



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2015 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Clarence M. Nakano	Project Number S1417
Project Title Biological Electron-Transfer Dynamics in Multiheme Cytochrome Complexes	
<div><div>Objectives/Goals Electron transfer (ET) governs all known energy-conversion processes in biology. A remarkable example is the recent discovery of rapid ET along electrically conducting bacterial nanowires produced by the bacteria <i>Shewanella oneidensis</i> MR-1. The outer-membrane cytochrome, MtrF and OmcA, are hypothesized media for ET, but how these multiheme cytochromes are assembled into a conducting complex remains a mystery. Thus, the goal of my project was to determine the structure of the MtrF-OmcA complex and visualize ET dynamics in it to better understand the underlying electric conduction mechanisms.</div><div>Abstract Electron transfer (ET) governs all known energy-conversion processes in biology. A remarkable example is the recent discovery of rapid ET along electrically conducting bacterial nanowires produced by the bacteria <i>Shewanella oneidensis</i> MR-1. The outer-membrane cytochrome, MtrF and OmcA, are hypothesized media for ET, but how these multiheme cytochromes are assembled into a conducting complex remains a mystery. Thus, the goal of my project was to determine the structure of the MtrF-OmcA complex and visualize ET dynamics in it to better understand the underlying electric conduction mechanisms.</div><div>Methods/Materials Here, I determine the structure of the MtrF-OmcA complex and study ET dynamics in it by combining the use of a homology modeling server, protein docking software, kinetic Monte Carlo (KMC) simulation, and visualization. I developed a computational framework including the entire workflow. In particular, I developed a C-RANK program to screen complexes according to biological plausibility as well as a plugin to the Visual Molecular Dynamics software named ETViz to animate ET dynamics.</div><div>Results My visual simulation results reveal novel nonequilibrium phase transitions with which <i>Shewanella</i> efficiently responds to a change in its electrochemical environment. The KMC results, when compared with experimentally observed respiration rates, suggest that life operates around the triple phase junction.</div><div>Conclusions/Discussion My simulation and visualization results shed useful light on boosting the efficiency of <i>Shewanella</i>-based microbial fuel cells by increasing the ET rate toward solving the global energy problem. Currently, I am working on a larger study of ET mechanisms along a lattice of outer-membrane cytochrome complexes on the entire bacterial nanowire.</div></div>	
Summary Statement I developed an electron transfer visualization software to reveal novel nonequilibrium phase transitions with which a bacterium efficiently responds to a change in its electrochemical environment.	
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