

December 2012

Dear Mr. and Mrs. MacDonald,

My name is Emily Hollenbeck and I am a recipient of the Robert F. MacDonald Fellowship. The financial assistance provided by this fellowship is helping me to pursue a PhD in chemical engineering and a lifelong career in research.



I completed my undergraduate degree in chemical engineering at the University of Washington (or "UW") in Seattle, Washington. Before arriving at UW, I had never thought about participating in research, but was encouraged by my advisors to try it out. My sophomore year I joined a research group in the chemical engineering department that investigates organic semiconductors and their applications in solar cells and transistors. By working with this group I grew to really enjoy research and realized that I wanted to pursue a PhD. After visiting Stanford and meeting the students and professors, I knew I wanted to join their program.

Currently, I am in my first year of the PhD program and am balancing a busy schedule of classes and research. In this program, we get to rotate in different research labs before joining a specific group, allowing us to find the best fit for our PhD work. So, this quarter I am rotating in a lab that investigates surface science and materials processing for applications in energy and electronics. Next quarter, I am rotating in a lab that studies complex fluids and fluid interfaces. I am excited to try out these new areas of research and decide the field I will pursue for my PhD work!

I am also thrilled to be living in the Bay Area. I have lived in Washington my entire life, and am eager to explore my new home. I like to hike and go on bike rides, so I am really enjoying the fantastic weather. I also like to watch sports, especially baseball, and clearly the Bay Area has great baseball! Since arriving, I have felt that Stanford and the surrounding area are a great fit for me.

I am very grateful for the support provided by this fellowship as it has made my dream of pursuing a PhD possible. It has allowed me to attend a fantastic school with a great program in chemical engineering. Again, my deepest thanks for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Hollenbeck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Emily Hollenbeck