Summer Interns Are Among Us

If you look carefully around Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's Manhattan campus this summer, you will spot quite a few new, young faces in our midst. As part of our commitment to education and the development and training of future leaders in the healthcare industry, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center will welcome approximately 100 medical, undergraduate, and high school students this summer through several programs.

Medical students will gain valuable experience in an eight-week program conducting laboratory and clinical research while being mentored by Memorial Sloan-Kettering faculty through the Medical Student Summer Fellowship Program. The Summer Pipeline Program for medical students is a companion program that provides additional funding and research opportunities to underrepresented minority medical students.

The Gerstner Sloan-Kettering Graduate School has developed the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) for underrepresented interests in pursing a career in biomedical sciences. SURP accepts 20 students and provides research exposure, faculty mentorship, and the opportunity to participate in weekly seminars, culminating at the end of the summer with a poster presentation by students of their research projects.

High school students interested in learning more about cancer during the summer can participate in one of two programs. The Human Oncology and Pathogenesis Program (HOPP) Summer Student Program is for students from the tri-state area who are interested in research and are chosen to work directly with a Memorial Sloan-Kettering postdoctoral candidate, graduate student, or research technician. In addition, underrepresented minority and under-resourced high school students from Memorial Sloan-Kettering's partner schools — the High School for Math, Science, and Engineering, located at the City College of New York, and the World Academy for Total Community Health, located in Brooklyn — participate in the Summer Exposure Program.

Since 2007 the critical care team at Memorial Sloan-Kettering's Intensive Care Unit has mentored high school students (front row, center) each summer.
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Program. Both programs give high school students the opportunity to learn and work alongside Memorial Sloan-Kettering faculty on research projects for six to eight weeks during the summer.

For example, two high school students are placed annually in the hospital’s Intensive Care Unit (ICU). At the core of this summer fellowship experience is a research project the students work on together that is beneficial to the hospital and of interest to the students. In previous summers, students compared different ways to measure red blood cells, and tracked the amount of blood transfusions that occurred in the ICU. Dr. Sanjay Chawla, a critical care medicine physician, states “Each summer, students learn the essentials of how to collect, analyze, and store information, and put together a presentation that logically presents the information that was collected. Students finish the program with a better understanding of healthcare careers and see that the field is infinite.”

Mentoring is a vital aspect of all summer student programs at Memorial Sloan-Kettering. Students are engaged with faculty and staff through luncheon seminars; informal lunchtime talks with physicians, nurses, hospital faculty, and other students; and the opportunity to accompany doctors on their daily activities including morning rounds. Memorial Sloan-Kettering staff members commit their time and energy by not only ensuring that the students are exposed to medicine and science but by working with them on communication and presentation skills. “It is an enriching experience for me because it allows me to look back at who I was and where I am now years later. Not long ago I was in their shoes questioning what I wanted to do with my life,” said critical care medicine physician Dr. Louis P. Voigt.

For more information on Memorial Sloan-Kettering’s student programs, including how to apply for summer 2012, contact the HOPP Student Summer Program at HOPPSummerProgram@mskcc.org, the Medical Student Summer Fellowship Program and Summer Pipeline Program at sumstudent@mskcc.org, and the Gerstner Sloan-Kettering Summer Undergraduate Research Program at surp@sloankettering.edu. Should you happen upon one of this summer’s student fellows during a visit to our hospital or while frequenting a local establishment, please join us in encouraging their pursuit of a career in science and medicine.

Construction Update

Construction continues on the second phase of the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Research Center on East 68th Street between York and First Avenues. Plans include completing the interior of several floors providing academic office space, the permanent home of the Gerstner Sloan-Kettering Graduate School, and the first-floor auditorium. The permanent lobby, accessed from 68th Street, will be completed and provide a pre-function area for events in the 350-seat auditorium. Construction will continue throughout the year.

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