

Oct 3 2024

To Whom it May Concern,

I, Braden Tierney, worked as a Visiting Fellow at the University of Palermo in April and May of 2024.

I was hosted by the ASCENT program and worked closely with Professor Marco Milazzo. During that time, we had an extremely productive two months. We completed the final revisions and received acceptance for a manuscript describing a novel microbe isolated from carbon dioxide seeps off of the Aeolian Islands. This paper will be released October 29th, 2024. We additionally completed the initial analyses for two follow-on manuscripts, which we hope to submit this calendar year (ASCENT will be informed when they are released).

I additionally taught a multi-day workshop in cutting-edge bioinformatics and microbiology to graduate students of UNIPA. We covered how to analyze next-generation sequencing data to infer the biology of complex microbial systems, and we also discussed methods for sequencing and the relevant theory and practical applications.

Finally, I took part in a week-long sampling expedition to the “Smoking Lands,” 70 meter deep carbon dioxide seeps, again in the Aeolian Islands. We successfully took 40 microbiological samples and they have been queued for sequencing and analysis in the larger context of our dataset from high-CO₂ sites around the globe.

In total, this was a highly productive two months that will yield multiple high-impact publications and preliminary data for future grant funding as well. I thank you for the opportunity and look forward to visiting again soon.

Sincerely,

Braden T Tierney, PhD

