

Students from Professor David Kooyman's lab get more than an ordinary undergraduate education. They gain confidence in their futures and a realistic application of what they are learning.

Currently Kooyman has two graduate-level research projects underway, but only undergraduates are allowed on board.

"I don't need research for me anymore, though I could move much faster if I did it myself. So why do I do research? It's to help the undergraduates," says Kooyman.

Biology student Paul Rogers discovered Dr. Kooyman's lab as a sophomore. Unfamiliar with lab work and intimidated by the jargon, Rogers would not have believed he would soon be extracting DNA from damaged heart tissue and studying it to find genetic culprits for cardiomyopathy, a disease found in turkeys and also in humans.



Undergraduate Paul Rogers participates in research hopefully worthy of funding from the American Heart Association in the future.

"If I run into a problem and things aren't working," says Rogers, "I can get help from Dr. Kooyman. He doesn't tell me the answer right away. He makes me think about it, which is frustrating, but helpful. It's given me more confidence in myself."

Like many professors at BYU who double as mentors, Kooyman finds great satisfaction in giving students opportunities to find out who they really are.



Though massive above the water, only a small portion of the iceberg actually shows. Similarly, many students on campus receive support from devoted faculty through mentored research, causing them to be greater students than they first expected.

"One young lady I taught came in very shy. She took a biology course from me and didn't do well in the course. She wanted to go to medical school but didn't do well on the MCAT. She was quite discouraged. I invited her to come work in the lab. She is very confident in herself now. She recently went off to dental school and is doing very well," says Kooyman.

Research changes lives. The students in Kooyman's lab are no exception.

"Zion means much more than 'no poor among us.' It means no intellectually poor, no socially poor, and no esteem poor," says Kooyman.

Spring 2005 ~ Rebecca Fishbein