Student Research: An Engaging Component of Education

Dear Students, Alumni, Faculty, and Staff,

Research is vital to the medical world. It leads to progress and discovery, and without this momentum, medicine would become a stagnant discipline. Research not only permits advancement, it also yields great excitement—for those participating in the project and those witnessing the results. Research positions those involved at the pivotal point where science shifts from a chemical compound or theoretical idea to a vibrant field of study that directly impacts patient outcomes.

A key opportunity for students to develop their basic and clinical research skills comes annually through the NIH-funded Summer Research Program. The program, which was started twenty-two years ago, has become one of the most popular features of our institution, as it gives students the opportunity to work side-by-side with a faculty mentor and become a valued contributor to an ongoing research project.

The Summer Research Program came under the guidance of alumnus Dr. Eugene B. Chang, Professor of Medicine, in the mid-1990s, and has subsequently flourished with reinvigorated funding from the NIH, including Dr. William A. McDade’s award from NHLBI. The oversight and contributions of Drs. V. Leo Towle and Vineet Arora have also been integral to the success of the program. Today, more than 75% of our first-year class participate in the program. “Our goal is for our students to experience the thrill of discovery and scholarship,” notes Dr. Chang. “We want them to work with outstanding mentors, hone their critical thinking skills, and have a positive, enriching experience that will favorably influence their career decisions about academic medicine and research in the clinical and biomedical sciences. We believe the Summer Research Program has been highly successful in achieving these goals.”

This issue of the Pritzker Pulse highlights three fourth-year students who began their research participation in the Summer Research Program and have gone on to conduct work of fundamental significance throughout their tenure at the Pritzker School of Medicine. Through personal accounts of these students’ experiences, you will get a glimpse of the scope of possible projects to be found, the opportunities research can yield, and the benefits of working with top-notch mentors.

I encourage you to take advantage of the numerous research opportunities that surround you. Be it within the familiar walls of our Medical Center or amidst the foreign landscape of another country, the experience of conducting research is one that will most likely enrich your experience of practicing medicine.

Sincerely,

Holly J. Humphrey, MD
Professor of Medicine
Dean for Medical Education
The Schweitzer Fellowship is a three month opportunity to work at the Schweitzer Hospital in Lambaréné, Gabon—a country about the size of Colorado situated along the west coast of central Africa. It offers a remarkable experience to practice medicine in a country where some of the problems are the same as the US, but where there is always an exciting mix of infectious disease and interesting people. Below are some excerpts that I wrote regarding my experiences.

**August 29, 2007**

I'm sure that everyone thinks things must be different in Africa, but I've come to learn some new rules of the road. Here are just a few:

- When an officer brings a patient into the outpatient clinic to get tested for syphilis, the officer will feel free to let the patient go retrieve the blood test on his own and expect him to return back to the exam room without a problem. I found this shocking, but apparently the patient deemed it better to return to the exam room than to make a run for the Congo.

- When asking if anyone in the family suffers from medical conditions, be sure to clarify what you mean. Many patients think “family” means the extended family, which is their village, friends, and anyone of the same ethnic group. While it’s wonderful to know that they consider all of these people close enough to call family, it sort of defeats the purpose of the question.

**September 23, 2007**

More than occasionally and a little less than frequently, we see elderly patients who don’t know when they were born. On their medical records, we simply note “third age”—I’m not really sure where this begins, but I’m going to go with about 60.

- I just started doing consults on my own when a woman presented with what was clearly a CHF exacerbation. The poor woman hadn’t been able to lie down to sleep at night for more than a week, had bad lower leg pitting edema, and was having difficulty walking more than five meters. I presented her to one of the doctors and we admitted her to the hospital. The following morning during rounds the doctors were laughing because the evening before the woman kept asking, “Where’s Dr. David, where’s my son? He saved me!” Thanks, Lasix.

