



The 2004 Medical Career Program



The LAPS Summer Medical Career Program was created thirty five years ago with the goal of encouraging high school juniors and seniors to pursue a career in the health professions. In 1990, the program was named after Gene Black, who worked for the Los Angeles Pediatric Society for

45 years and helped develop the program.

This year, 52 students were chosen from among 243 applicants to participate in the rigorous four-week program that put them in direct contact with the medical staff and patients. Forty nine students completed the course. Sixteen medical centers in the greater Los Angeles served as sites for the program.

To apply, students were required to write a short personal essay and to supply at least one letter of recommendation. Counselors at the sponsoring medical centers chose which students to admit.

Students were provided a weekly stipend of \$75 to cover incidental expenses. At the end of the program, two students who successfully completed the program were selected at random to each receive a \$500 scholarship from the Edward M. Rissman Scholarship Fund. The awards will be presented to the students after they finish their first semester of higher education. The winners of the 2004 scholarships are: James Ellis III from Martin Luther King High School in Riverside (Arrowhead Regional Medical Center) and Francesca Estella from Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach (St. Mary's Hospital).

Following is a sampling of letters of thanks we received this year.

Anyone interested in participating in next years' Gene Black program should contact Dr. Hamilton at (310) 264-2100.

First of all I would like to thank you for allowing me to experience this opportunity. It was completely amazing. I learned and witnessed so much.

My favorite department is the ER. There was so much action and all the cases differed. The doctors were very nice and explained a lot about how they go about their day.

I also saw open heart surgery. It is such an incredible process. I watched from the beginning when the anesthesiologist step up all his machines. It is still unbelievable to me how they stop the heart and a machine can replace it. Again, the doctors let me know what was going on which was really neat. I can still see images of the surgery whenever I talk about it.

Another department that I really enjoyed was pathology. I touched a real brain!! I also got to feel an amputated foot, a spine, and a breast tumor. I thought I would totally grossed out, but instead I liked it a lot. A pathologist showed me the difference between cancer cells and healthy cells under a microscope. That was really awesome.

And of course I loved the labor and delivery department. I saw a c-section and a vaginal delivery. I also saw tubes being tied. It was so amazing to be in a room with four people and then suddenly there be five people in the room. I still cannot believe I got to be apart of such a joyous experience for two families. Again, thank you for picking me to be one of the lucky fifty three selected. I will always remember this wonderful experience.

Erica Dorfman
Tarzana Hospital

Dear Ms. Carr,
My name is Joseph Ferrigno from the area of San Pedro, California. I was assigned to Harbor-UCLA general hospital. I just want you to know it was one of the most productive, influential, and rewarding experiences I have ever had the pleasure to participate in. A little history of myself made it very easy to relate to. I was born a premature baby 18 years ago at a total weight of 1 pound 11 ounces and a 25 weeker. Anyways, when I got the chance to enter the neonatal unit for a morning shift, it really made me relate. It made me feel so fortunate to be alive today and to know what these babies suffer, I once suffered. This is the primary reason I chose medicine, I feel the self-determination to become a pediatric neonatologist and return the favor of life to these babies. One doctor made sure I am here today, and I want to assure another baby in the future he will live a full productive life like I do. This is the reason I cherished the chance to participate in the Gene Black Summer program. Everything I saw I thoroughly enjoyed. There was nothing bad about the program and I hope to have high school seniors enjoy this program as much as I once did. It is truly amazing and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for making it run smoothly.

With much thanks and supreme gratitude.

Joseph Ferrigno
Program Site: Harbor UCLA General

These past four weeks have been the best experience I have ever had. I learned so much that many my age would usually never have the chance to experience. What I enjoyed the most was how many departments we visited and had a chance to observe. Many departments I visited I never thought of as a career that interested me, but now I realize that there are so many options in the medical career. What is wonderful about this program is that you get to see things first hand. Watching surgeries was so amazing and I really enjoyed how many of the doctors, nurses, and technicians we worked with tried to incorporate us into their work to make it more worthwhile. The only thing I wish was different is that it could have been longer than a month long!

