

Bates Center for

PURPOSEFUL | WORK

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(Hybrid)

Major: Biology

*** What parts of this internship feel “purposeful” to you – in the sense that they align with your interests, strengths, and values? Describe.**

I was really fortunate that this opportunity aligned very well with both my career goals and personal interests. I was able to experience life as a fisheries scientist here in Maine and build my skills as a researcher. But more than that, I really felt that I was working alongside people who had similar values for Maine (my home state and also where I worked) as I did – such as healthy coastal and offshore ecosystems, sustainable fisheries, and the preservation of our working waterfront. I was really happy to go into work each day with other people who cared deeply about the same topics that I cared about, and it was meaningful to me to experience that and realize how much I want to prioritize that in my own career.

*** Name a skill in which you gained confidence this summer.**

One skill that I gained a lot of confidence in from this summer was my ability to plan and implement a research project, especially when the plan doesn't end up working out perfectly! Although there were hiccups along the way, I learned to adapt my plan to work best with the changing circumstances. For example, I had a field day at sea where I became very seasick. However, I was able to salvage much of my data collection because I changed my plan and simplified the process to become something doable for me in those conditions. This helped me understand better how to readjust a research plan when things aren't always ideal in the field.

*** In what ways did this experience alter or confirm your planned career trajectory?**

In many ways this experience confirmed that I am on the right path to pursue a career that I love and enjoy as a fisheries ecologist. However, the advice of my mentors and colleagues at the site really helped me decide on my next steps in my career and understand how I can best approach the next 5-6 years of my life in order to further explore this career path. For example, I have decided to pursue a Master's degree program after college, where I had previously been unsure whether to go straight into a PhD. After listening to their experiences and recommendations, I know what will be the best next step for me and my personal goals.

*** What advice would you offer someone who is considering applying to your specific internship?**

I loved this internship and I would recommend it to anyone who is interested in fisheries biology or marine biology. This lab was super fun and had a lot of fieldwork-based components, like cutting open tuna heads to extract otoliths and take muscle samples for genetic analysis. One thing I'd say is, don't decide to do a stomach content analysis/foraging ecology project without knowing what you're getting into! There will be LOTS of decomposing fish. It was certainly one of the most memorable parts of the internship for me, but I'm glad it wasn't my project.

*** What is one thing you've learned in the classroom setting here at Bates that you were able to apply to your summer work? OR: What perspectives/learning opportunities did you gain from this internship that were not necessarily available within the classroom?**

As Bates is an inland college, there are not a lot of coastal and marine fieldwork opportunities. This organization really prioritized getting us out onto the water for both science and fun! I was able to go mussel sampling in Casco Bay and on a lobster boat to collect data. We also went on a long day cruise far offshore and saw dolphins, mola mola, bluefin, and even a turtle. I grew to really love being on the water and became passionate about marine and fisheries science in a more concrete and personal way than I had from solely my experiences at Bates.

*** What was the "community" of your workplace like? Was it a good fit for you?**

I felt that this internship was a really good fit for me! Everyone at the GMRI was passionate about marine science and coastal communities and I really felt that everyone I worked with not only enjoyed but believed in their work and the mission of the organization. The atmosphere of the lab and the organization was very welcoming and friendly and I always felt comfortable there.