First and foremost, I would like to thank the members of the ACS Pittsburgh section for awarding me with a travel grant to attend the ACS National Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts this year. The grant money helped to make the trip possible and ultimately more enjoyable, as it was an experience I will not soon forget! The generosity of this group helped my department to better afford to send my research partner, Shannon Rose, and I to the conference to speak about a project we have been working hard on during the semester and a majority of the summer.

The conference poster session gave us the opportunity and experience of speaking to our peers and scholars about our project, hydrolysis of a nickel-Schiff base. Our group focuses on the dialklyation and hydrolysis of a nickel complex called Ni-PBP-Glycine. The process ultimately results in an isolated unnatural amino acid that can then be inserted into a polypeptide, whose subsequent folding behaviors can be examined. The application of the peptide research has roots in a potential therapeutic for Alzheimer’s patients. We had gotten some encouraging results this summer, and I was excited to share our findings and to potentially network with groups working on similar projects.

The ACS conference provided me many opportunities for personal and professional growth. I really enjoyed spending time at the graduate school fair where I was able to speak to recruiters from my top school choices. I enjoyed walking around the expo and learning about the improvements that are being made to instruments and of course visiting the ACS store. I went to talks whose topics aligned with my own interests and was able to expand my knowledge on certain topics while developing an interest in others. I was also grateful to be
able to explore a new city, and to make connections with people. I cannot thank the Pittsburgh chapter enough for their generous grant. The conference was amazing and I am forever grateful for the experience.