
MEHARRY CANCER SUMMER UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM (SURP)

LaMonica Stewart, PhD, Program Director



PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Provide a 10-week, cancer-focused research training experience
- Provide information and skills needed to apply to medical and graduate school
- Provide an opportunity to present research findings internally at Meharry Medical College and externally at one national conference



STANDARD PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Use nationwide recruitment strategy to select 10-12 program participants interested in MD, PhD and/or MD/PhD degrees
- Allow participants to perform 10-week research project (basic, clinical, translational or community based) in Nashville, TN
- Provide course and seminars to enhance participant awareness of cancer and cancer health disparities
- Provide career development sessions and opportunities to interact with Meharry/Vanderbilt faculty and students
- Allow participants to present research locally at Meharry Summer Research Symposium and at one national meeting (ABRCMS, AACR, FASEB)




2019 – 2020 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY
November 6, 2019	Online Application Live:
February 5, 2020	Application Submission Deadline
February 19 – March 19, 2020	Application Review and Selection of Program Participants
March 20, 2020	Notification of Acceptance

2019 – 2020 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITY
November 6, 2019	Online Application Live:
February 5, 2020	Application Submission Deadline
February 19 – March 19, 2020	Application Review and Selection of Program Participants
March 20, 2020	Notification of Acceptance



You don't need to cancel,
you need to *PIVOT*.

HOW DID WE PIVOT?

We made a few changes to the program:

- Transitioned to solely virtual format (Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate)
- Shortened program from 10-week to 6-week training period
(May 26 –July 3, 2020)
- Participants did not perform individual research projects

HOW DID WE PIVOT?

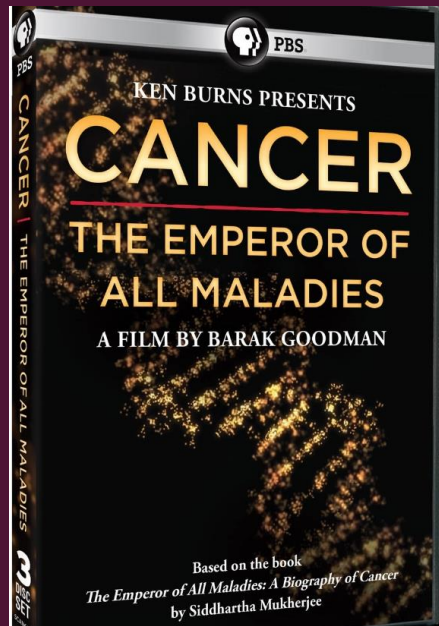
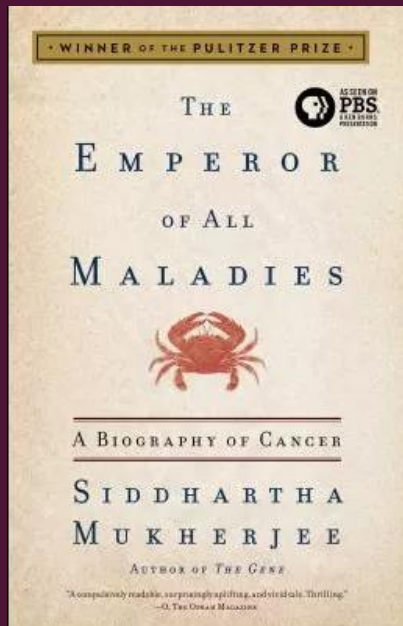
But we kept other key program components:

- Cancer Biology Mini-Course during first 2 weeks of program
- Responsible Conduct of Research Sessions
- Faculty and Graduate Student Cancer-Focused Research Seminars
- Career Development Sessions

CANCER BIOLOGY MINI-COURSE

Lecture Topic	Instructor
Overview of Cancer and Introduction to Cancer Health Disparities	Dr. Samuel Adunyah
Cancer Epidemiology/ Environment and Cancer	Dr. Flora Ukoli
Oncogenes and Tumor Suppressors	Dr. LaMonica Stewart
Community Based Participatory Research	Dr. Maureen Sanderson
Cancer Related Signaling Pathways	Diva Whalen (PhD Graduate Student)
The Scientific Process: How do We Study Cancer?	Dr. LaMonica Stewart
Cell/Organ Culture and Animal Models of Cancer	Dr. LaMonica Stewart
Tumor Invasion and Metastasis	Portia Thomas (MD/PhD Graduate Student)
Causes of Cancer	Dr. Sakina Eltom

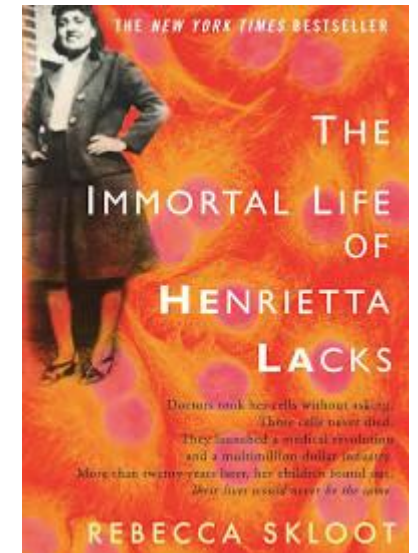
CANCER: THE EMPEROR OF ALL MALADIES



- Participants viewed 3 episodes of series
- Discussed key concepts during program sessions

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR) SESSIONS

- **Four RCR sessions held:**
 - Introduction to moral reasoning; scientific misconduct
 - Conflict of interest, competing interests
 - Authorship and publication
 - Human subjects and the story of Henrietta Lacks
- Session conducted as small group discussions of case studies
- Discussions held in Zoom/Blackboard breakout rooms



CAREER DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

- **Six virtual career development sessions were held:**
 - Career Exploration
 - Admission to Medical and Graduate School (with Admission Committee Chairs)
 - CV and Resume Writing; Cover Letters and Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
 - Meharry Student Roundtable (MD, PhD and MD/PhD students)
 - Interview Skills
 - Cancer-Related Societies

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS – PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT

- Participants asked to submit by email personal statements, CV, resume, cover letters and IDP documents
- Documents reviewed by program directors; feedback given by email and Zoom meetings (one-on-one interactions)
- Participants also submitted applications for AACR student membership



AACR American Association
for Cancer Research®
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

HOW WAS INFORMATION SHARED DURING THE PROGRAM?

