

2013 AAAS SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING MASS MEDIA FELLOW

TEAL CONNOR

DEGREE: 5TH YEAR PHD STUDENT,
NEUROSCIENCE
SCHOOL: GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
SPONSOR: BURROUGHS WELLCOME FUND
MEDIA SITE: NOVA

Research Focus: Development of the brain

Translation: I study the role of proteins that help certain brain structures develop. These brain structures are important for complex thinking, memory, and movement. I study how these proteins interact with each other in cells and how they contribute to the functioning of both the developing and adult brain.

What are your goals for the summer?

I really want to improve my writing skills and get feedback on my work. It would be awesome at the end of the summer to say that I contributed and helped make an episode.

What are you most excited about?

I'm excited to work at NOVA and be in a real office, discussing science and ideas for shows. I'm most excited about seeing the whole process and how a show gets put together.



Why are you passionate about science communication?

There is a wealth of science research being completed and yet the general public often doesn't hear about or understand the findings. I think it's important to have scientists and specialists translate the discoveries, methodology, and jargon for a lay audience. A better understanding of science will help in the sculpting of policy decisions, understanding of health and medical options, and promoting better environmental practices.

Who is your favorite science communicator?

Gretchen Reynolds (writes the Phys Ed column for the NY Times) because she has a very personable style and you can always relate to what she is writing. Also, Ira Flatow because he covers such a wide range of science topics. And I'm incredibly jealous of both of their jobs!

“THERE IS A WEALTH OF SCIENCE RESEARCH BEING COMPLETED AND YET THE GENERAL PUBLIC OFTEN DOESN'T HEAR ABOUT OR UNDERSTAND THE FINDINGS.”

Do you have a link to an article you'd like to share?

<http://www.milestothetrials.com/2012/04/science-friday-wall-of-carbs.html>

Describe your dream job.

My dream job would involve spending my time reading about the latest research

and translating it (writing or talking about it) for non-scientists. I don't care if it's a newspaper, magazine, website, or radio station, it all sounds amazing!

Tell us about something you do outside of the lab.

I'm an avid runner and marathoner.

Anything else you'd like to share?

Baking (and eating my creations) is my favorite way to negate all the miles I run.