- One of my favorite patients currently on the in-service doesn’t really speak French, has pretty bad cataracts, and spends a good part of her day sitting on the edge of her bed watching the world go by. One day during evening rounds, I was standing at the head of her bed listening to one of the doctors speak with the woman’s daughter, and she looked up at me, patted the bed next to her, and said something that I completely didn’t understand. Her daughter started
to laugh and translated, “She says you look tired and need to sit down.” I sat next to her, and she said, “C’est bon, mon fils”—“That’s good, my son”—and patted my arm.

**November 1, 2007**

As I get ready to say goodbye to Gabon, I’d like to take a moment to reflect on the people who have made my stay here so interesting.

**The ER Lady:**

I was walking past the emergency department (that’s being a little too generous, there are really only two rooms) when I heard some screaming coming from inside. Of course I had to go see what was happening. I walked in and there was a male nurse holding a woman in a bear hug, and she was not making it easy. Someone said, “Give her 10mg of haldol” (interesting development). She quickly calmed down and proceeded to walk out of the ER and out of the building. Huh? I believe the look on my face got me my explanation— “Oh, David, she comes in once a month for her shot. She might have been a little late this month.”

**The nurses at the hospital:**

**Nurse:** “David, you’re leaving soon. We’ll miss you.”

**Me:** “Oh, that’s nice. I’ll miss you, too.”

**Nurse:** “It’s hard for us. You students come for three months, we become friends, and then you leave.”

**Me:** “I’m sorry. But you all have been so nice and welcoming.”

**Nurse:** “Can I have your umbrella?”

**Me:** “Uhh...I guess.”

**Nurse:** “Can I have it now?”

**Me:** “Well, I’m sort of still using it.”

**Nurse:** “Ok, but make sure to get it to me before you leave.”

(Side note: the nurses are great and fun to work with.)

**The Americans—We were some of the strangest characters of all:**

**David:** “What do you think would hurt more if it fell from a tree and hit you, a mango, a coconut, or a palm branch?”

**Merridith:** “Least to worst is definitely mango, palm branch, coconut.”

**David:** “I agree with the coconut. That’s a concussion waiting to happen. But I believe that a palm branch, while it might knock you off your feet, will not hurt as much as a mango.”

**Kevin:** “I’m going with David. Mangos look like they could hurt. And palm fronds are soft.”

**Merridith:** “Are you kidding me?! The tips of those things could gouge you. You guys don’t know what you’re talking about.”

**David:** “We should see what the Germans think.” §

For more information about the Albert Schweitzer Lambaréné Program, visit http://schweitzerfellowship.org

Listings of other international research opportunities can be found at http://pritzker.uchicago.edu/international
Summer Research Leads to Extensive Publication, Valued Mentor
Research in Pediatric Surgery

By Adam Suchar, MS 4

The vast amount of research opportunities available to Pritzker students goes far beyond those listed in the Summer Research Program guidebook. I discovered the work of Dr. Donald Liu, Chief of Pediatric Surgery, during an internet search of University of Chicago physicians. At the time, I had no real interest in surgery, but was intrigued by one of the projects his webpage described.

My participation in the 2005 Summer Research Program and in subsequent research collaboration with Dr. Liu has resulted in two peer-reviewed publications, three additional manuscripts being prepared for publication, two invited talks (one at a national and the other at an international pediatric surgery conference), five abstracts presented at national and international surgical society meetings, and, most importantly, a direction to take in my medical career.

My earliest work involved the development of a neonatal rat model of necrotizing enterocolitis and the use of that model to investigate the effect of a particular drug on the development of the disease. That same summer we initiated a project investigating the role of video-assisted thoracoscopic decortication in the treatment of advanced pneumonia in children, a project that resulted in an invited talk at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Surgical Congress and my first authorship of a paper published in the journal The American Surgeon in August 2006. Other subsequent projects included an investigation of the risk of ventriculoperitoneal shunt infections in children undergoing a particular anti-reflux surgical procedure, the results of which were presented in an invited talk given at the World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons in Buenos Aires, Argentina in September 2007.

