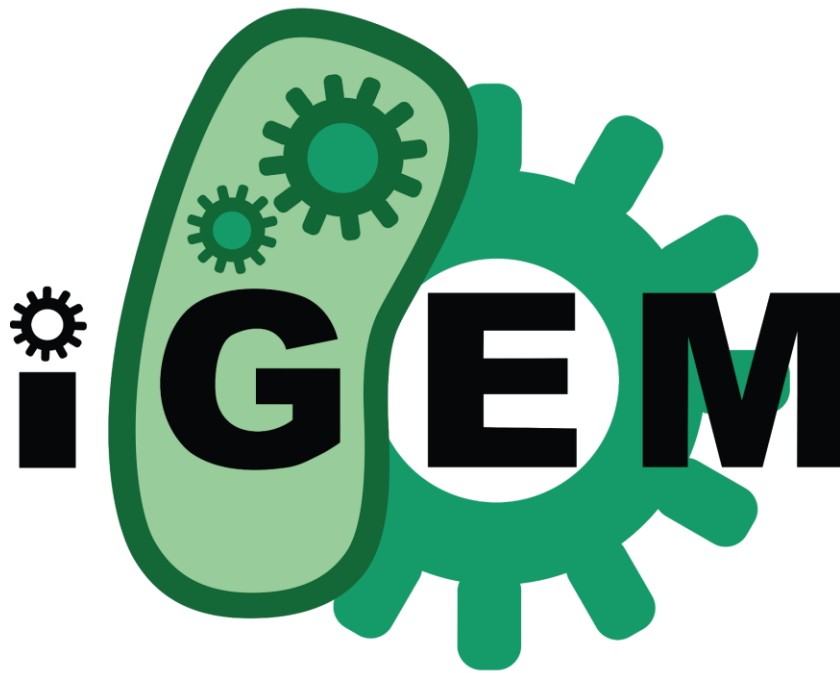


# The Baltimore BioCrew



## Sponsorship Opportunities

**Contact information:**

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# What is iGEM?

The International Genetically Engineered Machines (iGEM) competition brings together students from around the world in a global competition for teams of high school, college, and overgrad students. There are over 300 teams from 6 continents, and each team solves a real-world problem or makes a discovery by using genetic engineering. For example, our team last year engineered bacteria to produce a snake venom protein that could be used as first-aid to treat catastrophic bleeding. The year before that, they engineered bacteria to break down plastic that contaminates our Inner Harbor.

According to Mercedes Thompson, a graduate of Baltimore Polytechnic High School, “Being in iGEM has changed my perspective of the world around me. Now, I can use both my passion for science and my community to change my city and the world for the better.”



# Who are the Baltimore BioCrew?

We're a high school iGEM team based out of a community lab located in a disadvantaged area of Baltimore. Our team is made up of students from schools all over the DC-Baltimore area. Although they are from different schools, our team of 18 students comes together to design a project and carry out our work at Baltimore Underground Science Space (BUGSS), a community lab in Highlandtown, Baltimore. Every Saturday throughout the summer, we meet and collaborate to carry out the experiments to create the engineered bacteria. Our common goal is to use biology to improve the world.

# Our Project

Our team's project focuses on improving mental health through the use of psychobiotics. According to statistics from the State of Mental Health in America, incidence of depression and suicidal ideation has increased among adolescents and adults(<https://mhanational.org/issues/state-mental-health-america>). Social isolation, as well as economic and health anxiety caused by the COVID-19 have exacerbated mental health crises (<https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/the-implications-of-covid-19-for-mental-health-and-substance-use/>). This issue is important to us because as high school students we know that there is still a lot of stigma about talking about mental health so it can be hard for people to get the help they need. We plan to engineer bacteria that are natural probiotics to produce TPH1. TPH1 should be converted to 5HT which is then made into serotonin in the brain. This should be a more natural way to help improve people's mental health.

## Why is iGEM important?

Baltimore Underground Science Space (BUGSS) has been hosting iGEM teams since 2015. Each year, the team has won gold or bronze medals, and last year our team also won the award for Best Presentation. As part of iGEM, students learn many important skills like teamwork, problem-based knowledge, entrepreneurial thinking, collaboration, responsible science and engineering, safe lab work and project design, presentation skills, and scientific communication. Graduates of the Baltimore BioCrew have gone on to Brown University, Stanford, the University of Pennsylvania, UNC-Chapel Hill, USC, and many other prestigious schools, often on full scholarships. iGEM is a life-changing experience.

## Our philosophy

Science is FUN  
Science is CREATIVE  
Science is RELEVANT  
Science is a TEAM SPORT  
Science is DIVERSE



# The iGEM Jamboree

The iGEM Jamboree allows teams to travel to Boston in October to present their work to judges and meet other teams from all over the world. Last year's BioCrew won a gold medal and this year we're shooting for a gold medal and awards for Best Presentation, Best Wiki, and Best Math Modeling! The Jamboree is an amazing experience that allows us to collaborate with other teams and showcase the work of Baltimore students at an international level.



## Why you should donate

Our team needs around \$13,000 to participate in the iGEM competition. This includes \$5,500 for team registration, \$4,000 for materials and supplies, \$2,500 for registration for the Jamboree, and \$1,000 for printing team T-shirts and posters. At the Jamboree, we'll present our project, compete for awards, and connect with other iGEM teams. Without being able to attend the Jamboree, we won't be able to compete for those prizes.

The iGEM Jamboree is also an international gathering with over 3,000 students, research professionals, industry representatives, and journalists. This event generates high visibility and opportunities to reach a wide audience.



# Sponsorship Levels



## Bronze Medal Sponsor: \$500 and above

Company logo displayed on the team wiki, the team poster, and the team oral presentation.



## Silver Medal Sponsor: \$1,000 and above

All of the benefits above, plus display of company logo on the BioCrew's team T-shirt (worn at the Jamboree and available to the public for purchase) and publication on all of BUGSS' social media channels at least 3 times.



## Gold Medal Sponsor: \$2,500 and above

All of the benefits above plus mention of company sponsorship in a press release announcing the BioCrew's awards from the Jamboree.

To sponsor the team at any of these levels, please contact Lisa Scheifele at [lscheifele@bugssonline.org](mailto:lscheifele@bugssonline.org)

## Thanks to our previous sponsors!

