

## Maryelise Cieslewicz



**High School:** Whitefish Bay High School

**SMART Team Project:** Class II MHC and T-cell receptor

**College:** MIT Class of 2010

**Major:** Biological Engineering

**Current Career Plans:** After I graduate, I plan to go to graduate school for a PhD program in Biological or Chemical Engineering. After that, I hope to possibly work for a pharmaceutical company.

**Impact of the SMART Teams on me:** SMART Team was really integral in helping me figure out what I was interested in doing for a career. Before I began

on SMART Team, I actually wasn't very interested in biology. I applied to be on the team because the computer programming aspects appealed to me, and I thought it would be a great chance to learn something new. However, after just the first Saturday session I was completely hooked on biology and scientific research. What was special about SMART Team was that it gave us the chance to learn more in depth about a certain topic, as opposed to a course that covers a variety of areas. Learning about the MHC II and the immune system at that more complex level let us think more about the problems at hand and be able to ask better questions. It was my first introduction to research, and I decided that I really liked it.

**How did SMART Teams enable you to work in Dr. Gorski's lab?** The summer after graduation I worked with a post-doc in Dr. Gorski's lab at the Blood Research Institute. Already knowing Dr. Gorski from SMART Team, I felt really comfortable working for him, and it was a really great environment to get hands on lab experience for the first time.

**Favorite Memory of SMART Teams:** My favorite memories from SMART Team are definitely our lunch hour and after school meetings in Mrs. Roberts' classroom. Working together on the project was really challenging, but we made it really fun, too.