

Meaghan Keohane's Portfolio



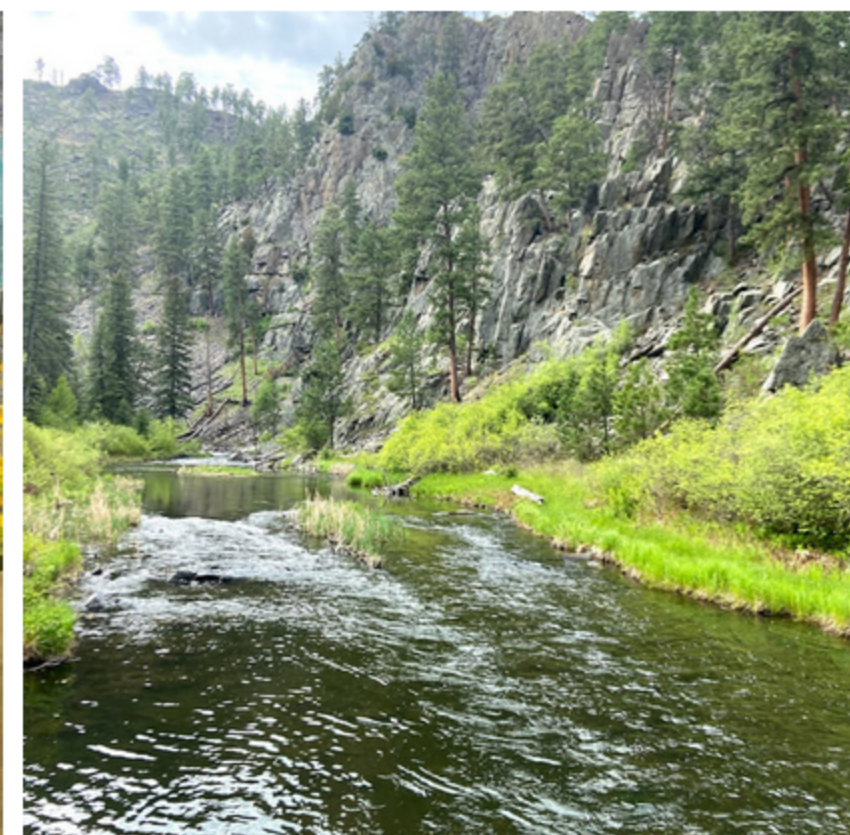
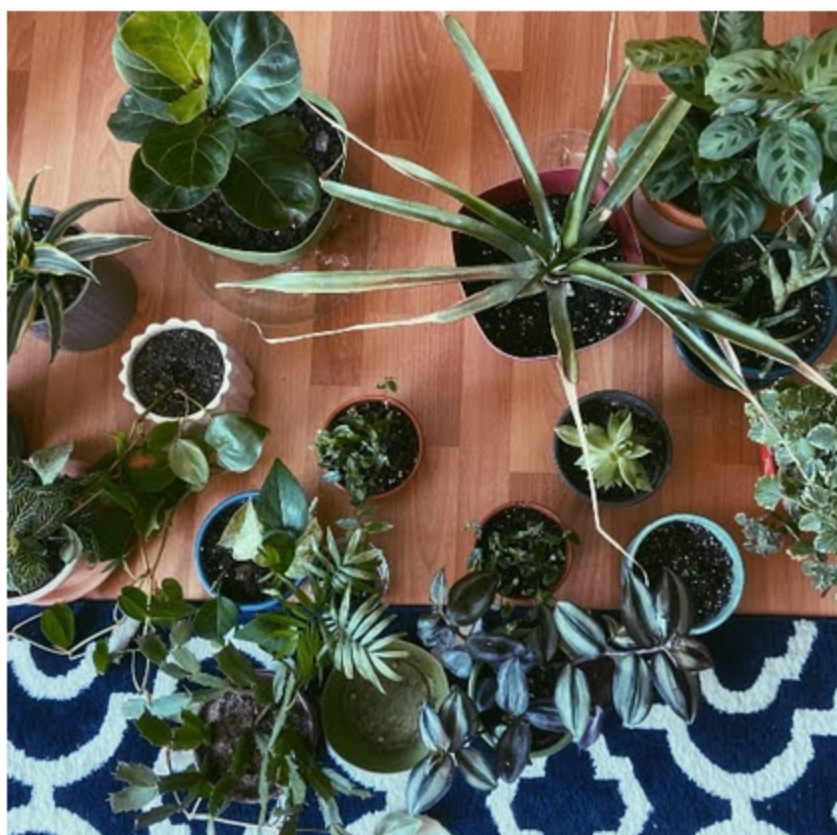
My name is Meaghan Keohane. I am a Senior Biomedical Sciences major at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Welcome to my Electronic Honors Portfolio!

