

**ALUMNI PROFILE: DR. DONITA C. BRADY (RU CHEMISTRY '03)****Describe your current position**

Currently I serve as a postdoctoral research fellow at Duke University. My research is focused on using genetically engineered mouse models of cancer to determine what pathways downstream of oncogenic Ras contribute to cancer initiation and metastasis.

**Briefly describe the path that led you to your current position after graduating from RU. In what areas of chemistry did you specialize?**

While at Radford University ('99-'03), I was a chemistry major with a minor in biology within the College of Arts and Sciences. The summer before my senior year of college I was accepted into a summer fellowship program in the Department of Pharmacology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I was blown away by the research at UNC-CH and applied to the Department of Pharmacology at UNC-CH for graduate school. While at UNC-CH, I was focused on cancer biology research. The lab I was a part of was interested in finding out how normal cells become cancer cells and finding novel ways to help treat patients who develop cancer. In the spring of 2008, Donita defended and received a Ph.D. in Pharmacology from UNC-C on "The transforming Rho family GTPase, Wrch-1, disrupts epithelial cell tight junctions and epithelial morphogenesis." A lot of the research I do requires the use of many biochemical techniques.

**In what ways did your RU chemistry degree help you achieve your goals?**

My RU chemistry degree has helped me achieve my goals by setting a standard of excellence in both the classroom and the laboratory. While at RU, the various chemistry classes I took challenged me to be a knowledgeable presenter of science in both a written and oral format. The relative difficulty of the courses offered in the Chemistry Department required a lot of self-discipline outside the classroom, which has been crucial to my success in graduate school and my current postdoc. All together, my RU chemistry degree provided an excellent foundation for me to achieve my goals.

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**Do you use chemistry on a daily basis? Describe what you do on a day-to day basis.**

I would say I use chemistry in many ways on a daily basis that are nontraditional. Many of the techniques I use involve biochemistry from PCR, ELISA, Immunoprecipitation, Western Blotting, and Immunofluorescence.

**Describe the personal skills that have played an essential role in your present position.**

Since I have always been a student-athlete, my time management skills and self discipline have always helped me achieve my goals. In addition, I have always has a good command of details that are crucial in science.

**What advice do you have for those who wish to pursue this career path?**

My best advice for anyone who wants to become an academic scientist in the biomedical research field is to due a summer research fellowship/internships to determine if research is for you.