- PowerPoint slides and other pertinent information placed within BlackBoard course and sent via email
- Ebooks and/or links to videos provided by email
- GroupMe messaging system used to send reminders and last minute changes
- One-on-one Zoom meetings held with Program Director

Blackboard
collaborate. »




groupme


zoom

SUMMER 2020 PROGRAM OUTCOMES

- 13 students participated in summer 2020 program:
 - Two (2) rising sophomore
 - Five (5) rising juniors
 - Six (6) rising seniors



MEHARRY CANCER SURP
2020 PARTICIPANTS



Raneem Ammar
University of Tennessee
Knoxville



Jada Bezue
Xavier University
of Louisiana



Akolbia Biggers
University of Alabama
at Birmingham



Tiffany Cole
Fort Valley
State University



Micahya Costen
Fisk University



Kamryn Davis
Mississippi State
University



Joshua Lewis
Prairie View A&M
University



Hayden Morris
University of Tennessee
Knoxville



Alanis Onwu
Tennessee State
University



Maya Sevalia
Xavier University
of Louisiana



William Smith
Howard
University



Ziann Traore
Howard
University



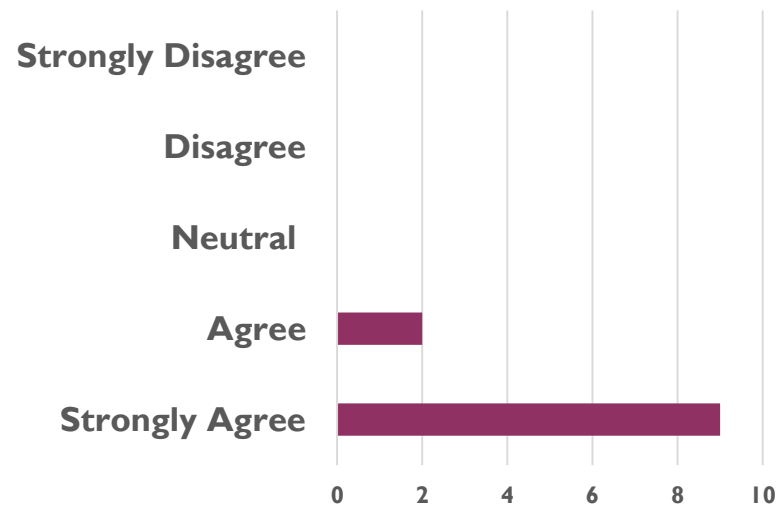
Detavious Veal
Kennesaw
State
University

EVALUATION FEEDBACK

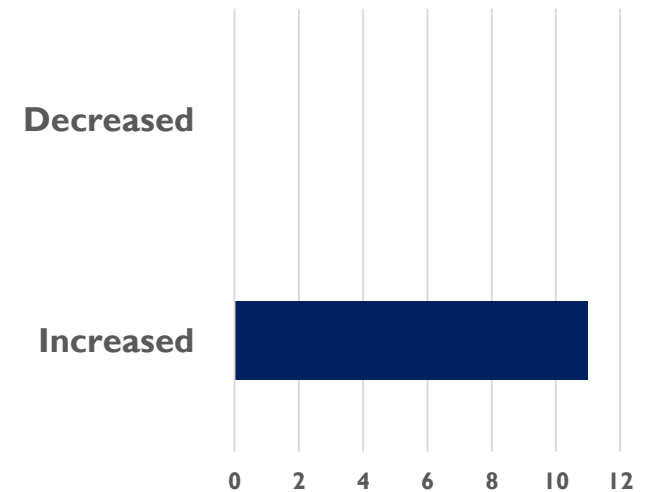
Overall, I would rate the program as:



Participation in this program has increased my awareness of Cancer Health Disparities Research.



Has participation in this program increased or decreased your desire to attend medical and/or graduate school?



STUDENT COMMENTS

- Before this program I was unsure if the medical field was the correct choice for me. With the help and guidance of the program administrators I now have a clearer idea of what I want my future to entail.
- It helped gain confidence in myself as I prepare to apply for medical school. I really enjoyed the career development portion and getting help with my CV and my resume.
- This program has confirmed my desires of pursuing a career in research.
- I really enjoyed learning about different focuses of Cancer. I found the career development sessions very helpful, and they were something I have never heard or experienced before. I am grateful for the opportunity I had to expand my knowledge on cancer research, and enhance documents that will aid in my future endeavors.
- It provided me with more tools to help prepare me for the application process towards grad/medical school. The students who spoke to us on zoom gave great insight into what life is like as a MD/PHD student.

STUDENT COMMENTS

- I really like and appreciate that the program was transitioned online due to COVID instead of simply being canceled. I felt like the faculty and students cared about me and my success.

PLANS FOR SUMMER 2021

- Planning for in-person research experience
- Considering options for distance research projects (if necessary)
- Using virtual recruitment strategy to attract applicants:
 - Virtual ABRCMS meeting and career fairs
 - Zoom sessions with undergraduate students
 - Social media approach (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)

