



## Albany State University MARC to BRIDGE Program

**2013 – 2015 MARC Scholar  
Briana Toatley**

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I am a senior biology major with a concentration in biotechnology. I graduated from Warren Township High School in Gurnee, Illinois in May of 2011 and matriculated into Albany State University in fall of the same year. I was admitted to the university as a psychology major, but changed my major multiple times before finally deciding on biology during my sophomore year.

Throughout my sophomore year in college I did not have health insurance and went to the local health clinic for treatment when I got sick. The clinic was understaffed, the employees overworked, and the patients underserved. This experience is what made me decide I wanted to be a doctor. I wanted to help to provide medical attention to areas that are underserved and of low socio-economic status.

Due to changing my major, when I did finally decide on biology, I had several credit hours worth of courses that no longer applied toward earning my degree. Even after academic advising for the fall of my sophomore year, I ended up taking classes I did not need.

When I joined the MARC program I received the help I needed to make a schedule of classes that made sense and could expedite my graduation process. I received support to present research at conferences, help with applications for summer internships, and attended skill building workshops. I was able to do these things because I was solely focused on school alone—I did not need a job to support myself.

The help I got in the MARC program allowed me to build my CV and research skills I will need when applying for M.D/ Ph. D programs. I was able to identify and determine what I needed to apply for each program because I received the push that I needed.

