



Editor: Rachel Baugh

## Sensational Summer 2021!!!

**Nine high school students** from seven states and **twenty-four undergraduate students** from ten states participated in the **onsite Aspironaut™ Summer Research Program** at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

**Yes, some things were different.** We lived in a hotel, we wore masks, and we ordered a lot through Door Dash. But, the **biomedical research, the professional skills development, and self-discovery** opportunities were spectacular. We added a lab skills course and honed science communication skills with the help of international experts.

The high school interns went on the **"Aspironaut Expedition on the Collagen Triple Helix to the Dawn of the Animal Kingdom"** exploring collagen IV in various species. Undergraduates achieved impressive original data in just ten weeks. Here are a few highlights:

### Impact: In Their Words...

- "My idea of the goals I am capable of achieving has extremely broadened after experiencing this program for the second time. Dreams have become attainable goals for me, thanks to the support system the Aspironaut™ program has also given me."
- **"The best thing about the program for me was I found novel data!"**
- "I felt that I was not just resume building but in fact, career-building as I got to connect with a variety of great minds from across the country and I was able to build valuable and long-lasting connections. This program is something that I will continually refer to as pivotal to my career experience."
- **"The best thing about this experience was feeling like I had the support of the whole Aspironaut family."**
- "The best thing: the interaction with mentors in later stages of life still struggling with problems I am working on. The intergenerational and cultural deep dive was the best part."
- **"I think this internship really caused me to emotionally mature in ways I was not before: not only was I learning so much in the labs, I also had to outline my time in lab, budget my money, and organize food and schedule in the hotel."**
- "Unique to this program is the intense inclusion of the overall program...everyone was ready to help."
- **"I have been able to meet so many mentors and professionals who I have watched and talked to, gaining perspective on research area or habits that I like or dislike. I have**

been able to manage my time better and improved on leadership skills like adaptability and communication. Lastly I have realized how much I love research, specifically when data from a tested hypothesis does not make sense and one has to interpret it."

- "The sheer amount of support in everything, from professional development to health, is what makes this program so unique. I've never felt more welcomed and believed in ever."
- "The best thing about this program for me was the exposure to real-world scientific discovery, bringing science out of the textbook and into the real world."
- "I can't imagine another program having such a strong sense of community among staff and members."
- "Being away from home during a pandemic was a very good thing in my eyes. Instead of staying home, I was able to be challenged and continue the path that I am on to become a doctor. I am very happy that this program was in person this year."
- "Thank you for being my first internship and making me love science even more."

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## 2022 Application is OPEN! **Deadline: January 17, 2022**

We are accepting applications for High School and Undergraduate Aspirnaut™ Summer Research Internships. Recruitment is focused on individuals from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented in STEM careers. We are looking for students who have achieved excellent grades and test scores in math and science and who have demonstrated a commitment to pursuing a career in a STEM field.

To learn more about the High School Program Click [HERE](#)

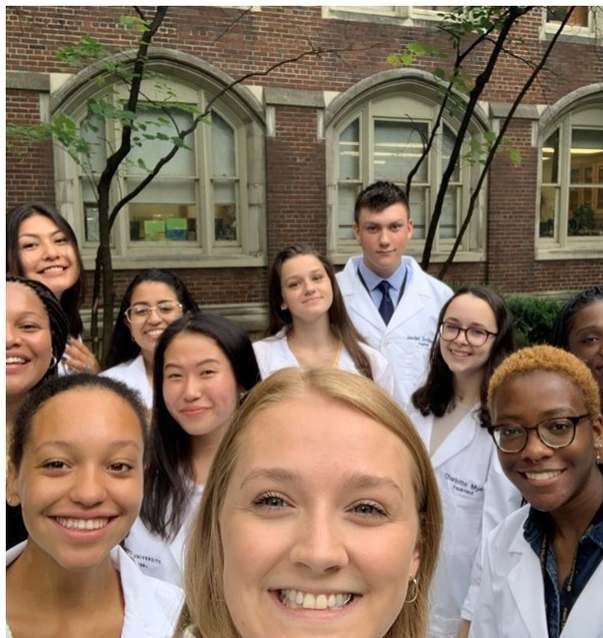
To learn more about the Undergraduate Program Click [HERE](#)