Emily Gallegos
Kaiser Permanente Woodland Hills



2005 GENE BLACK SUMMER MEDICAL CAREER PROGRAM IS A HUGE SUCCESS!

Robert Hamilton, M.D., Chair, Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program

Our summer 2005 Gene Black Summer Internship Program is now, as the sports announcers like to say, “in the history books.” And another great year it was!! In total 53 high school students, between their junior and senior years, participated in the LA County-wide July program. As they followed us in our daily routines, students were allowed the opportunity to intimately “peek behind the curtain” of our profession and see what we really do as pediatricians. The response from our students and our program mentors was overwhelmingly positive. The Gene Black Program continues to be an excellent vehicle for introducing young adults to our profession.

My commitment to this worthy program has never been greater. Here’s why: First, the value to our students who participate is great. As one would expect, most of our students have only a vague idea of what medicine really entails even though they profess to have an abiding interest in becoming physicians or nurses. The Gene Black Program shows them the real thing, unvarnished and stripped of the Hollywood glamour. Participation in the program helps to clarify their

vision and gives them a sense of reality that helps in their decision making in the years to come.

Second, as a mentor in the program, it is exhilarating to spend a summer month with excited, interested and motivated young people. There are many remarkable young people in our community and the Gene Black Program allows us the wonderful chance to work with the best.

Finally, the opportunity to teach, even at this elementary level, is stretching. Rethinking differentials and explaining disease processes in simple terms moves one beyond the usual work-a-day paradigms. I find this impartation of knowledge to our students exciting and as I participate, I am again challenged personally to continue my efforts to be a student of our profession.

For those interested in participating in the Summer Gene Black Program as a mentor for summer 2006, please contact Robert Hamilton, M.D. at (310) 264-2100.



“This program was an unforgettable experience.”



“I have learned so much from all of these amazing physicians and they have inspired me to pursue my medical career.”



“They taught me that you don’t need to be a genius to become a doctor, you just need to be hard-working, dedicated, and have passion for what you are doing.”



“I am more grateful and fortunate to have loving parents and a shelter that may keep me from violence.”



“This unforgettable experience has made me more excited about what the future may hold for me.”

2009 Eve and Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program

We just received this IMPORTANT dispatch from one of our reporters, on the ground, with some of the new recruits for the Eve and Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program. Our reporter, Robert Hamilton, MD is in the trenches now, working side by side with these young and yet untested privates. Here is what he had to say about their first mission into the world of pediatric medicine...

A QUICK DISPATCH FROM THE FRONT...

DATELINE: JULY 6, 2009

BYLINE: ROBERT C. HAMILTON, MD, FAAP

Yesterday, at the break of dawn, my office was filled with six, excited, garrulous and smiling faces. It was day #1 of the Eve and Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program, sponsored Los Angeles Pediatric Society. After months of anticipation and preparation, this day for them had finally arrived. Two young men and four lovely young ladies, all clad in white smock lab coats hovered around my desk. It was the time to receive their final instructions and fan out into the world of pediatrics.

Their first mission was to Cedars-Sinai Hospital in West Hollywood. As the "private attending" for the month, I have the responsibility of teaching the house officers about the patients they cover. With these fresh recruits in tow, I arrived at the hospital and we marched successfully to the floor after a brief stop at the Starbucks' waterhole.

We were met by two interns and one resident on the floor. Then, the war began! Back and forth flew the questions and answers. Facts were flying. Blood types were discussed and there was meconium all over the place. One young male child was even seen to lose a body part (foreskin). It was a short engagement, but our recruits saw their first action!

