



## The 2004 Medical Career Program



**T**he 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 Francessa 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 spline, 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](http://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](http://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

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## Press Release:

## COVID-19 and the Future Pediatricians of Los Angeles

*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](mailto:eseaman@lapedsoc.org), 424-262-6590) to “eavesdrop” on these sessions, or with any questions or interview requests.

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# Los Angeles Pediatric Society Newsletter



## President's Message

**Allyson Self-Stoico, MD**

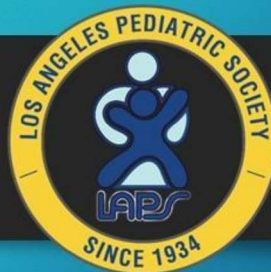
As we round out the year 2023, the Los Angeles Pediatric Society continues to thrive through your support of membership, attendance at our events and your donations and participation in our Summer Program.

This spring, Cedars Sinai Guerin Children's graciously hosted the 2023 S. Michael Marcy, MD, Memorial Lecture at the Parmelee. Dr. David Skaggs, Director of Pediatric Orthopedics at Guerin Children's, gave an overview of relevant clinical issues in his talk titled "*Torticollis to Scoliosis: Spine Issues in Children and Adolescents*". Even the more seasoned of us physicians came away with some great insight to take back to our clinics!



[Read More](#)

**54<sup>th</sup> Eve and Gene  
Black Summer Medical  
Career Program**



Creating life-changing  
experiences for High  
School Students with  
medical career  
aspirations since 1969



**Presentation Ceremony for  
LAPS Summer Program  
Students at Martin Luther King,  
Jr. Outpatient Center**



**2023 Summer Program Includes Both In-  
Person and On-Line Sessions**

The Los Angeles Pediatric Society (LAPS) established the Eve and Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program in 1969 as a medical mentor program to encourage high school students to choose careers in the health professions.

In this, our 54<sup>th</sup> year of the Program, we were able to offer a mix of in-person and virtual programs. We had 54 students participate in our in-person programs and 120 participate in our virtual programs.

The students were divided into two, 2-week sessions and met from July 10 through August 11. LAPS Board members Drs. Neville Anderson, Karen Camero, Caryn Cassidy, Claudia Emami, Gene Liu, Kimberly Klausner, Lauren Meepos, Allyson Self-Stoico, Sloane Sevrans, Patrick Whelan and Paula Whiteman, along with Dr. Nanci Rascoff served as the daily moderators, navigating speaker introductions, chat questions and PowerPoint presentations with ease.

## Click Images below to see Quotes from 2023 Program Participants

[READ MORE TO SEE ALL THOSE WHO HELPED TO MAKE THIS PROGRAM POSSIBLE](#)



[How can I help the Summer Program? Visit our website](#)



## LAPS Loves Updates from our Summer Program Alums!

*(Nicole Lee participated in the 2017 Eve and Gene Black Summer Program at the Pipeline and School Partnership Programs at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science and recently sent the letter of thanks below, to Dr. Eleby Washington, Professor and Chairman, Department of Surgery and Orthopaedic Surgery.)*

Dear Dr. Washington,

I hope this email finds you well. This is Nicole Lee - Mindy and I were part of the Eve & Gene Black Summer Program and came to visit you a few months ago. I wanted to send you an update having started school at the Georgetown University School of Medicine! I have been enjoying the past three months learning at school,

though there is definitely a lot to study. I just successfully completed my first round of exams for this year. I have also been learning so many clinical skills that I'm excited to use in the future.

I have been leaning towards pursuing orthopedic surgery, particularly hand surgery, since shadowing you in high school, and my experiences here already are also pushing me in that direction. I was matched with orthopedic surgeon Dr. Michael Kessler as my preceptor for in-office shadowing and have been following him throughout various sessions this year. I am also hoping to start research in the field very soon!

I have included an image from my white coat ceremony! It made me think of the first white coat ceremony you took us to at CDU 6 years ago. Thank you for the influence you have made in helping me start and shape my career. I look forward to communicating with you again!



