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Meet Theresa-Anne Tatom-Naecker, WHSA Summer Intern

A senior at the University of Chicago pursuing a double major in biology and environmental science, Theresa-Anne Tatom-Naecker grew up in St. Louis, Missouri. Like many other summer interns, she had not been to Woods Hole before, but she had heard about the village through the University of Chicago's affiliation with the MBL and in articles and papers about marine science and oceanography.

She learned about the summer internship opportunity at the Woods Hole Science Aquarium through a college friend who was an intern last year and "had a wonderful experience."

Tatom-Naecker is an only child, and while she is the first in her family to study marine science, several of her family members have backgrounds in science fields, including neuroscience, engineering, and economics. Interested in marine mammal conservation, especially involving whales and fish population dynamics, Tatom-Naecker plans to take a gap year after college, giving her time to gain experience and determine her specific area of focus through internships before she attends graduate school, where she plans to pursue a master's degree.

Her summer in Woods Hole allowed her to develop a new set of skills and connections and provided many new experiences. "One night, some friends and I went down to Stony Beach to see the bioluminescence. It was like swimming with underwater fireflies – definitely one of the most amazing things I've ever seen."

The internship program provided "an incredible variety of experiences. We were trained in animal husbandry work and public education techniques, attended seminars and presentations on the work being done in Woods Hole and on possible future careers, traveled around the Cape and learned about its history, and so much more."

In her spare time, Tatom-Naecker loves to read, swim, bake and cook, swing dance and discover new places. Most of her free time during the summer involved biking around with friends exploring the area and finding new beaches, restaurants, and ice cream shops.

Her favorite activities this summer were learning to prepare food and feed the fish in the aquarium, going whale watching in Provincetown, visiting Nantucket, leading aquarium visitors on collecting walks, and talking with scientists at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Her favorite places include Racing Beach and Spohr Gardens in Falmouth.

Her biggest misconception? “Before coming to Woods Hole, I had no understanding of the huge range of work done here, mostly because I did not realize that there were six scientific institutions in close proximity, nor did I fully appreciate how much inter-institutional work occurred.” she said. “Everyone was very welcoming and open to having us here. It was an amazing experience.”

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Woods Hole Aquarium Summer Interns Speak to a Full House:

http://www.capenews.net/falmouth/news/woods-hole-aquarium-summer-interns-speak-to-full-house/article_2bf88775-ec7c-5af3-ab94-5ad0e3c5dcab.html

Woods Hole Science Aquarium: <http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov/>