NO FLY ON THE WALL.

“...I chose MSU because it was the only university I found that gave me the opportunity to do research starting my first semester. Here, I’ve discovered not only amazing friends and inspiring professors, but I’ve also become a part of a lab and research community that has really helped me to become a better scientist. I’ve visited and done research in Germany, New Zealand and Switzerland and I’m constantly amazed by the opportunities, like these, that I find around every corner at MSU.”

IRINA PUSHEL
Biochemistry & Molecular Biology and Biotechnology ’15

College of Natural Science
2014-15 Dean’s Research Scholar
A conversation with Irina...

What is the societal impact of your research: In understanding how certain critical regions of a protein contribute to its overall function, I’m able to apply this to the development of treatments for specific types of cancers. It also contributes to the overall understanding of how healthy cells function.

How has your undergraduate experience been impacted by this research opportunity: The experience of working in a lab has not only confirmed my desire to pursue research as a career, but also given me excellent preparation for graduate school and the work I do in the future.

What is something you never expected at MSU: I really didn’t expect that I’d get the chance to meet and become friends with such a diverse group of people as I have. MSU is such an open and welcoming community and just about everyone is willing to help with anything you might possibly need.

Coolest gadget: The coolest gadget would have to be my Swiss army knife which includes a knife, a file, miniature scissors, a pen and a flash drive. It’s everything you could ever want in one gadget.

Book you’d recommend: I highly recommend anything by Gerald Durrell, especially Two in the Bush.

People who have inspired you: My parents have been a constant inspiration in my life, because of their hard work and the way in which it has paid off in the lives of everyone in my family. Don Dosch, my high school biology teacher, inspired me to not settle for less than my best and to continually push myself further. And more recently, my mentor, David Arnosti, has inspired me to keep working even when things are challenging and experiments don’t work.

On your bucket list: I want to get my scuba certification and dive reefs throughout the world.

Person you’d most like to meet, living or dead: Given the chance, I would most like to sit down with Patrick Rothfuss, author of one of my favorite series, The Kingkiller Chronicle, and a man who does a lot of amazing work for charities.

Major research breakthrough of the next decade: In could see potential cures for, or vaccines against, certain types of cancer and/or HIV coming to fruition in part due to the amount of work being put into these developments and in part due to the recent advances in our understanding of certain cancer-causing mutations and the HIV virus.

What are some of your favorite MSU memories: Some of my favorite MSU memories include ice cream at the Dairy Store, long walks across campus at 2am when it’s unusually quiet, lunch in the biochemistry gardens in the summer and long evenings spent playing Settlers of Catan with good friends.