The publications and related presentations of the research experience were intrinsically rewarding and educational, but were not the most important outcomes of the Summer Research Program experience. Of much greater impact for me personally was finding a mentor like Dr. Liu who fueled my growing admiration for the field of surgery and the work that surgeons do. Not only did he reinforce my interests, Dr. Liu also served as a model for a compassionate physician who loves what he does, takes pride in his work, and whom patients listen to, admire, and trust. In addition to working on research projects, Dr. Liu allowed me to shadow him in his clinic and in the operating room. It was there where I was afforded the opportunity to catch a glimpse of an academic surgeon’s life. I strongly believe that the Summer Research Program provides an early opportunity to work closely with faculty members who are some of the very best in their respective fields and has the potential to be a transformative experience. Other than taking an active role in patient care during my third year, no other experience at Pritzker has been as rewarding and impactful on my career path as the one that I initiated through the Summer Research Program.

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I had decided my career in research had ended. I thought I had given it a fair chance having done nine months of bench research in college and decided it wasn’t for me. It’s not the only thing that I was wrong about when I walked through the doors of Pritzker on my first day of medical school.

The pressure to plan the most perfect “last summer” came at me fast that first year. As I heard more about the Summer Research Program and talked to upperclassmen, I realized that maybe it was a little premature to close the door on research completely. Knowing that the most important part of any project is who is on your team, I was lucky to find my way to Dr. Vineet Arora, Assistant Professor of Medicine, well known to my classmates as a leader on the internal medicine service.

Our project focused on examining resident sleep hours to see if an educational intervention that teaches residents the importance of sleep would affect how many hours they slept. I worked with Dr. Arora throughout the summer, meeting a few times a week to iron out problems as they arose. By the end of the summer I felt I had really accomplished something and was excited to present my research, unsure of whether it would mark the end of my work on the project.

Throughout my second year I had the chance to revise my work with Dr. Arora and was thrilled when she let me know we would be submitting the paper to be published. Third year came and I forgot about my research in the hustle of the many rotations. But then, as light broke through the darkness at the end of the third-year tunnel and I was able to see beyond clinical rotations again, I received the exciting news that my paper would be published in Archives of Internal Medicine.

I’m now going through the interview trail for residency and I’ve had the opportunity to reflect on my research experience at Pritzker. I’m not sure that the experience guided my decision of which subspecialty to choose, but I am sure that it has provided me the confidence and support to find a great residency program. Dr. Arora has been both my advisor and my advocate as I’ve navigated the application process. I proudly discuss my research and our success during interviews and find interest and enthusiasm from many of my interviewers.

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The Pritzker Pulse, Winter 2008
By Alan Thong, MS 4

Going into the summer after my first year of medical school, I knew that I wanted to take some time to explore possible specialty interests. Looking for the right mentor and project was difficult, though. Perusing the booklet of Summer Research Project proposals, there seemed to be a number of interesting projects in specialties that appealed to me. Many seemed manageable enough to accomplish something within the short summer time span. In the end, I joined a research project that offered not only a research question in a specialty that I was interested in, but also a great mentor.

When I interviewed with Dr. John Ellis of the Department of Anesthesia and Critical Care, it was clear that he was as excited about working on the project as I was. Our ultimate goal would be to see if an anesthesia protocol using processed EEG monitoring to titrate anesthetic administration could facilitate perioperative beta blockade. We went to the operating room and, over the course of an afternoon, Dr. Ellis not only explained the questions underlying the project, but also showed me the central hypothesis in action during an actual case. This interactive introduction to the research project was only a preview of how hands-on the rest of my summer experience would be.

My role in the project was to coordinate a prospective randomized trial of a monitored anesthesia protocol using processed electroencephalogram parameters. Over the course of the summer, we attempted to determine if such a protocol would increase anesthesiologists’ use of perioperative beta blockade. I got the chance to work on everything from the Institutional Review Board approval process to recruiting patients to running protocol cases in the operating room.