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## **PARTICIPANTS OF THE 2024 ONLINE AND IN-PERSON EVE AND GENE BLACK SUMMER MEDICAL CAREER PROGRAM SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS**

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- ❖ This program will always hold a special place in my heart for being the start of my journey, and for giving students like me a great opportunity to explore medicine on a deeper level.
- ❖ Soon the sight of procedures didn't scare me, they interested me, I got to see the anatomy of an actual human in front of my eyes. I was captivated.
- ❖ This experience opened my eyes to the fact that being a doctor isn't just about performing procedures in a sterile operating room; it's about connecting with patients and understanding their fears and concerns. It is a holistic process.
- ❖ As I apply to colleges and contemplate the journey ahead, I am filled with excitement and confidence that this is the path I want to pursue in life.
- ❖ I was educated that a career in healthcare requires you to be a student for a lifetime and continuously learn and grow, which touched me as this mindset is parallel to my own.
- ❖ It has fueled my passion for not just becoming a doctor but becoming a doctor who serves those in need, who advocates for the underserved, and who strives to bridge the gaps in healthcare that exist in so many communities. I've seen firsthand how a doctor's compassion and commitment can transform lives, and that is the kind of doctor I aspire to be.
- ❖ Meeting Dr. Washington was an unforgettable highlight. His wisdom and advice were exactly what I needed as someone passionate about medicine. His guidance and the inspirational conversations we shared were incredibly motivating and impactful. My experiences here were undoubtedly one of the most enriching and educational summer programs I have ever attended.
- ❖ Additionally, I have learned that there is no single pathway to becoming a medical provider and even when challenges arise, the light at the end of the tunnel is always within reach.
- ❖ It was a breath of fresh air to realize that there's no just one direct path to become a medical professional. Absorbing multiple people's journeys about their pathway to become a medical provider, I remained open to future opportunities and the several pathways to become a healthcare worker.
- ❖ The level of respect and professionalism that the physicians demonstrated, while also managing to be humorous and keep the conversations lighthearted, was intriguing, and has made me think about the way I should carry myself in the future as a healthcare professional.
- ❖ Being able to both learn and understand the difficulties the lecturers had encountered really shaped what I believed, and allowed me to further understand the numerous and vast amount of career options the medical field has to offer.



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## **PARTICIPANTS OF THE 2024 ONLINE AND IN-PERSON EVE AND GENE BLACK SUMMER MEDICAL CAREER PROGRAM SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS**

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❖ *Page 2 of 2*

- ❖ Working with these spectacular doctors has given me my own definition of medicine. Medicine doesn't come in the shape of a pill bottle, but in the form of a person.
- ❖ July 22nd I was granted the opportunity to work at my local county hospital, gain exposure and a glimpse of what the rest of my life could be like. To witness people of my complexion in a position of such empowerment, capability, responsibility, and trustworthiness made all the difference in my 17-year-old mind.
- ❖ I was fortunate to participate in an experience that provided me with unparalleled insights into the medical field at a young age. The unique wisdom and knowledge that I gained through the LAPS Eve & Gene Black Summer Medical Career Program is unmatched and truly cannot be gained elsewhere.
- ❖ ...gave me words of encouragement and a talk of "why not become a doctor?" in which he then proceeded to speak life into the conceived thought by saying "you would make an extremely great doctor". A lot of people wouldn't understand but this was the moment my life, ambitions, and dreams changed. I started thinking to myself how have I never considered becoming a doctor?
- ❖ Dr. Gordon's emphasis on having a clear vision for the future and staying true to oneself in times of hardship allowed me to feel more confident in myself and continue setting goals for my future.
- ❖ I have been equipped with knowledge, skills and inspiration to continue my path in medicine with more enthusiasm and dedication than ever before. Hopefully, one day I will be on the other side of the panel, inspiring more aspiring individuals to join me in making the world a better place, one patient at a time.
- ❖ Seeing like-minded, driven, and curious providers presenting their own journey to medicine made what felt unattainable become real, as I started to realize that this is something I can achieve in my future. Having the opportunity to be in contact with such wise and knowledgeable medical professionals was invaluable, as I was able to receive true, authentic information to guide me in my future.
- ❖ More specifically, learning from these people helped me realize what kind of doctor I aspire to be: one that listens, and takes what she hears to heart. The sounds of MLK always harmonized together into a general hum, which Dr. Brown claimed was proof that the hospital was alive. Each day, from the moment I arrived, I strove to learn from things I could hear, but more so to understand the things I could not.
- ❖ Additionally, their openness to questions and their willingness to provide well thought out answers on the spot was brilliant. Their love for their careers translated in the way they spoke and that passion translated itself onto me.
- ❖ The medical internship was not just a learning opportunity but I saw it as my first step towards my future.