IBT Summer Intern Wins Presidential Scholarship

When Xinchen Wang began a summer internship at the Institute of Biosciences and Technology in June 2004, she never dreamed that a year later she would travel to Washington D.C. with 140 other newly-named Presidential Scholars and meet with President George W. Bush in the White House.

On June 27, 2005, the Presidential Scholars were presented medallions recognizing their achievement in a ceremony in the White House with the President. In the photo below Xinchen is on the far right, in the second row.
The Presidential Scholars of 2005 were honored for their accomplishments in academics or the arts, as well as for their leadership, character and civic contributions during a four-day celebration in Washington, D.C., June 25-28. The scholars' agenda included educational seminars, meetings with representatives of all three branches of the federal government, a morning of community service, an exhibition of scholars' artwork, and a public performance at the Kennedy Center by the Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Events culminated with the White House ceremony.

She credits her work in the laboratory of Dr. Wallace McKeehan for opening her eyes to science research. In high school she took courses in biology, chemistry and physics, taking a second year in biology because it was her favorite. Dr. McKeehan's lab focuses on the biology of cancer.

"I enjoyed learning how to use the lab's different equipment and techniques and liked the involvement of the whole science team," she notes. Looking to the future, she says, "I am
excited about the potential of stem cell research in treating deadly diseases."

Next fall, Xinchen will attend Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, where she will study a combination of law, economics and sciences. The eighteen-year-old graduated from Bellaire High School sixth in her class from the high school located in a suburb of Houston that annually produces graduates destined for prestigious colleges.

Although Xinchen does not know anyone else who will be going to Yale in the fall, her best friend will attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "Luckily our schools are pretty close, so we can meet up," Xinchen says. Clearly, exciting travel is in her future.

For a list of the 141 Presidential Scholars named for 2005, including the four named in Texas, see http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2005/05/05032005.html