

LSU Health New Orleans Summer Research Internship Program Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)

Summer 2021 Newsletter

DEAR STUDENTS, PROGRAM ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND FRIENDS,

Happy Summer! Welcome to our very first Summer Internship Program Newsletter! Through this newsletter, we hope to provide updates on the program, as well as share the academic and professional achievements of program participants with our community. If you are a program alumnus and would like to be featured in the next newsletter, please share your academic and professional achievements [here](#).



DR. AYESHA UMRIGAR
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2011
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Dr. Umrigar received her PhD in Human Genetics from LSUHSC in 2019. She is currently working as a postdoctoral fellow at LSUHSC, where she conducts research in health and science policy. In addition, Dr. Umrigar serves as an engagement lead for the All of Us Research Program, communicating the importance of precision medicine to the public.



MARIANA DUPONT
REU PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2015
DILLARD UNIVERSITY

Mariana DuPont is currently a PhD candidate in the School of Optometry at the University of Alabama-Birmingham. Her research focuses on the relationship between the retina and pulmonary vascular diseases. She has several published and ongoing projects in Vision Science, including Investigating the disease association of USH2A p.C759F variant by leveraging large retinitis pigmentosa cohort data which can be found [here](#).



KENNETH TERRY, II
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2018
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Kenneth Terry spent the summer of 2018 working with Dr. Haydee E.P. Bazan in the LSUHSC Neuroscience Center of Excellence. He attributes his courage to excel in research to the mentors he connected with during the summer program. Kenneth is currently a medical student at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine.



DR. KEVIN DIETZ

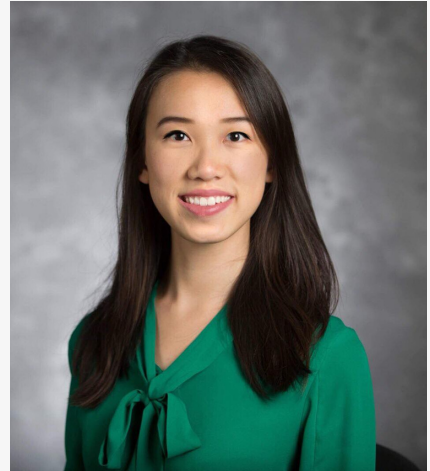
**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2003
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Dietz received his PhD in Human Genetics from LSUHSC in 2010. He completed a joint post-doctoral fellowship in the Department of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and the Center for Human Genetic Research at Massachusetts General Hospital. He is currently working as a Registered Patent Agent at Baker Donelson and is a member of the Firm's Intellectual Property Group, where his practice focuses on patent prosecution and patent portfolio management for life science and biotechnology fields. Prior to joining Baker Donelson, Dr. Dietz was with the Office of Technology Management at LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans, where he focused on technology evaluation and marketing, patentability assessment and patent portfolio management.

SCHUMANN CHANG

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2018
EMORY UNIVERSITY**

During her research program, Schumann Chang worked with Dr. Lauri Byerley in the Department of Physiology investigating the effects of walnuts on cancer cachexia through alterations of the gut microbiome. Dr. Byerley became a trusted mentor and helped her persevere in science, even when they received unexplainable or unfavorable results. The skills she gained during the summer research program helped her when she served as an EMT and medical scribe years later and solidified her interest in medicine. She hopes to continue to grow as a scientist and clinician to serve the people of New Orleans and will begin her first year of medical school at LSU Health this Fall.



JORDAN ANDERSON

**REU PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2014
XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA**

Jordan Anderson graduated with an MPH from Duke University in Bioethics and Science Policy in 2020. His research focuses on public health and using art and communications to make science more reflexive, equitable, and engaging to audiences. He is currently a member of Sigma Xi, the Scientific Research Honor Society, and is freelancing for their magazine, American Scientist. He hosts the D&I ComSci (Diversity & Inclusion Communications and Science) podcast which you can check out [here!](#) Starting in June, he will be working for Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine.

BENJAMIN BONNER

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANT 2014, 2015
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY**

Benjamin Bonner is a medical student in the School of Medicine at LSU Health. The experiences and connections he acquired during the two summers he spent in the summer research program greatly influenced his academic and career goals. The two projects he worked on were titled "Refining a Computational Model of CA1 Pyramidal Neurons" and "Aneuploidy and Chromosomal Abnormalities in Primary Mouse Myoblasts Expressing Pax3-FOXO1". He recently received the Sarnoff Cardiovascular Research Foundation fellowship for research in cardiovascular innovation and translational medicine.

