Travel Grant to Attend ASM General Meeting 2014
EDventures Grant Final Report
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Introduction:

Effective science communication is an increasingly important part of a career in research. Scientists must be able to communicate their ideas to funding agencies and their results to their colleagues and the general public. My EDventures grant to attend the ASM General Meeting 2014 in Boston, MA, was intended to allow me to: (1) facilitate a workshop titled “Communicating Science to the Public: A Professional Necessity” in collaboration with Workshop Convener Dr. Dennis Mangan and (2) subsequently recreate this workshop for the broader C-MORE community through a videoconference organized in conjunction with the Professional Development Organizing Committee.

ASM General Meeting 2014:

Unfortunately, the registered attendance for the Communications Workshop at the Boston ASM General Meeting was low and ASM canceled the workshop. However, since my abstract had already been accepted for a poster presentation I still attended the conference and got a lot out of it. The talks and posters at ASM covered a range of topics immediately useful to my C-MORE research, including a symposium on “Metals and Microbes” and “Who Are the 99%? Insights into the Uncultivated Bacterial Majority.”

C-MORE Workshop on Science Communication:

The C-MORE iteration of “Communicating Science: A Professional Necessity” occurred on August 27th, 2014. There were 30 total attendees across six partner institutions, ranging from graduate students to associate professors. Attendees went through improv exercises and learned other techniques to help energize their talks (Figure 1). Overall workshop feedback was extremely positive, and 95% of survey respondents stated they would recommend this workshop to a peer. I gained leadership and communication skills by organizing and facilitating the workshop in collaboration with Dr. Mangan.

Figure 1. UH attendees practice their elevator pitches. Photo credit: Michele Guannel