

As I was graduating high school many of my friends were excited for college and the new adventures that awaited them, yet they were still apprehensive because they did not know their major or what they wished to do with their life. While I was sympathetic to their conundrum, I was not facing the same problem. I had known what I wished to do with my life from the time I was in seventh grade: I wanted to be a research scientist. Sure, the field of science had switched a few times, but it never strayed far from biology and chemistry. As I prepared to leave high school, I had been accepted into arguably one of the best scientific colleges in the world and my future was looking bright. Once at the Caltech I dove straight into chemistry and even started doing research the summer after my freshman year.

As a freshmen I fell in love with the perpetual sunny skies of Southern California and even picked up a new hobby – fencing. As my college career progressed I was able to travel, through fencing on the national circuit, and I began to meet people from all different backgrounds and my ideas about my future began to morph. At the same time, I continued to take chemistry courses and was even able to spend a summer doing research with Professor Robert H. Grubbs. Despite my long-held interest in scientific research, I could not settle into my work. Many of my classmates were excited for class because they truly wanted to learn the material; I was just taking the classes so I could graduate. Eventually, during the second term of my junior year, I realized that I could not see myself spending the rest of my life doing scientific research and I decided that a change was in order. From there I realized my interest in medieval European history and became one of the only non-science majors at Caltech.

Just as I thought that I was done with science, I attended some recent talks by Professor Patrick Geary (UCLA) and Professor Michael McCormick (Harvard) about cutting edge historical research that is examining how scientific methods, such as DNA analysis, can be applied to archeological evidence to uncover new information about the past. This year I am graduating from Caltech and I am further from knowing what I want to do with my life than I have ever been. While I am faced with an academic crossroad between history and science, a third interest has also started to pull me over the past year – fencing. I began to compete in the highest division on the national circuit and recently earned National Points that could towards Olympic qualification. Several of my family and friends have asked whether I have ever thought about taking time off to train for fencing and to see how good I could get. While they were not entirely serious, their comments planted themselves in my mind. If I wanted to train seriously I would need to decide to do so before entering a PhD program, as fencers tend to physically peak in their mid-twenties. I am now stuck in a conundrum; do I continue to explore my academic interests or do I delay my academic career to train for a few years? Unfortunately, I do not have any experience training full-time for a sport to know if this is something I would seriously want to try. Therefore, I would benefit from the opportunity to train over the summer. I feel as though this would help me decide the course of the next few years of my life.

My goal is to spend the summer training at the clubs where the US national team members train. This would take me to New York City and Oregon and then back to California so I can work with my personal coach to develop a training regime that I could use if I decide to train seriously for fencing. I would start my training in New

York City. In all of the locations I would attempt to find housing with family and friends and other fencers if at all possible. I realize that the Studenski Award is not designed to provide a paid vacation to visit people. The purpose of using friends and family would not be for visitation; it would reduce my non-fencing fees and allow me to participate in more training activities. For the first part of my trip I would live in New Jersey and catch a train into the city 4-5 days a week. where I would train at the New York Athletic Club and the Fencers Club. The other 2-3 days would be spent doing cross training and footwork at a local club in New Jersey (Medeo Fencing Club).

My next stop would be Oregon, where I would attend an intensive training camp at the Oregon Fencing Alliance with the current World Champion, Mariel Zagunis, and her coach. I would fly out one week before, or stay one week later, to have the opportunity to train at the club outside of the camp environment. To wrap up my training experience I would fly to California and train with my coach in Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. One of my teammates is currently training for the Taipei National Team and she would be able to mentor me in my training process. I would be able to work alongside her and experience her training regime. Please see the chart below for a breakdown of my expenses.

<u>Budget (Rough Estimates)</u>	
Airfare (airports may vary based on price when tickets are booked)	Oregon Training (~2 weeks)
LAX → EWR: \$250	Oregon Fencing Alliance Fees: \$65
EWR → PDX: \$300	Camp fees (includes room): \$800
PDX → LAX: \$150	Food: \$10/day for 2 weeks → \$140
LAX → EWR: \$200	
	California Training (~1 month)
New York Training (~3 weeks)	Salle D'Asaro Fencing Fees: \$30
Medeo Fencing Fees: \$90	Lessons: 30/lesson 3x a week → \$360
Fencers Club Fencing Fees: \$250	Room and Board: \$1000*** → \$520
Agility Ladder: \$30	
Food: \$15/day for 1 month → \$450	Total Summer Costs: \$3986
Train Pass: weekly pass \$117 x 3 = \$351	

***This number is based on paying for part of an apartment. Once I have confirmation on funding and more information about dates, I may be able to lower these costs by staying with other fencers. If this happens I will be able to spend more time in Oregon. I also plan on coaching fencing for part of the time that I am out in California. I have previously worked with some children during the school year and it is reasonable to expect to earn ~\$480/month, which would drop housing costs to \$520 and give me additional time to work on my technique through teaching.

Thank you for your time and consideration on my application. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me.