

**Judy Hsu**

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My summer research experience served as an excellent entrance point for me to the world of research. Prior to that I had minimal to no training in research but was always curious about the behind-the-scene work in all the scientific papers that I read. I was interested in things like why the researchers thought the topic was significant enough to pursue, how they formulated a working question, and the kind of study they ultimately designed to answer that question. I knew there is no better way to learn about the details of a research process other than to be part of that process, so I jumped at the opportunity to participate in research between my first and second year of medical school. The research experience was less structured than what I expected, and it turned out to be both a good and bad thing. I liked how much freedom it gave me so that I was able to take charge of my own learning and go at my own pace. On the other hand, for someone who had little background in research, I found that too much creative freedom wasn't always a helpful thing for me; I just wasn't experienced enough to know how to construct the process in a logical and coherent fashion. It was very much a self-directed experience, but by the end of it I felt like I had a good grasp on the development and implementation of research design. Data analysis was still somewhat of a challenge for me, and it would have been nice if I had some training in statistics in order to be able to fully immerse myself in the project from beginning to the end. Overall, the summer research experience gave me what I was looking for, and it provided me with a wonderful insight; it made me realize how research can be a powerful tool for clinicians to address knowledge gaps they see in practice, and this appreciation is something I am sure I will carry with me for the rest of my career.

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