To take a glimpse into my life and learn a little bit more about me! Scroll down to view a few photos that introduce me.

Mission Statement

In hopes of becoming a more well-rounded individual, I will not only strive to grow as a student, but as a human being through the opportunities and experiences I have the opportunity to be a part of.



The Honors Program

The Honors Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato is committed to supporting motivated undergraduate students by providing them with exceptional learning opportunities, mentoring relationships, and a supportive community that fosters their personal, academic, and professional development.

INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

RESEARCH, SCHOLARLY, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

LEADERSHIP

Why I chose Honors

I originally joined honors because it was something I was involved in during high school. Thus, when I decided to join, it was something that seemed familiar and grounding. I figured it would allow me to not only meet new people, but also give me many amazing resources as I dove into the unknowns of college. Another huge factor in joining honors was that it would be a nice addition to my resume.

Many of these surface-level thoughts ran through the back of my mind as I decided to join honors. Now in my senior year, I have come to realize the honors program has offered me much more than freshman year me had expected. Honors has facilitated meeting lovely academic-focused people, gaining valuable perspectives that vary vastly from my own, and self-reflecting in ways I have never done before. By striving to fulfill competencies, I ended up shaping myself into a more well-rounded, inclusive individual.

One of the most eye-opening experiences for me was doing the language partner program. The second semester I was a part of the program, I was matched with Mohammed (I call him Mo for short). Mo was a young man from Saudi Arabia. I still remember on one of the first days I met him he said to me, "okay, tell me all of the stereotypes you know Americans have about where I am from." I remember being slightly startled by the statement and somewhat hesitant to answer. But throughout the semester, as we met each week, I became amazing friends with Mo, and we were able to have those tougher conversations. I believe if I would have never joined honors, I never would have had these "hard to talk about" talks and realized some of my internalized stereotypes about people different than myself. I also would have never met Mo, who I still stay in contact with to this day. This is just one example of many experiences I would not have without the help of the Honors Program.

By knowing I needed to achieve certain goals in the honors program, I found myself pushed to try new things and find leadership roles to aid in my growth. I realized once I began to get more involved, I was able to build up my confidence and find leadership roles in areas of my interest. Honors gave me the push I needed to further my growth.

Apart from urging me to get involved in new activities, honors has given me a wonderful platform for self-reflection. Sometimes it is hard to believe I am in my senior year of college because it goes by in the blink of an eye. It would be hard to remember each experience without the reflection that comes with designing your honors website.

With graduation just around the corner, I am excited to use the skills I have gained over the past 4 years. By fulfilling many of the intercultural engagement, research, and leadership competencies of honors, I feel that I have become a more thoughtful and insightful person. From each of the three pillars of honors program, I can now use the individual skills from each to reflect on my experiences on a much deeper level. As I continue to pursue my goal of becoming a physician, I plan to use many of the skills I have gained from honors to be openminded and driven in my next chapter of my life.


Learning Plan 2018-2019

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Learning Plan 2019-2020

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Honors Experience Log 2021-2022

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Why Honors Essay: HONR 375

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Why Honors Essay: HONR 475

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Intercultural Engagement

[LANGUAGE PARTNER PROGRAM](#)[HOME HEALTH AID](#)[BIG BROTHER BIG SISTER PROGRAM](#)

Intercultural Engagement Synthesis Essay

Intercultural engagement is all about interacting with people who think differently than you. If we only surrounded ourselves with people that think exactly the same way, we would never grow as individuals. Over the course of my four years of college I have changed in so many ways. I have grown up and learned how to take care of myself. I have learned that everything I grew up believing is not as black and white as I once thought.

