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The Hun School of Princeton

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**Hun School Bio Students Conduct Original Molecular Research in Conjunction with Rutgers University**

**Princeton, NJ – On October 8th, Hun School Advanced Placement Biology students began working on an extended research project with Rutgers University’s Waksman Student Scholars Program. Conducting original genetic research, students will have hands-on experience in isolating, sequencing, and analyzing genes from the species *Landoltia punctata*. The sequence of these genes has never before been determined.**

“This project offers a range of practical opportunities for students. Firstly, students will apply technical scientific procedures and methods toward molecular research; and secondly, students will interpret data at a very high level,” said AP Biology teacher Blair Buck. “The bench work itself, involving cDNA extraction, electrophoresis, and restriction digests will take a few weeks to complete. Learning to analyze the sequences and completing an unknown sequence annotation can take months.

“Recent research has begun to explore the potential of Duckweed as an alternative fuel source. By researching this plant on a molecular level, our understanding of its genetic composition can help to provide a more complete understanding of this organism’s genes and what the genes do.”

Because the Duckweed genes have never been sequenced before, students have the opportunity to provide data that could ultimately be cataloged by the international sequence database and used by the international scientific community.

To prepare students for the analysis of the Duckweed genes, students will practice analyzing the sequences of other known Duckweed genes. “Our students will be supported by the Waksman Scholars Program in order to prepare them for the difficulty of working with a never-before sequenced series of genes,” said Mr. Buck.

In the course of these studies, Hun School students will work closely with research scientists, using the basic principles of molecular biology and genetic engineering to sequence the Duckweed organism.

**Photograph caption:**

*IMG\_0075.jpg* – Hun School AP Biology student Nealon Suthersan ’14 isolates a cell of the plant Duckweed as he begins an extended research project in which he and his classmates will attempt to sequence and analyze the genes of the species *Landoltia punctata*. The Hun School will work closely with Rutgers University’s Waksman Student Scholar program.

About The Hun School of Princeton:

The Hun School of Princeton, founded in 1914, is a co-educational, independent college preparatory school in which student-centered learning is encouraged within the context of traditional curriculum, preparing its students for the global community in which they will live and work. Individual attention and strong student-faculty relationships are the hallmarks of the School. The Hun School is comprised of 629 students in its Middle School, Upper School, and Postgraduate Program. The boarding community is home to 141 students from seventeen countries and fifteen states.