All along the way, Dr. Ellis was available, offering to help in every part of the process. We often stayed late beyond the day’s cases to discuss manuscript drafts or plan the next day’s cases. As a mentor, he always made sure that I had the resources and information to keep the project moving forward. And despite the busy research schedule, I also managed to spend some time shadowing Dr. Ellis in his daily practice and preview anesthesia as a specialty well before my third-year rotations.

By the end of the summer, we had enough data to do a preliminary analysis and Dr. Ellis offered to help put together a submission to one of the national anesthesia meetings. Nearly a year after I first started to work with Dr. Ellis, we traveled to San Francisco to present our abstract and poster at the International Anesthesia Research Society Annual Meeting. It was a nice way to cap off the whole Summer Research Program experience.
Among the plethora of community service and research opportunities available to Pritzker students are countless local projects. But in taking a look beyond US borders, students will also find opportunities to serve and work at the international level. “Going abroad gives both students and residents the opportunity to practice medicine in different resource-limited settings and to see disease processes that we don’t have a chance to see here in Chicago,” elucidates Dr. Janis Tupesis, Assistant Professor of Medicine. He and other faculty members from the University of Chicago Sections of Infectious Disease and Emergency Medicine started up the Geographical Medicine Scholars Program (GMSP) in 2006 in an attempt to increase the level of global health competency among medical students and residents at the University of Chicago. “GMSP was created to act as a fulcrum, balancing clinical and research experiences in international settings,” explains Dr. John Schneider, co-founder of GMSP.

The program is comprised of three components: monthly symposia, clinical competency experiences, and an in-country practicum. The monthly symposium component helps strengthen the scholar’s knowledge base of international disease, ethics, and medical care, while the clinical competency allows scholars to gain clinical skills. The latter is particularly beneficial for the pre-clinical scholars, giving them the experience and confidence to interview patients, perform physical exams, and conduct minor procedures. Selected scholars participate in a four-week in-country practicum based in Hyderabad, India. This past year eight scholars, six medical students, and two residents participated in this part of the program. The practicum schedule consisted of lectures, rounding at hospitals such as Nizam’s and Mediciti, hands-on small group teaching sessions, visiting an HIV orphanage, and participating in disease prevention programs (TB, for example). Within the structured format, there was also some flexibility that allowed students to pursue their own interests. I was able to work more closely with the Sivananda Rehabilitation Home to create an annual summer program for volunteers to teach at the HIV orphanage. Other scholars spent time observing reconstructive surgeries of leprosy patients, visiting pediatric hospitals, and even giving presentations to local residents.

Although it seems that the year’s activities are in preparation for the in-country practicum, the purpose of the GMSP is to unite individuals with similar international interests. Students and residents interested in pursuing international research or health policy are able to connect with and find mentors who are currently active or have experience conducting such projects. For example, current faculty members associated with GMSP are managing research projects in Nigeria, Bangladesh, and India. The subjects of study include breast cancer, environmental correlates of cancer, dermatological diseases, HIV prevention, and substance abuse.

The GMSP can therefore be seen as an international health care study program or as a tool to help those students interested in health care to gain the experience and mentorship to take part in or direct their own self-tailored international research, policy, and community service projects.

For more information, visit http://pritzker.bsd.uchicago.edu/gmsp
The 2007 Annual AAMC Conference took place from November 2–7 in Washington, DC with many members of the Pritzker community in attendance. The work presented by those from Pritzker demonstrated just a few of the ways in which innovation can be found here on campus.

Second-year student Dean Shumway was one of just five students selected to present at the AAMC Annual Conference’s Student Programming Showcase Plenary Session. Dean discussed the innovative Health Care Disparities in America course, the various teaching modalities used, and the need to incorporate this type of instruction and experience into medical education in order to address the pervasive issue of health disparities in America. In the concluding remarks of his proposal, Dean wrote, “While the biomedical and clinical sciences comprise the core of medical school curricula, medical training would be incomplete without educating future physicians about the societal context in which they will practice…For me and for my classmates, Health Care Disparities in America was a very moving introduction to the community in which we would learn to become doctors. The impact on our perceptions, attitudes, and even our careers would be impossible to calculate.”