I began college wanting to get involved in something. One of the first activities, that I heard about through the Honors Program, was the [Language Partner Program](#). I thought that the program sounded like an interesting and fun program, so I decided to join it! In this program, I worked with a student to improve their English-speaking skills through fun activities. I really enjoyed this program and learned from people from countries I have never been to. By building these relationships it made me realize that although we grew up in different places and different cultures, there was still a lot we had in common. Building this understanding my freshman year of college allowed me to use this skill going forward. Further into college, I began working as a [Home Health Aid](#) and volunteering with the [Big Brother Big Sister Program](#) (BBBS). Each of these positions had me working with age groups unlike my own. In the BBBS program, I worked with a middle schooler who became my "sister." Being in this role I was focused on support and building a relationship much like a real sister. I learned about her family and her life and she learned the same about me; it was very different than my childhood. Through more than 2 years paired together I consider her to be my true little sister. This program allowed me to build my understanding of people different than myself, especially from a different age group.

My next position, as a home health aid, also allowed me to work with a differing age group. I began working with elderly individuals, many who lived alone, to do basic chores and give companionship for someone who spent most days alone. This was a huge area for growth for me because I had no experience working with this age group, even in my personal life. Being a support system for people in an aging group taught me a lot about differing perspectives and how to overcome resulting conflicts in order to take care of someone for their wellbeing.

In all of these positions I realized what people needed was for someone to listen and try to understand where they were coming from. Even though all these experiences have been with largely varying age groups, a lot of what was needed was support and understanding. Having developed these skills, I was able to use them over Christmas break while I was working in retail. There were numerous times when people spoke little to no English and having the understanding and patience from the experiences described above allowed for a more thoughtful exchange. These experiences helped me realize the importance of understanding where someone is coming from and to process each perspective as impartially as possible. I also learned the importance of listening, not just waiting to reply. In the future I plan to use these skills and awareness for my future patients in order to listen to where they are coming from and develop a plan of care for both their mental, cultural, and medical needs, as should any medical professional.

Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity

[RISEBIO](#)[DR. KATNER'S LAB](#)

Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity Synthesis Essay

Over the course of my four years at Minnesota State University, Mankato I have learned how necessary research is in all aspects of our lives. In medicine, the field I plan to go into, research has especially played numerous pivotal roles in saving millions of lives. A great example of this is the Covid-19 vaccines. Biomedical researchers are the reason we have our modern medicine of today; without them, there would be no way of treating really anything.

Throughout my undergraduate degree, I worked in two labs studying cancer. I have always had an interest in cancer, but I never really understood what cancer was.

I developed an understanding of research my freshman year with the [RISEbio program](#) in Dr. Allison Land's lab studying miRNA regulation of the APOBEC family in cancer. The RISEbio program is tailored to immerse freshman students in primary research. Biomedical research is something I knew nothing about my freshman year; being in RISEbio taught me how research worked and what it really was. I was transferred to this world where I was reading primary research articles and conducting experiments for something no one knew anything about. Although I was overwhelmed with these concepts, it took me years of further experience to truly appreciate the introduction to research RISEbio provided. This program taught me about the importance of research and how one goes about doing it correctly and efficiently.

Once I developed many of the basic skills needed for biomedical research, I was able to start working in [Dr. Samantha Katner's lab](#) studying hepatocellular carcinoma. I began working on a completely new research project. To first understand my topic I needed to review primary literature, something I learned to do in the RISEbio program. I felt my confidence and passion for research building. Over the course of the two and a half years in Dr. Katner's lab, I was able to conduct amazing first-hand research. I have presented my findings at many conferences, which gave me irreplaceable communication skills. This experience helped me build my understanding of the intricacies of each experiment and how they melded together to make one picture. With the information we have gathered we also plan to publish a paper in the coming months; this has helped me understand the process needed to synthesize all our findings across several experiments into one synthesized paper.

