

Just take a look around the UNH campus and you may see Computer Science major David Fournier cruising around on his moped. Fournier, from Rye, N.H., knew he wanted to attend UNH. He loved the campus, not too huge, and not too spread out - a great college town.

Fournier was admitted to UNH as an undeclared CEPS major with an interest in chemistry and computers. During his freshman year, he took an introductory course in computer programming taught by Professor Bergeron. "It was his enthusiasm for the class that sparked my interest in computer science." After talking with Bergeron, he learned about the CS bioinformatics program, a new program that involves developing and utilizing computer programs to crunch biological data. Students in the program learn to use their computer programming skills to develop such programs while simultaneously getting some background in the biological sciences. Fournier's decision was made - he would major in bioinformatics which would combine both his interests.

When Fournier, a sophomore, discovered a research opportunity with the [Hubbard Center](#) for Genome Studies, he submitted an application for the McCooey award. This award, donated by CS Alumnus Jeremy McCooey, is designated for funding CS undergraduate students to pursue research. Fournier received this award and started his research during summer 2009 with the genome center.

Fournier worked with [Professor W. Kelley Thomas](#) whose group studies the basic patterns and processes of genomic change and how these relate to our understanding of genetic diversity and evolution. The research involved writing programs to analyze the DNA species of nematodes (roundworms) to characterize the variations in their ribosomal RNA genes.

When asked what he liked about the experience. Fournier replied, "I loved working alongside the grad students and loved the people I was working with. We had a lot of fun. I appreciated the opportunity to be exposed to research in an academic environment."

When asked the strengths of the computer science department, Fournier appreciated the many computer programming assignments. He especially liked Professor Hatcher's CS 520 class where he learned how things worked. "The assignments were not just superfluous but meaningful ones. Hatcher took things from the beginning and worked them to the end".

"The opportunities are tremendous at UNH. This summer I will be interning at Liberty Mutual which I am looking forward to because it will expose me to the corporate side of things."