Graduate school is an emotionally draining process. It’s about persistence and maintaining forward progress, sometimes with little feedback and guidance. It’s not ideal, but I had it figured out, for the most part. Which meant I was completely unprepared for the emotional rollercoaster that came next: job and fellowship applications.

I’ll be honest, applying for new jobs and fellowships makes me excited. My brain goes wild, trying to imagine what I could be doing over the next several years, what my life might be like. To some extent, this excitement and planning is necessary. In proposals, you have to articulate what you will be doing for the next few years. You have to see yourself in the job you are applying for, imagine how you would work with colleagues, what you would contribute, and even what living in a new place would be like. Essentially, you have to buy into a dream future. Then it all comes crashing back down when you click “Submit.” You have to stop planning your future, or maybe plan a different one, and go back to your life as it is now. All the emotional energy dissipates, leaving you empty.

I still haven’t figured out the best way to handle this rollercoaster. As far as I can tell, there is no way to get off the ride—you need the high and the emotional buy-in for the application process. My strategy for now is awareness. I know I’ll be a mess for some period after I submit an application, so now is the time to prepare for the emotional rollercoaster that comes next: job and fellowship applications.

What about you? What do you do to survive the application process?
— Stefanie

---

RAQUEL BRYANT. I am a PhD student in paleoceanography and micropaleontology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. I use tiny fossils called foraminifera to understand how Earth’s ocean has changed over time.

I am currently aboard R/V Roger Revelle on my third STEMSEAS (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Student Experiences Aboard Ships) expedition. STEMSEAS is an NSF-funded program that exposes undergraduates to the Earth and ocean sciences through shipboard experiences. Aboard Revelle, our mission is to recover 21 electromagnetic instruments that have been on the seafloor about 600 km off the coast of California. Later we will assist in collecting some vibrocores off the Oregon coast. Together with co-chief scientist Valeria Reyes-Ortega, a graduate student at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, we are leading nine eager undergraduates on their first research cruise.

I first got involved with STEMSEAS in 2016 through my advisor, Mark Leckie. During my first expedition, we sailed for 10 days on R/V Oceanus from San Diego to Honolulu. I was a graduate mentor and assisted the instructors with lessons and experiments. I also talked to the students about life after college, applying to graduate school, and getting started with research. I also ran the STEMSEAS blog and Facebook page, which was a blast! It was great to be able to share all the fun with the many people following our journey. I sailed again that summer on R/V Sikuliaq from Seattle to Seward. This time I sailed as an instructor, leading lessons and activities in my areas of expertise.

Being involved with STEMSEAS has been an amazing opportunity for me. I have been able to hone my skills as an educator and mentor, which is important to me because I hope to become a professor one day. Through STEMSEAS I have been able to meet and connect with so many different people, from graduate students, to scientists, to the ship’s crew, and of course the STEMSEAS students from all over the country and from all walks of life. It has been rewarding to share my passion for the Earth and ocean sciences with a diverse group of young scientists.

---

Resources

Career Profiles. Be sure to check out the newest Career Profiles posted on the TOS website. » https://tos.org/career-profiles


---

REVELLE LECTURE

Distress Signals: Historical Waypoints in Northwest Atlantic Fisheries

By W. Jeffrey Bolster

» https://doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2018.208