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Lisa Bernardin, Program Coordinator, Vermont Brain Bee, April 12, 2019



## Vermont Brain Bee

Explore Neuroscience

Engage Students

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## Isabelle Petrucci Testimonial

My name is Isabelle Petrucci, and I am a senior at Essex High School. My junior year (last year), I heard about a neuroscience club at my school, and as I've always been interested in science, I figured "Why not join? It could be fun to learn about the brain." This was probably one of the best decisions I have ever made. Having a family history of neurological diseases, specifically, my grandmother was diagnosed with Huntington's disease last year. I've always been interested in neuroscience, but I knew very little about it.

In the neuroscience club at my school, we would meet once a week and we would learn about the brain. From the different parts and functions to the way drugs affected the adolescent mind. All of this was in preparation for the VT Brain Bee. In addition to the Brain Bee, UVM hosted the Brain Bee boot camp for Brain Bee participants a week or two before the competition. In this boot camp, we were given the chance to look at real brains, rather than just the diagrams I had studied at school, one of my favorite parts.

I expected the VT Brain Bee to be a rigorous competition, and while it was this, it was also a learning experience. The competition allowed us to apply what we knew to real-world situations as we attempted to diagnose some case studies and listened to a keynote speaker present their research.

Both last year and this year, I came away from the VT BrainBee with more knowledge than I originally came in with, and I thought it was an incredible experience.

The VT Brain Bee has really solidified my love for medicine, making me think more about neuroscience as a career in my future. It is something that I am very glad I did, and that I regret not doing earlier. It really changed and influenced my life for the better, as it allowed me to explore new interest and discover a whole new field of science.