduating from our [Chemistry program](#):



Name: Erica Mitchell, '20

Major: Chemistry

Hometown: Fruitport, MI

Why did you choose Taylor and your major?

I selected my major because it seemed interesting and my friends and teachers in high school told me I was good at it. I chose Taylor because they had a professor for each field in Chemistry to allow me to find what type of Chemistry would interest me.

What people have had the greatest impact on you during your time at Taylor?

My friends and professors have had the greatest impact upon me. My friends support, listen, and share life with me well. I feel very known and loved at Taylor due to them. The professors offer support and listen, they see my future more clearly than I do many times and push me to be able to become who they know I can be.

Have you had any internship experiences?

I have completed two summer research experiences while at Taylor. The first was after my sophomore year at the University of Mississippi and the second was at the University of Minnesota.

My former research advisor, Dr. Brandon Magers, prepared me very well for these experiences with the research I did under his leadership. My classes also prepared me well as the amount of work done at these experiences really depends on your drive to do more work. From these experiences I learned how to present my research confidently, work independently, and know when to seek help.

What are the most important things you've learned in your major classes?

I learned that it is okay to make mistakes along the way as long as you get to the right end. It is rare that you are given a problem and know the "correct" way to answer it, the chemistry classes I have taken have prepared me to look at a problem and see multiple paths to get to the solution. *Physical Chemistry II* is one example of where the problem may seem daunting at first but if you just start with one idea to get to the end, you will eventually get to the right answer.

In what ways do you feel prepared for your future because of your Taylor

experience? What are your hopes for your future career?

Being at Taylor has helped shape me into the person I am today, I am the sum of my experiences and the moments I have had here have allowed me to understand myself and others in a much deeper way. I have learned who I want and strive to be along with learning what I wish to turn away from.

In the future, I hope to become a professor so that I can guide and mentor students just as the professors here have done for me.

How have foundational core classes impacted you?

Foundational core classes are a mixed bag. I think it really just depends on the professor and what they prioritize as the end goal of the class. Most general education class professors should understand that a majority of their students are not going to remember the minute details of the class, and adjust so that the end takeaway is something that leaves the student thinking. Dr. Householder, Dr. Pak, Dr. Magee, and Dr. Johnson have all done a wonderful job with this and have really pushed myself to rethink my past perspective.

How has your faith been affected by your Taylor experience?

Being at Taylor has helped me see ideals and beliefs that are advertised to me as truth and sort through them to find what I believe is truth. To me, part of building and fostering a Christian worldview is figuring out how to take new information and have it challenge your past perspective. This leads to changed minds and beliefs.

What advice would you give a high school student who is considering Chemistry?

Stick with it if you are unsure. Chemistry has a lot of opportunities that many do not know about and those opportunities have created a great job market for a career after college.



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