

## **Sara Rubenstein, Class of '09**

My name is Sara Rubenstein and I am currently a freshman at MIT. I have just finished my first semester, and I can honestly say that the past three months were probably the hardest of my life. But, they were hard in a good way. I knew coming to MIT would be a challenge, but I could never have imagined what it would actually be like, both the good and the bad. Despite the difficulty of the decision, I really think I made the right decision coming here. I was scared coming here, scared that I wouldn't be smart enough, or that I wouldn't fit in. However, I have realized that MIT has so much to offer its students both academically and socially. MIT allows me to get a glimpse of the many opportunities and possibilities out there, and I am glad that I made the decision to come here.

If you asked me what I wanted to be when I was 5, I would have said a ballerina; If you asked me when I was 10, I would have said an author; If you asked me when I was 13, I would have had absolutely no idea. It wasn't until high school when I realized that I was interested in science. Over the past few years biology has been my favorite course. Ever since the first few months of freshman Biology, I have developed a love for the subject and an especially keen interest in the areas of genetics and molecular Biology. I liked the other sciences as well, but I never saw myself as a hard-core physicist. Biology was extremely appealing and intriguing to me. It was around that time when I fell in love with biology, that I decided that I wanted to be a doctor.

My desire to work in the medical field was intensified when I took part in a mentoring program offered by my high school. This program partners students with professionals in areas of specific interest to the student. During my sophomore, junior and senior years, I was paired with a pathologist, a neurologist, and cardiologist. This experience exposed me to both medical research and patient care, two areas in which I am interested. My mentoring experience gave me added experience to the medical field and really helped to solidify my desire of becoming a doctor.

I came into MIT 99% sure I wanted to major in Biology and be a doctor, but I had no idea what kind of doctor I wanted to be or what specific areas I wanted to study. I had always been interested in the patient-care aspect of medicine as well as the medical research aspect, but was unsure of how I was going to combine them. After one semester at MIT and participating in the seminar Career Options in Biomedical Research, I am still 99% sure I want to major in Biology and be a doctor, but all of the other questions remaining unanswered. However participating in this seminar did open my eyes to what is out there in the field of biomedical research. While I am still sure that I want to major in biology, I have begun to generate interest in neuroscience and bio-medical engineering, and thus am considering the possibility of double majoring in Biology and Brain and Cognitive sciences, or possibly minoring in biomedical engineering. While I still am unsure about exactly what type of doctor I want to be or how I am going to combine my interests in patient care and research, this seminar introduced me to some of the possible career options. I was given the opportunity to hear from successful medical doctors as well as bio-medical researchers, and was given the inspiration to further my interests.