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Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening Announces \$100,000 Graduate Education Fellowship Grant Awarded to David McIntyre of Boston University

Oak Brook, IL (USA) - The Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening (SLAS) is pleased to announce David McIntyre, Ph.D. candidate from Boston University (Boston, MA, USA), as the 2021 SLAS Graduate Education Fellowship Grant recipient.

SLAS will award \$50,000 per year for two years to Boston University to support McIntyre who will expand his research on accelerating the design-build-test-learn (DBTL) cycle and reducing the testing bottleneck in synthetic biology by combining active learning and droplet microfluidics.

“The SLAS fellowship will give me additional freedom and support in my research to explore new ideas as I progress into the latter stages of my Ph.D.,” says McIntyre. “Being involved in SLAS will give me a forum to present my ideas and receive feedback from members outside of my field.”

McIntyre’s research entails the use of active learning to: 1) build a multicomponent microfluidic design automation tool by coupling it to a rapid prototyping workflow, 2) automate experimental design and microfluidic operation for biochemical reaction optimization and 3) in collaboration with other groups, perform a massively parallel screen of memory elements for environmental biosensor development as a platform proof-of-concept. These hardware components and software tools will accelerate the speed of programming biology, empowering others to do the same, McIntyre explained, and help realize its near-ubiquitous potential.

McIntyre has hope for the future of his research, and the world. “Beyond having the world return to a ‘new normal,’ I hope to see further adoption of automation high-throughput technologies in the life sciences as it transitions into a more data-driven, engineerable field,” says McIntyre. “Personally, I look forward to advancing my research to provide some value to the field and finding what role I can play in the biotechnology and automation community.”

Judging criteria for the SLAS Graduate Education Fellowship Grant is based on the applicability of the applicant’s research to laboratory automation and screening, originality and creativity of the scientific approach, quality of the science, presentation of the research objectives, and the quality and capability of the institution and its educational program to support the grant.

The SLAS Grant Program was introduced in 2015 to facilitate educational opportunities for outstanding students pursuing graduate degrees related to quantitative biosciences and/or life sciences R&D. This

program helps to realize a fundamental tenet of SLAS's mission: to advance the fields of laboratory science and technology by nurturing the next generation of professional scientists.

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SLAS (Society for Laboratory Automation and Screening) is an international professional society of academic, industry and government life sciences researchers and the developers and providers of laboratory automation technology. The SLAS mission is to bring together researchers in academia, industry and government to advance life sciences discovery and technology via education, knowledge exchange and global community building. For more information about SLAS, visit www.slas.org.

SLAS publishes two peer-reviewed and MEDLINE-indexed scientific journals, *SLAS Discovery* and *SLAS Technology*. For more information about SLAS and its journals, visit www.slas.org/journals.

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