

Meet Alysia Bryant, GHS Class of 2017



Aly graduated from GHS in love with science and ready to take advantage of all the STEM-related opportunities she could. She thought the only way she could do that was with a 4-year college degree, until she discovered the Gloucester Biotech Academy, a 9-month training program that allows students to get right into professional biotech labs. Aly interned for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, which works in cancer treatment and research.

Aly's first lab experience was in the classrooms of GHS, conducting experiments made possible by GEF funding. Now, Aly is at Vesigen Therapeutics, a biotech company dedicated to developing therapeutics and breaking scientific barriers, and her future is dazzlingly bright.

What has your path been since graduating from GHS?

So, I graduated high school in 2017, took a gap year, and then I graduated from the Gloucester Biotech Academy (GBA) in 2019. Right after the GBA, I interned with Dana-Farber in Boston. I ended up staying there and working there for about a year after my internship, and then I joined a private company which I'm still with, Vesigen Therapeutics, in Cambridge. I went from doing bench work and being a research associate to now being lab manager and upstream production coordinator. With lab management, I'm in charge of overseeing the lab activities, making sure that everyone has everything they need to get their projects done, be that ordering consumables, maintaining equipment, etc. Upstream production management means I help all the research associates and make sure we're on track to reach our goals as far as production goes.

In high school, what were your main areas of interest?

I've always been interested in science. I knew I would be doing something related to science in my career, I just didn't realize it was going to be biotechnology. I always thought I'd be working in a hospital lab, testing samples, and I didn't even discover the world of biotech until GBA. In high school I did a lot of science classes. People usually take it easy their senior year, but I took as many science classes as I could. At GHS, I was in **Marine Biology, Ecology, AP Bio, Physics, Chemistry**, I did it all. I definitely worked my way through the STEM field.

When you graduated from GHS, what was the process behind getting involved with the GBA?

I actually got introduced to it by a former student, who had gone the year prior and knew I was super into science, so that's how I got involved. GHS did give us a little information about what it was my senior year, but I was set on going to college back then.

What did you learn at the GBA?

At the Biotech Academy, they teach you everything from lab skills to interpersonal/professional skills. When I was there, I learned all of the components of a lab, but what I really carry with me is the professionalism practice, like mock interviewing, communication. They teach you about the science aspect, but they also prepare you to go out into the working world and be a professional.



This interview was conducted by GHS student Aurelia Harrison in 2023, as part of a GEF Summer Internship. GEF funds a wide variety of dynamic programs in the arts, STEM, and more in the Gloucester Public Schools. GEF-funded programs are highlighted in yellow above.

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