Dear Broussard Family,

Thank you for offering young adults like me the opportunity of a lifetime. I started my internship at the H. House Caffey Research Station in Crowley, Louisiana on May 13th, 2024. I interned under Dr. Felipe Dalla Lana, the plant pathologist at the research station. Throughout my two months at the research station, I was able to work alongside the members of the pathology project in preparing research plots and implementing research trials. This work included everything from planting seed, spraying herbicides to control weeds, and hand pulling weed escapes after the research plots were flooded. After pulling weeds and unwanted rice, we would monitor fields for the next few weeks to check the growth stages of the rice and to begin inoculating plots. Once the rice reached a certain growth stage, the research component of our work would begin. We would spray different fungicides on random plots to see how certain varieties reacted to both the disease and the chemicals. Dr. Felipe would decide which plots received which fungicides. One disease that we specifically researched was bacterial panicle blight. This involved inoculating rice plants by spraying the bacteria on 1/3 of each row of rice. As the disease began to spread, we would rate the plants to see how different plants and different varieties reacted to the disease.

The diseases that the pathology project conducted research on were bacteria panicle blight, sheath blight, and blast. A significant component of the research conducted by the pathology projecting is testing the reaction of new rice varieties to these diseases. The pathology project "tests" or characterizes every new rice variety before it is released to the public to determine how resistant or how susceptible the variety is to the various diseases. This information is used by producers in deciding on which varieties to plant and how they need to manage those varieties. This effort involved the pathology project monitoring disease development throughout the summer on various varieties in four separate research fields.

Throughout the summer, I have learned various skills that are going to be useful in my future. I am pursuing a career working on my family's 5000-acre rice and crawfish farm, so seeing this side of the operation has been a big change of pace for me. Learning exactly how new varieties of rice are made and experiencing the hard work conducted by the AgCenter employees has been an eye-opening experience. I want to take the time to thank the Rose and Charles Broussard family again for the memories that are going to last me a lifetime. Additionally, I recommend this internship opportunity to anyone who has an interest in the LSU AgCenter.

Sincerely,

Emma Stelly