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The 2010 Summer Internship at the Center for Reproductive Medicine was an eye-opening experience I am grateful to have been a part of. Coming in I was nervous and apprehensive, unsure as to what was expected of me and if I would be able to meet the standards required. Being the only international student did not do any to help my nerves. I did not expect to receive the guidance and support given to us throughout the program, and was quite surprised by the compassion demonstrated by the professionals I found myself surrounded by.

The daily lectures we received from world-renowned infertility specialists, gynecologists and reproductive endocrinologists were both stimulating and very informative. We were given the opportunity to work on both scientific publications and laboratory research and I, like most of the interns, decided to take on both tasks. The lab work was a break from our regular routine and I found the techniques I learned (sample and slide preparation, scoring based on morphological criteria) to be very interesting.

Most of our time at the internship was dedicated to research and writing scientific papers in the hopes of getting published. The ability to critically analyze research articles is an asset in the scientific field and due to the help of the staff at the CRM I can now say I am much more knowledgeable in that area, and this has helped me as I continue on with my education. The direction and advice I received from my mentors throughout the writing process was very helpful and further fueled my motivation to produce quality work. Although stressful at times I found I learned a lot from the entire process, and it is an experience I am glad to have gone through.

Shadowing physicians was an added bonus to the internship and I was extremely eager to have my first peek into an operating room. I was able to observe a hysteroscopy, the examination of the uterine

lining for any pathological abnormalities. It was very exciting and allowed me a glimpse into the surgical aspect of medicine, an area I am now heavily contemplating.

I am truly grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of this program. It was challenging, but also enlightening and inspiring and I don't regret a second of it. The experiences I went through and the friendships I made were an unexpected, but pleasant surprise. This internship opened my eyes to what awaits me out there and has allowed my passion for medicine to grow.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Francispillai". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mary Francispillai  
McGill University  
2010 Summer Intern