

Elbow to elbow with leading researchers

Monday, August 9, 2004

Megan Cleland, a biochemistry and biomedical science double major, has been spending her summer in a prestigious internship program in biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, Md.

Cleland, a Sioux Falls native, is performing research for the genetics and biochemistry branch of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, an NIH subsidiary. NIH is the world's largest biomedical research institution. Its summer internship program in biomedical research is highly competitive – just one in four applicants is selected.

Cleland was awarded her internship in part because of her research experience at SCSU. As a member of the interdisciplinary research group, she has studied calf DNA with chemistry professor Lakshmaiah Sreerama.



Working with some of the world's leading scientists and researchers, Cleland is examining newly discovered proteins in order to form a better understanding of how cells grow and develop. That understanding will be the foundation for further research that may lead to advancements in treating diseases that affect millions.

Cleland hopes that her summer experience will help further her career. "NIH is an incredible place, and the opportunities to network and meet people are endless," she said. Working at NIH gives her the opportunity to be part of a community of people from around the globe who love research. Cleland also believes that her experience has significantly improved her skills in the laboratory environment and in dealing with complex scientific problems.

- Marge Proell