

2013 PSBR High School Essay Contest
Creative Category Winner

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Munch, munch. Nibble, nibble. Oh hello! Excuse me one moment while I finish my cheese... Wow the lab scientists here treat me so well! Anyway, my name is Rickey Mouse. Please, oh please do not confuse me with the big guy at Hollywood. Trust me, I'm no Mickey Mouse. My girlfriend is no Minnie either, if you know what I'm saying. Many people think so highly of us rodents. But honestly, we are just a way of life. Everyone dies eventually and frankly, I like the fact that my life is being dedicated to science and the ability to make people feel better. What better purpose could I have for life? I am saving lives!

I have just been so sick of people telling me what I should and shouldn't do lately! If I want to be a part of medical miracles, then I will! There's obviously a reason scientists need to use us in labs. "What are those reasons?" you ask and "Isn't he going to tell us?" you say. Well you are darn tootin' I am! Sit your booty right down and let me talk, would ya? You would be surprised of how biologically similar us animals are to humans. It is quite amazing actually. A tiny difference between those great humans and us rodents though, is that our life span is about two to three years. I know, I know. I won't be around that long for you guys to hear all my exciting stories about how my one buddy Tom saved a boat load of people with diabetes but hey, life's life right? Anyway, because we have such a naturally short life span, scientist are then allowed to observe what happens during the pathogenesis of an illness much faster than if they tested humans. We can be studied through our whole entire life span in just a few years, isn't that something? This creates the learning process for scientists to be much faster and efficient than you think. Another big plus of testing us animals instead of humans is that the big guys in the white lab coats can easily change and manipulate our environments. They can adjust the temperature, lighting, and our diets in a jiffy.

I am having a bit of a mental block. Do you know what those square boxes are with a screen on them? They have a bunch of letters and the guys in lab coats always use them. Oh right! They're called computers. Well did you know the scientists can use those and cell tissue studies in addition to their research? But just studying cell tissue and creating computer models alone cannot provide as much information as studying us. Sure, they are a great source as an addition to the wonderful information we give the scientists. But these resources cannot demonstrate the complexity and elaborateness of the human body. That is exactly why we are needed in the process of the extensive research.

I am not just helping the humans out with my courageous acts in the lab, but I am also helping other animals! "What's that?!" you say "other *animals*?" Yes, other animals. Discoveries from biomedical research in animals have helped cure and treat diseases affecting poor and innocent animals. The research put forth has helped multiple diseases in animals such as arthritis, epilepsy, kidney disease, and glaucoma. You know, I used to have a friend named Scooby who lived out in the county. He was a tall-wager. Before we became friends, he would loudly bark at me every day. But one day, I decided to share a little nibble of my cheese with

him. After that he loved me very dearly. Well one morning, Scooby dolefully learned that he had a kidney tumor. With the hard work and research put forth, a new drug was able to successfully treat the tumor and cause it to disappear in the matter of a few months. Animal research has been able to save a true and unique friend of mine.

Wow. Just wow. Biomedical research has done miracles in the past few years, from understanding the human body to testing new drugs for safety. What this research has done blows my little mouse mind. Thanks to animal research, small little kids who have been diagnosed with sickle cell disease now have a much greater chance of living longer and happier lives. I know another nifty fact to share with you. Every single person in America has beneficially been affected by the results of biomedical research. I think the main question of it all is, "What can't animal research do?!" From all the benefits this type of research has created, I am just proud to say that Minnie and I are taking a great part in it and love every minute of it.