

BEST @ CORNELL

Events for September 2016

From Academics to Your Career Goals | 15 September

Lydia McClure from NSF ICorps speaks at the CAPES seminar series. Hosted by CCMR

Location: 700 Clark Hall. 12:00 - 1:00 PM. For info click [here](#)

URBEST Retreat & Career Workshop | 15 September

Career workshop events hosted by URBEST. Registration required

Location: 601 Elmwood Ave, Rochester, NY. 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM. Please register [here](#)

Navigate Your Future BEST – Careers in Governance, Risk, and Compliance

Panel discussion/skills session co-hosted by OISE & BEST

Location: 226 Weill Hall. 1:00 - 3:00 PM. For info click [here](#)

Postdoc Leadership Certificate Program – Module 1 | 29 September

Modules designed for postdoctoral fellows on leadership certification

Location: TBD. 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM. For applications click [here](#). Must attend series

SPARK Talk – Deadline | 3 October

Refine your research presentation skills. Hosted by Cornell University Library

Event will be held: October 27. 4:00 - 6:00 PM. For info click [here](#)

For the complete set of events, make sure to check the
[BEST Events Section](#)

Perspectives on Biosafety and Research Safety Management

by Victor Aguilar

While summer was in full swing, I had the opportunity to work as a part-time intern for Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) at Cornell, specifically with the Biosafety team. The internship immersed me in the daily work environment and mentorship in key aspects of the career. This approach allowed me to understand the technical and interpersonal skills required to be a successful biosafety expert. While at EH&S, I worked most closely with two biosafety personnel, Alan Bitar and Joshua Turse, with oversight and mentorship from the Biosafety Officer, Alexis Brubaker. While there, I was able to meet with individuals across EH&S and understand the broad objectives for each section. Josh spent additional time taking me on safety inspections across campus and instructing me on how to perform risk assessments. These interactions offered me a closer look at EH&S dynamics. One of my assignments was to draft content for a new initiative to develop biological agent safety guidance sheets, as well as reviewing existing training materials used by EH&S. Given prior experience critiquing the communication of science, I felt most comfortable revising the teaching materials. Most unique was understanding the process of creating the agent safety guidance sheets. It was a freer experience that allowed me best to understand how EH&S develops new safety guidelines and protocols. Most important for me was understanding the nature of safety management to meet the needs of the university, striving to be mindful of the research itself. For those with customer service skills and passion to advance the biosafety field, this is a BESTernship for you.

-Victor Aguilar is a graduate student at the Meinig School of Biomedical Engineering

Victor Aguilar
Editor-in-Chief

BEST MENTORS



-Maintaining Safety at the Lab Bench

Alexis Brubaker, M.S. has been preparing for a career in biosafety since her days as a student, focusing on aspects of biology and forensic science. After earning a prestigious fellowship to develop as a biosafety expert at NIH, Alexis obtained the opportunity to oversee safety at high-risk facilities like Boston University's NEIDL and the Rocky Mountain Laboratories. These days, Alexis still manages (with great enthusiasm) a biosafety team at Cornell, often taking the initiative to develop best practices to ensure safety compliance by researchers across the university. Among some of her innovations includes the development of safety guide sheets for biological materials and reforming teaching practices employed by EH&S staff (see this month's perspectives article). With expertise in tow, Alexis is naturally a mentor to many, welcoming the opportunity to inform others on the daily work of a biosafety officer.

Reach out to a BEST mentor today.

Alexis Brubaker is a biosafety officer for Environmental Health & Safety at Cornell. She manages the main biosafety group. While not fighting germs, she enjoys organizing team walks and Salad Days.

**Broadening
Experiences in
Scientific
Training**

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