

Elizabeth “Renee” Matthews is a former Oklahoma resident who initially graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in music. She later settled into the Bay Area and made Texas her home state. After many years of public-school teaching, she desired to learn more about how DNA and proteins interact, which led to a degree in Biochemistry from the University of Houston in 2014. After working in the lab of Dr. Robert Schwartz alongside Dr. Hua “Peggy” Zhang, she developed a deep interest in cardiac development and cardiac regeneration. This led her to complete a Ph.D. in Biochemistry under Dr. Yu Liu at the University of Houston in 2021. Her work focused on CRISPR-mediated miRNA knockout effects on cardiac development and cell fate choice. She is currently exploring how DNA-damage alters the genomic landscape of a variety of primate cell types using RNA sequencing and CUT&Tag sequencing using computational tools. She thrives on working with a team to understand the impact of transposable genetic elements and their contribution to the diversity around us. She is an active member of several science organizations, including the Association for Women in Science, the American Society of Human Genetics, American Association for the Advancement of Scientists, the American Heart Association and the Sigma Xi Scientific Honor Society.