As we drove back to our base camp on the road west to Santa Monica aboard the Hamilton Humvee (2003 GMC Yukon), these young privates expressed delight and awe. It was clear for them to see that pediatrics was not all labs or anatomy, but that there was a sense of camaraderie and purpose that was infectious. One female recruit was particularly effusive.

"Do you still want to be a doctor?" I asked after the skirmish. "More than ever!!" she responded.

I haven't heard those words in quite some time. It was a successful first mission. More battles await, but their enthusiasm is sure to see them through...

Our thanks to Dr. Hamilton for his exciting update. We extend our thanks to all our veteran counselors, their participating hospitals or practices as well as all those who generously support our young privates by donating to the Summer Medical Career Program. Now in its 40th year, this program has exposed over 2300 high school students to the world of medicine with many of its past participants going on to become medical professionals. There are even several former Eve and Gene Black participants now in the trenches assisting current recruits.

To learn more about this life changing program, a synopsis can be found on page 6 of this newsletter and on our website:

www.lapedsoc.org. This year LAPS received over 350 applications and could only place 46 deserving recruits. If you are in a private practice or a faculty member at a hospital in the area and you are interested in making a tangible contribution to our combat effort, LAPS WANTS YOU!



2010 EVE AND GENE BLACK SUMMER MEDICAL CAREER PROGRAM REFLECTIONS



King Center staff and participants, kneeling Program Coordinator Lorraine Grey.

Combined Valley Program

"The two weeks that I spent in this program were life-changing. I gained such significant insight into the world of medicine and came out of the program with a solid understanding of the medical path I want to follow. I sincerely believe that this program has made my dreams and interests become realistic, tangible goals. I am eagerly awaiting my journey into the progressive, captivating world of medicine."

Chelsea D.

"My hope is that one day, I can be the doctor to show LAPS students around the hospital and get them to love the program as much as I did."

Meredith B.



Department Rotation at Cedars-Sinai



Working in the Lab at St. Mary



UCLA participants with pediatric therapy dog

LAC-USC

"...by engaging in this educational and informational experience, I have now decided that I would like to pursue a career in the pediatrics department of medicine. With the help of the Eve and Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program, I have now discovered that the medical field is where I'm destined to be."

Cynthia A.

"Finishing this program has opened my eyes to new possibilities of a health care profession and helped me realize that I do want to be a doctor."

Monica M.



Surgery Observation at White Memorial

Harbor UCLA

"Keep your mind open" was what the presenting doctor said during one of my first Grand Rounds.

Johana M.

"The program meant more than just learning what goes on in the hospital. I learned how much effort and teamwork it takes to not just solve problems in the hospital but in the rest of the world as well."

Marshall C.

Olive View

"If anyone wants to go into medicine, they should definitely apply for this program."

Kee-Hwan K.

Childrens

"From the outpatient rooms, to the clinics, and the laboratories, everything was laid out for us to see: raw and uncensored. It is truly an experience that you cannot gain from reading a textbook. To the professionals who readily welcomed clueless high school students into their days, I thank you sincerely."

Shalisa P.

St. Johns

"The Eve and Gene Black Summer Program is completely different in every way from other summer programs. Not only do the interns experience the hospital environment, they also shadow various fields of medicine, ranging from general pediatrics to dentistry. If it was possible for me to do this program again next year, I would sign up in a heartbeat."

Jessica C.

Tarzana

"I was able to see three cesarean sections performed and an arthroscopic surgery and both were very exciting to watch."

Jessica L.

"I wore scrubs, stood next to surgeons as they performed amazing procedures, and circulated through almost all of the departments. I entered the hospital as an ignorant student dazzled by the hospital's complexity and vastness and left enlightened and confident about pursuing a career in medicine."

Monica C.

Thank you to the participating hospitals, their counselors, and all those that generously donate to the Summer Medical Career Program; your support positively influences future generations of medical professionals. Additional information about the **2011 Summer Program** can be found in this newsletter or on our website: www.lapedsoc.org

On Their Way..Updates from Former Summer Medical Career Program Students

Where Are They Now?