Fourth-year student Troy Leo served as co-author of an article entitled “Third-Year Medical Students’ Participation in and Perceptions of Unprofessional Behaviors,” which appeared in the October 2007 edition of Academic Medicine. Dr. Shalini Reddy, Assistant Dean for Student Programs, gave an oral presentation on the topic as a part of a Research for Innovations in Medical Education (RIME) session at the AAMC Annual Meeting. Dr. Vineet Arora, Assistant Dean for Curricular Innovations and Dr. Holly Humphrey, Dean for Medical Education were among the article’s co-authors.

ARCS Scholars

ARCS (Achievement Rewards for College Scientists) is a national non-profit foundation whose mission is to “provide scholarships to academically outstanding United States citizens studying to complete their degrees in science, medicine, and engineering, thereby contributing to the worldwide advancement of science and technology.” This year, three Pritzker students were recipients of their generous scholarship funds:

Shahnaz Kazi, MS 2
Baxter International Scholar

Ann Laake, MS 3
Richard Driehaus Foundation Scholar

Erica Aronson, MS 3
Takeda Pharmaceuticals Scholar

Each received a $10,000 award and were invited to present a poster of their research at the Annual ARCS Foundation Scholarship Luncheon on October 24th. A three-year recipient of the ARCS scholarship, Shahnaz Kazi was selected to be the student speaker at the luncheon.
Many thanks to those who responded to the recent Communications Survey sent out to all students. We received feedback from one-quarter of the Pritzker student body and appreciate your thoughts! Here is what you had to say about communication at the medical school, and how we plan to improve our system to better serve you.

- 87% are able to find what they are looking for on the Pritzker website
- Students who visit the website are looking for Course Listings and Descriptions (69%), Information about Pritzker Programs (61.5%), and Student Forms (52.5%)
- Students prefer to receive information via e-mail (45.6%) followed by postings on the Pritzker website (42.0%)

Based on your comments, we will be making ongoing changes to the website and Pritzker Pulse. Visit the Students and Faculty page (http://pritzker.bsd.uchicago.edu/current/) for new Quick Links that allow easy access to the most visited portions of the website. Also look for more features and profiles of Pritzker alumni in upcoming issues of the Pritzker Pulse.

We welcome your thoughts and ideas on how to most effectively communicate and correspond with you! E-mail Kelly Smith (ksmith2@bsd.uchicago.edu) or Caroline Kraft (ckraft@bsd.uchicago.edu).
Faculty Accolades

Dr. William A. McDade, Associate Dean of Multicultural Affairs and Associate Professor of Anesthesia and Critical Care, will rise to the role of President of the Chicago Medical Society in June 2008. Of his new role, Dr. McDade notes, “My goal as President will be to increase the academic community’s role in organized medicine in Chicago. There are a great number of benefits that students and academic physicians derive from the work done by the state and county medical societies. I don’t think this is fully appreciated by a number of academic physicians, but it will be my goal to make them more aware and to welcome them to membership.” He currently serves the organization, a subsidiary of the American Medical Association, as President Elect and Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He is also a member of the Illinois State Medical Society Board of Trustees.

Dr. Monica Peek, Assistant Professor of Medicine, received the Community Service and Advocacy Award at the 2007 Midwest Regional Society of General Internal Medicine Meeting. Dr. Peek was recognized for her outstanding accomplishments in the area of community-based research and outreach for breast cancer and diabetes.

Dr. Monica Vela, Assistant Professor of Medicine, won the 2007 Midwest Society of General Internal Medicine Clinician Educator of the Year Award for her outstanding curricular development in health disparities and related work. The Society of General Internal Medicine is the principal professional society for academic general internists and is dedicated to the promotion of excellence in teaching and research in primary care internal medicine.

