

Student News



(L -> R) Lauren Whitt, Eliza Dhungel, Judith Rodriguez and Courtney Schiebout.

Four students in the Master's Program for Bioinformatics and Computational Biology attended the Computing Research Association Grad Cohort for Women (CRA-W), held April 13-14 in San Francisco. The CRA-W Grad Cohort aims to increase the ranks of senior women in computing-related studies and research by building and mentoring nationwide communities of women through their graduate studies. BCB students Eliza Dhungel, Judith Rodriguez, Courtney Schiebout and Lauren Whitt were awarded scholarships from CRA, with additional support from the NSF BITWISE program, to attend this two-day workshop. The workshop provided opportunities to network and learn skills to navigate graduate studies and careers in computational fields, which have not always been welcoming of women.

Courtney Schiebout reflected on the workshop with the following message: "the CRA-W Grad Cohort Workshop is something I would recommend to any female grad student in a computing field. The workshop focuses on providing relevant resources and advice for important topics, such as choosing a career path, conducting research, and maintaining work/life balance. In addition, the entire weekend is designed to encourage as much networking and collaboration as possible, which enabled me to make connections and develop meaningful friendships."

Judith Rodriguez commented “I found worthwhile the workshops and talks from experienced professional women in the computer science field. It was a safe haven for female graduate students to share their experiences. It allowed me to learn more of what I can face in graduate school when I pursue my doctoral degree. This conference surpassed my expectations and answered many questions that I didn’t even know I had. We also were able to meet more people from our area of bioinformatics and I noticed that it is an area that many people outside of bioinformatics are interested in”.