

LIYSF Report

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to attend the 60th London International Youth Science Forum, or LIYSF. The entire fortnight was wonderful and unforgettable.

Throughout the forum we attended thirteen lectures from incredibly successful and enthusiastic scientists, each of whom specialised in a completely different area of science. However, every one of them placed a massive emphasis on the interconnectedness of scientific disciplines, and stressed how important it was to take an interest not just in one very narrow area of study, but to learn more about as many aspects of science as we could. As a physics student, I found the talks on materials science from Professor Mark Miodownik and Professor Philip Moriarty fascinating. However, the lectures that I found the most memorable and interesting were from Dr Becky Parker and Dr Nira Chamberlain, on science communication and AI respectively. Before the forum I knew very little about these areas of study. However, through attending the forum I have found that many disciplines that I had never explored or sometimes even encountered before really appeal to me. The lectures were one of the greatest parts of the Forum – each one of them was amazing and memorable, and collectively they showed us all how broad and vitally important science is.

I went on four scientific trips over the course of the two weeks in London, visiting Oxford University, the Science Museum, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and my favourite, UCL's Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science. Prior to visiting the institute, I had never thought of the study of crime as a science, but I learned that by combining multiple areas of science such as physics, data science and psychology, crime levels can be dramatically decreased. They use often very simple, inexpensive measures that are massively effective in reducing crime and make London much safer. Their work seemed challenging, yet rewarding. As a topic I found crime science fascinating – it was a fascinating visit and I'd love to learn more about the discipline in the future.

During the Forum we participated in many group activities, one of which was to do a presentation on a topic which we had attended a lecture on earlier that day. This was one of the most rewarding experiences of attending the Forum – speaking on a stage in front of 500 people was something I never thought I would have done at the beginning of the two weeks, but the confidence and achievements of the speakers and of the other participants really inspired me.

As well as spending time together on science related activities, events such as The International Cabaret and the Traditions of Home evenings were organised to allow participants to showcase their talents and traditions. 500 students from 75 different countries around the globe took part in the Forum, and I learned more about the languages, history, cultures and traditions of the world in that two weeks than I had learned in my entire life. Befriending people from the other side of the planet, who have so much in common with you despite your different backgrounds, was definitely the most special part of the Forum.

Attending the 60th LIYSF was incredibly rewarding and life-changing. The success stories and passion of the speakers, all of whom have excelled in their field, was inspiring and motivational. The visits gave us all a taste of the reality of working as a scientist, as well as allowing us to look around cutting edge, multi-million pound facilities, which was amazing! Getting the opportunity to spend time with so many incredible students from around the world was a privilege. Thanks again for the brilliant opportunity to attend such a great event!