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## Summer of Fun Photo Gallery

### White Coat Ceremony



# Lab Skills Course (Dr. Pedchenko)



# Distinguished Luncheon Series



Dr. Jeff Balsler



Dr. Wonder Drake

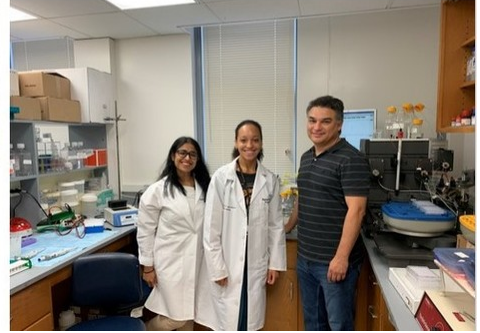
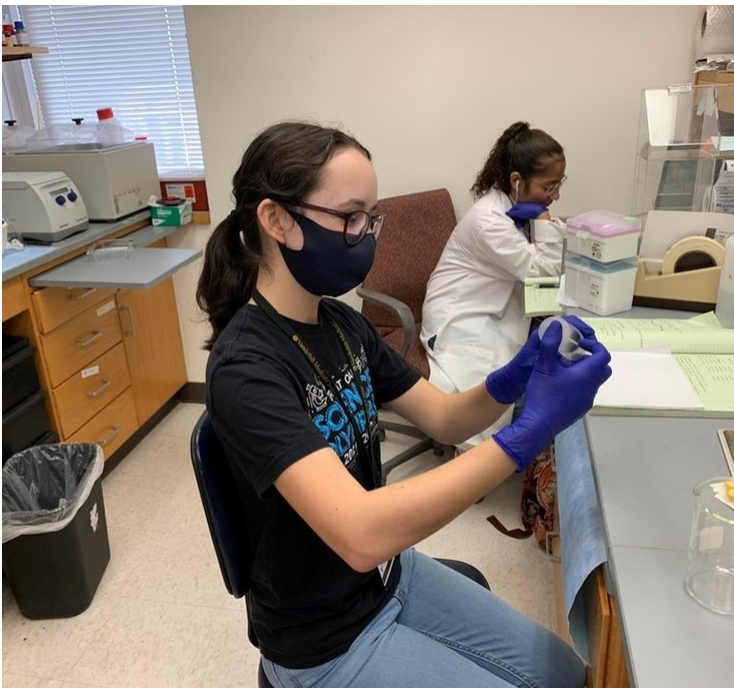


Kitcki Caroll

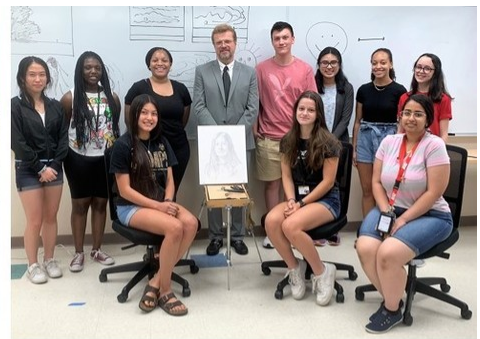
Dr. Ebele Umeukeje

### In The Lab





**Drawing in Science (Maestro Igor Babailov)**



**College Planning (Cynthia Nash) & ACT Prep Course (Tiffany Le)**



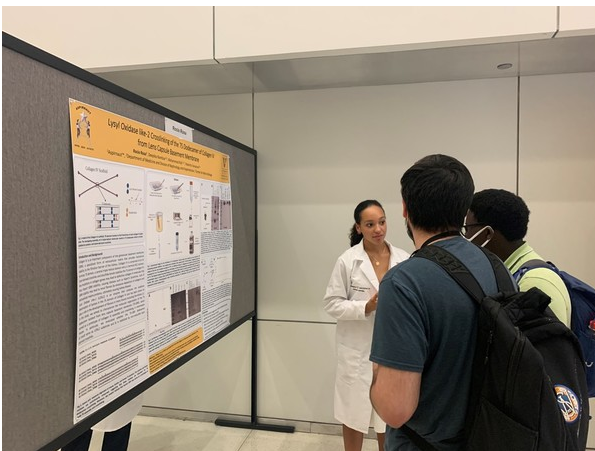
## Psychological Thriving (Dr. Taran) & Wellness (Coach Rachel)