Honors and Publications

Rashad Belin, PhD, a first-year student, presented an oral presentation entitled “Molecular Mechanism of Atrial Autonomic Remodeling in a Canine Ventricular Tachypacing Model of Congestive Heart Failure” at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions in Orlando, Florida this November. This study was part of his postdoctoral research conducted at Northwestern and stems from a cross-departmental collaboration between the Departments of Cardiology and Preventive Medicine. The project is translational in nature as the end-goal is to find novel pathologic signaling mechanisms that may contribute to atrial fibrillation in patients with structural heart disease (i.e. congestive heart failure). Rashad received his PhD from the University of Illinois at Chicago in Physiology and Biophysics in 2006.

Algernon Cargill, Jr., a third-year student, presented a poster entitled “Racial/Ethnic Differences in Active Involvement in Shared Decision-Making Among Patients” at the 2007 Society of General Internal Medicine Midwest Regional Meeting. Algernon’s submitted abstract stemmed from research he conducted during the 2006 Summer Research Program with his mentor, Marshall Chin, MD, PhD., Associate Professor of Medicine. Algernon was also second author on a publication entitled “Diabetes Health Disparities: A Systematic Review of Health Care Interventions,” which appeared in the October 2007 supplement of Medical Care Research and Reviews.
Fourth-year student Sonya Chawla served as first author of an abstract that was recently accepted for publication in the *Journal of Cutaneous Pathology*. Her research on apocrine osteoma in a patient with hyperparathyroidism was presented at the annual meeting of the *American Society of Dermatopathology*. Dr. Vesna Rosic-Petric served as her research mentor. Sonya also serves as first author on a case study entitled, “Ring Around the Nevus,” which will appear in an upcoming edition of *Contemporary Pediatrics*.

Fourth-year student Nicole Cipriani, MS, was a co-author for an article that appeared in the September edition of *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*. Nicole, who has her Master of Science in Biomedical Visualization, contributed medical illustrations of a breast reconstruction surgery to the piece. Nicole also contributed medical illustrations to a case study on the congenital absence of the inferior vena cava, which was presented at the *Society of General Internal Medicine Midwest Regional Meeting*. Fourth-year student Daniel Clayburgh, PhD was first author of the presentation.

David Dickerson, a fourth-year student, was first author of a poster presentation at the 2007 *Society for Airway Management National Meeting* in Houston, Texas. David conducted a web-based survey of anesthesiologists’ experience with different airway devices under the mentorship of Dr. Allan Klock.

Nicholas Elisseou, a fourth-year student, was co-author of two publications that recently appeared in *Surgery* and the *Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery*. Nicholas’s research looks at the clinical outcomes and functional effects of surgical treatments for ulcerative colitis. His research grew from his participation in the 2005 Summer Research Program under the mentorship of Dr. Alessandro Fichera.

Fourth-year student Jon Hron will serve as co-author of an upcoming publication in the *Journal of Pediatrics*. The article, “Just In Time: Ethical Implications of Serial Predictions of Mortality and Morbidity for Ventilated Premature Infants,” emanated from Jon’s participation in the 2005 University of Chicago Summer Research Program with his mentor, Dr. William Meadow.
Honors and Publications

Anupam Bapu Jena, PhD, a third-year MSTP student, won the 2007 Eugene Garfield Economic Impact of Medical and Health Research Award. The award serves to recognize those whose work illustrates the economic and health impacts derived from medical and health research. With his research mentor Tomas J. Philipson, PhD, Bapu and Dr. Philipson were recognized for their study on “Who Benefits from New Medical Technologies? Estimates of Consumer and Producer Surpluses for HIV/AIDS Drugs,” published in Forum for Health Economics and Policy. Bapu’s research has focused on the economic value of medical innovation, implications of cost-effectiveness policies for technological growth, and the economics of fertility.

Fourth-year students Martha Johnson and Jared Olson are co-authors on the paper “Using, Assessing Care of Vulnerable Elders Quality Indicators to Measure Quality of Hospital Care for Vulnerable Elders.” The article appeared in the November issue of Journal of the American Geriatrics Society. Faculty authors are Drs. Vineet Arora, Paula Podrazik, Stacie Levine, Catherine Dubeau, and David Meltzer.

