

Voices**A Yale Student and Bioethicist in Training's Visit to the CBEL****Caroline Beit (Yale University)**

My first exposure to formal bioethics training was a research ethics class in high school I took as a part of a summer science research program at the Rockefeller University. It was there, that I was exposed to how to determine ethicality in research; from not cherry-picking data, to the idea of informed consent, to some of the ethical issues involved in testing in animals.

Before this, I was interested in many bioethical issues, like providing confidential treatment for those with HIV/Aids and reducing disadvantages based on social determinants of health (which I learned about through volunteering at a medical clinic for low-income individuals and reading to their children to promote early childhood literacy). It was after this research ethics class that I became obsessed with bioethics. In my senior year, I took an ethics class and learned about the many different forms of ethical reasoning. During a gap year between high school and college, I continued learning about bioethics (both academically and through real-world experiences) by auditing a Jewish sexual ethics class and volunteering with the Missionaries of Charity in a pharmacy in Calcutta India. While volunteering in India, I learned first hand about the different approaches to medicine and bioethics in different cultural contexts.

The summer before college, I further

solidified my formal academic bioethical training by attending the Sherwin B. Nuland Summer Institute in Bioethics and Yale University. It was here I was exposed to cross-cultural perspectives in bioethics in a formal academic setting. My favorite class was the CBEL's own Shizuko Takahashi's class on "Ethical Issues in Obstetrics & Pediatrics: Cross-Cultural Perspectives" where I was able to learn about differences in bioethical approaches in Japan and the United States. I really enjoyed getting to learn the differences in approaches between the two countries, and further solidified my interest in the cross-cultural approaches to medicine and bioethics.

When I traveled to Tokyo this January, I knew I wanted to experience firsthand how academic bioethics was practiced in a foreign country. Dr. Takahashi kindly extended an invitation for me to visit the CBEL. After passing through the historic red gate of Tokyo University, I was led to the building that housed the CBEL. Once inside, I was introduced to Dr. Akira Akabayashi, Director of the CBEL who insisted on giving me a tour of the center. I was thoroughly impressed by the large library on numerous bioethics texts and journals, which Dr. Akabayashi proudly exclaimed was the largest bioethics library in Asia. I was also fortunate to meet many graduate students and other faculty members of the CBEL. Dr. Takahashi

and Akabayashi told me about the multifaceted ways in which the center is involved in promoting cross-cultural education and research in bioethics both in Asia and globally. The center is highly involved in translating bioethics resources into Japanese and creating informational videos for a wider audience, as well as publishing and contributing to exciting and important bioethics research.

The CBEL is an incredibly important voice contributing to the advancement of bioethics in Japan, Asia, and globally. As Japan faces many bioethical issues including a shrinking and aging population, bioethical research will be needed to address current and upcoming issues. The CBEL is a great center to execute this type of research and add culturally informed and specific bioethical guidance in the Japanese context, and more broadly. As a Yale student, It was a joy to visit with the Center and I cannot wait to see the Center's future contributions.