Discovery and Collaboration

STUDENT PROFILE

“The result is an amazing team of students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members who are committed to making new discoveries.”
— Nathan Nguyen ’19 Ph.D.

Studying the textbook in his high school’s Advanced Placement biology class, Nathan Nguyen kept returning to the chapter on the formation of life in the primitive earth environment and its subsequent evolution. This early fascination shaped his collegiate experience and ultimately led him to pursue an advanced degree in the biological sciences.

After receiving his bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Santa Cruz, in 2014, Nathan enrolled in Yale’s doctoral program in cell biology. Today, he is a graduate student in the laboratory of Professor Thomas Melia, conducting basic research on cells. Alongside a team of students, Nathan is investigating macroautophagy, a cellular process through which cells gather and recycle their damaged parts. “It’s rigorous work,” he observed. “Collaborating with a large team means you can ask bigger questions.

“That’s one of the reasons graduate fellowships are so important,” he said. “Yale fellowships make doctoral studies possible for me and my fellow graduate students. The result is an amazing team of students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty members who are committed to making new discoveries.”

Nathan carries his passion for collaboration beyond the lab bench. He works with undergraduates in Jonathan Edwards College and with fellow graduate students in the Office of Career Strategy, leading professional development and career exploration workshops in addition to individual advising. “It’s very fulfilling to help others succeed,” he said.

Once he earns his Ph.D., Nathan hopes to pursue a career in science outreach running STEM programs. “My goal is to share my passion for scientific discovery with the next generation of scientists and researchers at Yale,” he said.

Graduate fellowships bring exceptional students like Nathan to Yale, advancing research, teaching, and discovery. To learn more about ways to support graduate students, please visit giving.yale.edu or call 800.395.7646.