Steve Kahn, a second-year student, is the first author of a manuscript that was recently accepted for publication in Cancer Cytopathology. The article, “Quantitative Methylation-Specific PCR for the Detection of Aberrant DNA Methylation in Liquid-Based Pap Tests,” stems from research he conducted within the Department of Pathology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine prior to his matriculation to Pritzker.

Julia Kao, a third-year student, is co-author on a paper that was published in the December issue of Journal of General Internal Medicine entitled “Medication Discrepancies in Resident Sign-Outs and Their Potential to Harm.” The article examines the benefits of utilizing electronic medical records, and the importance of vigilance in hospitals without such technology. Drs. Vineet Arora, David Lovinger, David Meltzer, and alumnus Sam Seiden, MD ’06 also contributed to the publication.

Fourth-year student Bahareh Khatibi was the second author on “Higher Incidence of Abnormal Pap Smears in Women With Inflammatory Bowel Disease,” which was published in the October issue of the American Journal of Gastroenterology. The publication is based on research Bahareh began conducting during the Summer Research Program under the mentorship of Dr. Sunanda Kane. Their study examined the relationship between immunomodulator use and the presence of abnormal cervical histology in women with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).
Caitlin Schaninger, a second-year student, presented the poster “Improving Inpatients’ Identification of Their Doctors: The FACE Project” at the Arnold P. Gold Foundation Meeting in Chicago this September, a project done as part of the 2007 Summer Research Program. Under the mentorship of Dr. Vineet Arora, Caitlin was also the recipient of the Gold Foundation Summer Research Fellowship.

Adam Suchar, a fourth-year student, was the first author of the abstract “Shunt Infection Rate After Laparoscopic Nissen Fundoplication in Children with Indwelling Ventriculoperitoneal Shunts,” which was presented at the World Federation of Associations of Pediatric Surgeons in Buenos Aires this fall. Third-year students Kelly Snider and Alexandra Briggs served as co-authors.

Fourth-year student Elizabeth Sullivan recently had a case report accepted for publication in the Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences. Dr. Maria T. Caserta serves as co-author of the article, “Late Onset Huntington’s Disease Masquerading as Normal Pressure Hydrocephalus.”

Through his continuing work with Dr. Benjamin Abella and as a follow up to his Summer Research Project, third-year student Joshua Wallbrecht recently presented an oral abstract entitled “Audio Analysis of Pauses During CPR Delivered by Hospital Providers” at the American Heart Association Scientific Sessions on November 5th in Orlando, Florida.

Students and Alumni!

If you would like your recent achievement to be highlighted in the next issue of the Pritzker Pulse, please visit the Pritzker website at pritzker.uchicago.edu and click “Submit your Pulse update!”
It was a warm, clear September afternoon when Pritzker students from all four classes converged on the Midway for the inaugural Pritzker Field Day. Members of the Huggins, De Lee, Phemister, and Coggeshall Advising Societies gathered for some friendly competition in four classic outdoor events: volleyball, soccer, ultimate Frisbee, and the elementary school favorite…kickball! For four hours, clinical responsibilities were put on hold, orientation events had to wait, and fourth-years momentarily forgot about their pending applications to residency. This was about pride and bragging rights. Which really is the best Society?

Led by Dr. Shalini Reddy, Associate Professor of Medicine, members of the Huggins Society gathered and began to think up cheers and develop strategies as they prepared for their first event. Dr. Reddy, never one to shy away from competition, pulled me aside and stated simply, “We need to win,” marking the importance of this day and clearly demonstrating this was more than just friendly competition.

From across the Midway a man came marching over, dressed head to toe in a referee’s uniform. As he got closer, Phemister’s fearless leader, Dr. David Howes, Professor of Medicine, made his presence known by blasting on his whistle. Phemister members laughed and cheered while other society members wondered if his refereeing would alter the outcome of the games.