## Fitness Any Time Any Where (Coach Rachel Baugh)



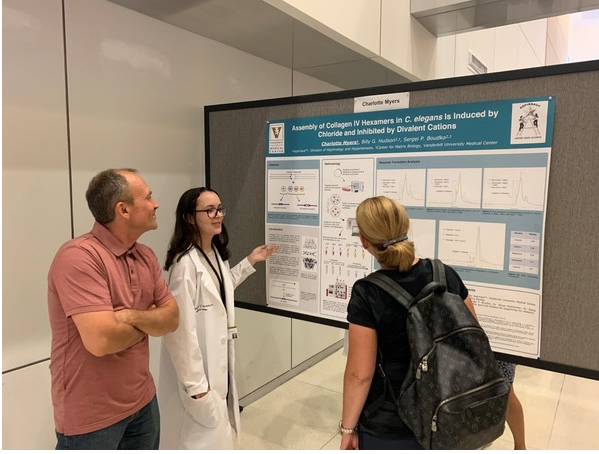
## High School Poster Session



Rocio Rosa



Madeline Lach

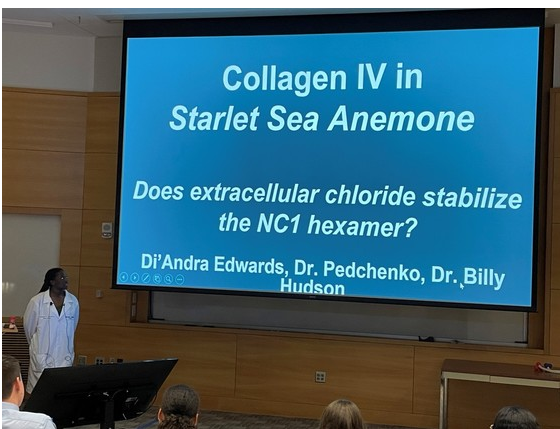


Charlotte Myers



Camryn Cole

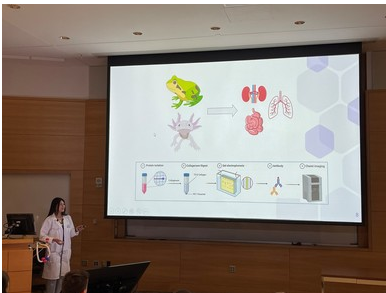
## High School Expedition



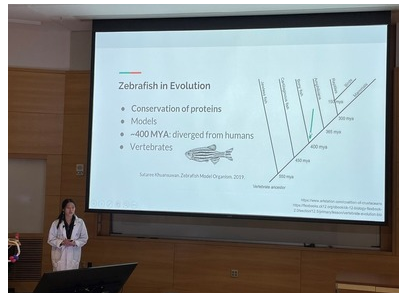
Di'Andra Edwards



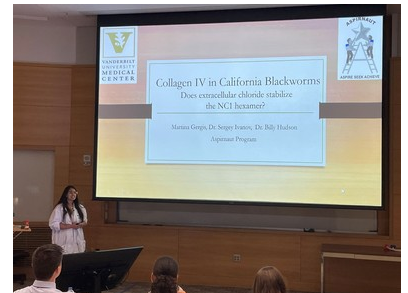
Jaedan Sockbeson



Neve Redhair



Connie Ni



Martina Gergis

## BBQ at the Hudsons



### 4th of July Picnic at Dragon Park







**DONATE NOW**

If you are interested in getting involved or sponsoring an Aspirnaut™ high school experience, please contact Rachel Baugh at [rachel.baugh@aspirnaut.org](mailto:rachel.baugh@aspirnaut.org).

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