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his Lab and got to meet Dr Leland Tseke (Lab manager) and Katie Horton (PhD student), whom I worked closely with. We then devised a strategy to align projects I would undertake. I worked on developing a pipeline to screen for bacterial pathogen from wild lettuce, which would be utilized as potential novel candidates for hypersensitivity response studies. I also worked on validating physiological responses of wounded CRISPR lines, a study aimed at understanding the jasmonic acid pathway. This was truly an amazing time for me which helped to significantly broaden my skill set among incredible, vibrant and extremely helpful researchers.

Fig 1: My experiences in the Gassmann lab. (1) conducting an HR assay on some lettuce leaves, (2) doing some microbiology working, (3) maintaining newly germinated CRISPR lines, (4) two key members of the Gassmann lab.

The visit was not all work though. I like to say "work hard, play hard". During the 3 months I managed to make amazing international friends from Brazil, India, Kenya, Pakistan and South Africa, of co



thank Walter Gassmann, his lab members and the University of Missouri for the opportunity that allowed me to gain valuable experience and build an international network that will be a key stepping stone in my development as an academic. Lastly, I would like to thank Prof Ashwil Klein, Prof Rodney Uphoff, Ms Debra Lamson and the University of the Western Cape for their involvement in the programme. They worked 24/7 to make sure everything was well-coordinated and with amazing contingency plans should anything fail. Thank you very much, your work is truly changing the lives of many.