Show Me Success!
Paul Ladipo Tells Story of Success

By: Alisa Warren, Minority Science Student Coordinator

Paul Ladipo attended the predominately African American University City High School in St. Louis—and “no” he didn’t know Nelly. As you could imagine the transition to a predominately white institution like MU would be challenging. It was like traveling to a foreign country with a strange new language, and an entirely different lifestyle. Paul distinguished himself as a star at MU as the recipient of the George Brooks scholarship, a McNair Scholar, and most recently the Thurgood Marshall fellowship. He originally came to Mizzou with aspirations to attend the Vet school and explore his passion for animals. However, much to his chagrin, allergies made it impossible to continue in that direction. He finished his B.S. in Biology and is currently a Masters student in Biology at Mizzou.

His graduate study was initially funded through a teaching assistance ship and phenomenal mentors. “I didn’t plan to teach but the students opened me up and vise versa and they changed my path. I have always had a love for science and now it has crossed with my new passion for teaching. I taught Biology 1020 with Dr. Gerald “Ace” Summers who made it so much fun by challenging me to lead, teach, and explore science. I currently work in Dr. Karen Cone’s lab that leads by example. She is smart, well respected, and really great to work for—I have learned a lot just by watching her. She always gives helpful advice and she is a genuinely kind and caring person.

As an Express student I conducted Epi-Genetics research fed my curiosity for discovering what lies beneath. By conducting gene expression you have an allele for each gene in different forms. Gene have different DNA sequences in human hair verses cat hair. Epi-genetics is not due to DNA sequencing and the research tried to find out why. What causes it: cell activity and the organism itself, or because of the different chromatin. Real world applications include human genetics and cancer research. If we can regulate the cell cycle we can regulate cell growth in cancer.

“When I was four years old I used to walk around with dinosaur books and identify the species to everyone who would listen. By seven years old, I had my own set of encyclopedias to explore. I was always a curious kid and science inspired my curiosity,” he explained. So many kids in my high school were not motivated to be successful. I believe that many young men like me need to be shown what success looks like. I actually know that I want more out of life because someone has taken the time to “show-me” success. My mother made sure that I did not fall through the cracks in high school and I was not just another statistic. She made me turn off the T.V., study; she monitored my whereabouts, my phone calls and the girls.

“MU has taught me to open my mind to new experiences and showed me success. You have to be able to adapt to new things because if you can’t adapt you can’t grow. If you can’t grow, change and adapt you cannot get to graduate school or your PhD. I am fascinated by different cultures. In the words of the great philosopher Confucius, “The measure of a man is not how many times he falls but how many times he gets up.”

Website of the Month
Each month, we will feature a different, useful website for your reference.

Rules of Heredity (1850s)
Austrian monk and botanist Gregor Mendel discovers how genetic information is passed down through generations. In experiments performed on pea plants, he notices that characteristics of a plant’s offspring, such as height, exhibit recessive and dominant behavior. Mendel’s findings are ridiculed during his lifetime and he dies never knowing that he would come to be known as the “father of genetics.”

http://science.discovery.com/convergence/100discoveries/