De Lee, absent their faculty leader, relied on the sound leadership and experience of seasoned fourth-years. Calling upon their previous intramural experiences and wisdom of their sagacious MS 4s, De Lee assembled a powerful team that exuded confidence as marked by proclamations like, “You might as well give us that trophy now.”

Coggeshall was also without a faculty member or senior leadership and instead had to rely on the organization and leadership of primarily first-years. Intensity was the name of the game for Coggeshall, as team members played every point like it was their last and challenged points that were denied.

As the competition wore on, Huggins began to falter. A victory in volleyball was short-lived as they fell in soccer and ultimate Frisbee. Phemister, too, was unable to capitalize on the distinct advantage of having an official on their side and squared off against Huggins in the consolation bracket where Huggins took home 3rd place.

The quiet confidence of De Lee and young leadership of Coggeshall set the stage for a final game of kickball to determine the champion. With multiple lead changes, cheering, and disputed points, it came down to one final inning to determine the champion. What appeared to be the game-tying run ended up being negated as a base-running gaffe ended the game, but not without controversy. In the end, De Lee came out on top with Coggeshall left to wonder what could have been. As De Lee hoisted the muscle-man trophy overhead, Coggeshall, Huggins, and Phemister applauded politely. One couldn’t help but wonder about next year. Will De Lee retain the trophy or will a new champion be crowned? §
Students from Pritzker’s American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Chapter took both literal and figurative strides toward making AIDS a known issue to local government and beyond. On November 30th, many area medical students gathered together to rally for World AIDS Day, before marching to the Illinois Republican Party offices in Chicago to make known their stance.

The *People’s Weekly World* online reports that, “The student medical association is urging Congress to approve at least $50 billion over the next five years to fight global AIDS and $8 billion to train and retain health care workers.”

First-year student Aaron Cohn was instrumental in orchestrating Pritzker’s participation.

On why involvement in the rally was important, he notes, “PEPFAR—the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—is up for reauthorization right now, making it a critical time to demand change on behalf of those impacted by HIV/AIDS worldwide.”

Joseph Tasosa, a first-year student with family members living in Zimbabwe, told the *People’s Weekly World*, “There isn’t anyone that doesn’t know anyone who hasn’t died from AIDS,” said Tasosa. “I’m lucky because none of my immediate family is infected.”

Along with Aaron and Joseph, Jonathan Lee, Molly McAdow, Jennifer Kaiser, Emilie Vander Haar, Tashera Perry, and Elizabeth Garza all attended the rally.

At the University of Chicago, in an atmosphere of interdisciplinary scholarship and discovery, the Pritzker School of Medicine is dedicated to inspiring diverse students of exceptional promise to become leaders and innovators in science and medicine for the betterment of humanity.
The Comer Kids’ Classic, an annual race now in its fifth year, took place on October 10th and Pritzker representatives from each of the four advising societies came out in full force to participate. With all proceeds going directly to the Comer Children’s Hospital, the 5K run, walk, and kids’ dash proved to be a great way to support the facility that provides such outstanding care to our community.

All told, the Pritzker team registered 45 members, which translated to $1,125 in entry fees donated.

In the spirit of friendly competition, the participants from each society were:

Fourth Place: Phemister–7 participants
Third Place: Coggeshall–10 participants
Second Place: DeLee–12 participants
Making the winner the Huggins Society with 16 participants!

Congratulations to the Huggins Society and many thanks to everyone who participated and made this event a great success! §

Upcoming Events

JANUARY
22 MS 4 Class Meeting: Preparing Your Rank List

FEBRUARY
26 AOA Induction Ceremony

MARCH
4 Gold Humanism Honor Society Induction Ceremony
20 Match Day
24 MS 3: Spring Symposium
26 MS 2: Orientation to the Junior Lottery
31 MS 3: Orientation to the Senior Lottery

MAY
8 Senior Scientific Session

JUNE
13 Divisional Academic Hooding Ceremony
13 University Convocation
18 Student Clinician Ceremony
18-20 Introduction to the Clinical Biennium

For the event details, visit the Pritzker Calendar of Events at http://events.uchicago.edu/pritzker