Medicine is always changing; understanding medical research, through my experiences explained above, will continue to benefit me throughout my career as a physician. Having these research experiences has changed me into a person who is excited to learn about new, upcoming medical research. Taking the skills I have gained, I plan to treat patients with the best, modern medicine and work closely with others to further medical understanding through clinical research.

Leadership

[HONORS 401](#)[CHEMISTRY TEACHING AID](#)[LEARNING COMMUNITY COORDINATOR](#)[HONORS 201](#)

Leadership Synthesis Essay

Leadership, one of the pillars of the honors program, plays an important role in any functioning group. Without proper leadership, the success of any group is drastically hindered. That being said, there is no one way to be a great leader. Over the course of the last four years, I have found myself in many new situations where I could grow my leadership skills. Before I mastered my style of leadership I spent a good portion of time observing the leadership styles of others. I also gained an awareness of my own leadership skills in [Honors 201](#). This class got me thinking about the impact I could have as a leader and what my strengths and weaknesses are. Having these tools allowed me to start turning my thought process into what type of leader I wanted to be. Once I took [Honors 401: Leadership and Interpersonal Communication](#) the following summer, I was able to understand the value of leadership. Through this class, I learned more about the different leadership settings and styles that are used in a medical setting. I was able to analyze the importance of having good leadership in medicine by researching styles of leadership in the medical field and the importance leadership plays in medicine overall. This gave me a sense of how urgent it is to develop my leadership skills to prepare for my future. By understanding the need for strong leadership in medicine, it made me realize I needed to begin building my leadership skills.

Knowing my need for continued leadership development, I pursued many leadership roles throughout my college career. One of these was working as a [Chemistry Teaching Aid](#). Being in this position, where I helped students be successful in the classroom, allowed me to learn from great leaders (my previous professors) while also developing many of my own leadership strengths. This experience also taught me how to work as a team to properly teach in the laboratory setting. Another leadership role I held was being a [Learning Community Coordinator \(LCC\)](#) during my sophomore and senior year. Having the opportunity to revisit my position as an LCC allowed me to apply what I had learned from my sophomore year experience and further solidify what leadership tactics worked the best for my position. In this position, I had the opportunity to help students maneuver their freshman year of college. I planned numerous events, study sessions, and office hours. Being in this role for two years gave me confidence and the basis around which to build my leadership role. I also felt much more comfortable my second year as an LCC in staying organized and planning ahead. Being an LCC helped me develop my planning and communication skills, all while allowing me to build my confidence in leadership. It also gave me an appreciation for how difficult it is to schedule, plan, and keep a large group engaged. Having experiences where I am in charge of a large group showed me how things on paper do not always go to plan and adaptability plays a huge role in being an effective leader.

Having these opportunities, along with many other leadership experiences, helped me identify my philosophy of leadership. I believe there are three main rules that I would follow in any leadership role. For one, I believe adaptiveness is the key strength to any great leader. Sometimes things do not go as planned. When things don't work, you have to pick yourself up and find a new approach. If you cannot adapt, you are not going to be able to stay in your leadership role. The second rule of my leadership philosophy is the need for communication. If you lose good, consistent communication you lose everything. Knowing the thoughts and feelings of the group allows you to know the adjustments you need to make. If there is not open communication, the needs and wants of the group may not be understood. My rule three, is to be humble, but confident. This is where the adaptability is key; when you let your ego get in the way of your leadership approach, it creates an unconstructive culture. That being said, the other half of it is not losing your confidence. Sometimes the approach you take does not work; you have to be able to pick yourself up and figure out what to do next.

In the future, I plan to apply my leadership philosophy to any leadership role I acquire. By having numerous experiences in leadership roles, I have been able to figure out what type of leadership does and does not work for me. I have also learned the necessity of working together, as no one person can do everything. Going forward, I plan to use my new understanding and development of my leadership skills to be a physician who is able embrace leadership roles in order to properly advocate for my future patients and medical team.

Contact me!

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