

2-25-2016

Batchenkova '18 Earns a Place in Exceptional Research Opportunities Program

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "Batchenkova '18 Earns a Place in Exceptional Research Opportunities Program" (2016). *University Relations News Archive*. 2294.

http://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/2294

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the External Relations at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Relations News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MORRIS

Contact:

Melissa Vangsness, Director of Communications
Phone: [320-589-6414](tel:320-589-6414), melissav@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer

Phone: [320-589-6068](tel:320-589-6068), jrray@morris.umn.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Batchenkova '18 Earns a Place in Exceptional Research Opportunities Program](#)

EXROP provides outstanding summer research experiences to bright, motivated undergraduate students.

MORRIS, Minnesota (February 25, 2016)—Natalia Batchenkova '18, Morris, is one of only a few students nationwide selected for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) [Exceptional Research Opportunities Program](#) (EXROP). EXROP provides outstanding summer research experiences to bright, motivated undergraduates from groups traditionally underrepresented in the sciences.

The goal of EXROP is to ensure that a diverse and highly trained workforce is available to assume leadership roles in science. Once accepted into the program, students are matched with HHMI scientists who have volunteered to provide mentored research experiences. Batchenkova has been matched with HHMI investigator Michael Summers at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The two will work on a project regarding retroviruses (like that which causes AIDS), which will offer her the opportunity to learn new laboratory techniques.

HHMI works with EXROP students after they have finished their summer study programs to encourage them to pursue careers in academic science. A junior majoring in biology and minoring in chemistry, Batchenkova hopes someday to pursue graduate study in the fields of neurology and virology, and she has a very clear sense of how this experience will help her to do so.

“It’s a competitive process for the faculty mentors to get in, and it’s really competitive for the students, so you get the best mentors working with the best students,” she says. Her hope is to continue working, networking, and possibly publishing with her faculty mentor once the summer internship concludes.

Batchenkova already boasts an impressive resume when it comes to hands-on lab work. She began working with Assistant Professor of Biology Michael Ceballos on an [American Chemical Society Project SEED research internship](#) when she was a high-school student in 2013. As an undergraduate she continued working with Ceballos on [a biofuels project](#) and took part in two National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates. [She has presented her research in Manizales, Colombia](#), and at the Council of Undergraduate Research in Washington, DC. She also has received multiple national and local awards, including a Morris Academic Partner award and several scholarships.

Application to the EXROP program is by nomination only. Noting her many accomplishments, Batchenkova’s nominator, Ceballos, speaks of her with the utmost praise and admiration.

“Of the hundreds of students I have served over the past decade as a faculty member at three different institutions, she is among the top five I have seen come through my classes and my lab,” he says. “She is exceptionally dedicated, and that is what is needed to be successful under HHMI EXROP.”

Batchenkova is the second Morris student selected for EXROP. [Ellie Hofer '15 was selected in 2014](#).

Batchenkova is made eligible for the EXROP program by the Pathways to Science Program, which is supported in part by a grant to the University of Minnesota, Morris from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute through the Precollege and Undergraduate Science Education Program. More information is available at morris.umn.edu/hhmi.

[View this story electronically.](#)

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.

###