The Los Angeles Pediatric Society and the many medical professionals involved in the Eve & Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program, often wonder what becomes of the students who pass through this program. Here are some excerpts from emails we have received from former participants who are indeed, well on their way! Be assured your efforts truly make a difference!

"I just wanted to thank you for giving me that opportunity and let you know how much it's helped me. After doing the program, I knew for certain that I want to be a surgeon. Now I'm finishing my freshman year at UCLA. I started an incredible internship at the UCLA hospital, and I'm staying in LA over the summer to continue it. I shadow a Cardio-thoracic surgeon and have already gotten so much exposure to the field. I've seen heart transplants, valve repairs, artificial hearts and corrections of birth defects. It's unbelievable.



I am also helping with a study on an organ care system that keeps organs perfused during transport. The doctor I'm shadowing is helping me start a job as a "procurer," flying out on heart and lung procurements. Thank you so much for introducing me to the medical field. I could not be more excited." ~ Corinne, 2013

"I'll be moving to Baltimore at the end of June to start my job as a research associate at the Lieber Institute for Brain Development at Johns Hopkins. I'll be using genetics techniques in combination with neuroimaging to isolate specific brain areas affected during the development of Schizophrenia, particularly with regards to deficits in motivation and reward." ~ Akshay, 2010



"I am currently a third year Biology major at the University of California Riverside, and in the preparation phase of applying to medical school. I would not be where I am, if had not participated in this program. ... I would really like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation." ~ Caroline, 2009



los angeles pediatric society

Press Release:

COVID-19 and the Future Pediatricians of Los Angeles

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Los Angeles CA, Monday, 27 July 2020 – **Mayor Eric Garcetti** is saluting a highly-select group of high schoolers who hope to pursue careers curing the diseases of childhood. “For more than half a century the Eve & Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program has put young Angelenos on a path to a life of service,” he said to the 65 students in prepared remarks this week. “This year like so much in our lives, the program looks a little different.”



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Since 1969, thousands of kids have applied to the **Los Angeles Pediatric Society** in order to join small teams of students who spend the month of July with a pediatrician: seeing patients in their offices, rounding in the hospital, and learning about the sacrifices that go into becoming a doctor. Last August, the group was saluted on the field at Dodger Stadium for 50 years of preparing future pediatricians.

But the Covid-19 crisis of 2020 closed all the hospitals to volunteers. Like many schools and colleges, the Pediatric Society scrambled to save their long-running program and to reward the efforts of the 250 students who had applied to participate. “We sent out an invitation in May seeking 48 speakers to inform and inspire these young people, and in the end we had to turn away some very talented presenters because the response was so enthusiastic,” said **Dr. Robert Hamilton**, a Westside pediatrician who has directed the program since 2004.

Four weeks of online lectures and discussions ensued after Independence Day, with presentations ranging from a 21-year-old program graduate talking about her life as a medical student to a 95-year-old **Dr. Mike Martini** describing the changes he witnessed in the care of children since he started practicing in 1954. There were chaplains from Cedars-Sinai and child-life specialists from Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles, to name a few.

Besides the remarks of Mayor Garcetti, the final week of the program features the perspectives of **Moira Szilagyi MD PhD**, a UCLA professor and newly-elected national president of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and also a discussion led by **Dr. Perri Klass**, the New York Times pediatrics columnist, about her classic book entitled, “Baby Doctor: A Pediatrician’s Training.”

Mayor Garcetti talked about how Covid-19 had impacted the lives of all the city’s students. But he closed on a high note by advising the participants, “Stick to your studies, stay inspired, and keep up the good work. And on behalf of the City of Angels, thank you for choosing to provide help, and to give hope, and to make life better for all of us.”

Please contact Ms. Ellen Seaman (eseaman@lapedsoc.org, 424-262-6590) to “eavesdrop” on these sessions, or with any questions or interview requests.

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