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Reflection #1  
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Before I arrived at Howard for the workshop, I expected an intensive hands-on 4 weeks spent learning about an area I don't have too much knowledge about. I assumed it would be purely scientific and that the applications would be narrow. Now in the midst of the program I see that while it is definitely a science workshop, much more than scientific questions are being raised and answered in our work. I've learned that plant science has a lot of geopolitical applications and this workshop has appealed to my political interests. As a biology and political science double major, this workshop has served to highlight just how much science and politics are related in our 21st century world. The GMO food controversy is a perfect example of how important it is for lawmakers to understand science and for scientists to understand law.

The field trip was a great opportunity to see this work being done on a larger scale. UMD has great facilities and very passionate staff. The instructors at Howard have been more than helpful. They've all guided us well during labs and the current undergraduate students have been especially generous with their advice. I think the use of textbooks would be helpful during the lectures to help us understand the scientific concepts. I also think more dedicated discussion time would be nice. So far I've really enjoyed this program. It's evident that everyone involved wants to be here and is doing their best. Can't wait for the rest of the activities.