

## **Daon Ha, Class of '09**

When I was applying to MIT, biomedical research was not exactly what I had on mind as my career goal, even though I had an interest in it. I thought I would major in Architecture because I had always loved practicing visual arts. However, I found the architecture workshop I did over the summer after high school graduation to be uninteresting, and it seriously questioned me if architecture is truly the career I wanted to pursue the rest of my life. So when I was to sign up for a freshman seminar, I chose Careers in Biomedical Research to see if I could find a new interest in an area other than architecture. I chose specifically this seminar because I have always been fascinated by my high school biology class and the study of all life forms in general. Although I had an interest in biomedical field, I realized that I had not very much exposure to it because I didn't have an extraordinary experience such as working in a research lab. I would say I knew no more than what an average student would know about biomedical research by the time they are fresh out of high school.

As I am currently exploring many options for my major, this seminar has helped me to realize that I have a stronger interest in medical research than what I had thought I had before. Although I had hard time understanding parts of presentation due to my lack of knowledge in the technical subject, it did not prevent me from recognizing the passion of the researches toward their work in every presentation. What was also interesting to learn about was that almost none of the speakers knew what they were going to be when they were college freshmen like me. In fact, many of them did not know until they had done more study. Many had redirected their career path as opportunities came up, in the similar way I am trying to choose my major among so many opportunities here at MIT. The recurring advice from the speakers to us was “leave the doors open,” “be ready for a change when another interest comes up,” and even “live without plan.” I learned from their advice that what I can do now is to explore as much as I can and find where my heart lies, and then I will be able to pursue it with passion like I saw the speakers did, while being ready for changes at any time.