

2013- SARAS - Students Feedback

The SARAS program has definitely been the highlight of my summer vacation. I learned a lot during the three weeks about different professions in the Medical field. I was enlightened about the various ways people can be helped. The talks on the research of various experts helped me understand concepts I had never thought about.

On Monday July 22nd, the group was able to try out different procedures actually conducted by doctors. These procedures included the lumbar puncture, working with an ultrasound and watching how a patient in the Emergency Room would be treated. As most of the professors who spoke to us, I felt very comfortable since they talked so nicely. These professors made me feel more excited for college rather than be intimidated.

Most importantly, the SARAS program helped me expand my ideas for professions that I would like to pursue in the future. I realized that I really liked doing various procedures as well as interacting with patients. So I have decided that my interests lie in being a Physician or a Physician Assistant.

Another interesting experience I had was visiting the veterans at the Veteran Home. The veterans shared some of their wisdom which was eye-opening. Their experiences showed how they got through difficult times and how they lived their lives to the fullest.

I am very thankful that Dr. Srinu Pentala was able to take time out of his busy schedule to organize an amazing program for a few high school students! Among his many success stories, I am sure SARAS is definitely a success story that has really opened the eyes of many students.

Mariya

I absolutely had a great time attending SARAS. I really liked the lectures by the experts. I found Dr. Srini's jokes funny. I started to see myself researching what we learned. I also met great people from all around the country. I made new friends. Seeing people who are smarter than me really motivate me to study harder. SARAS made me actually be someone that will change other people's life.

SARAS provided me with a new goal and I recommend people to attend to this camp.

I genuinely enjoyed my experience at SARAS this year and it is sure to be a summer which I will remember and talk about in the future. I met extremely nice people, especially those in the dorms, and I hope to keep long-lasting friendships with each of them. We have shared many fun moments together and even inside jokes. The program itself was very informative and introduced me to new fields of medicine that I had not considered before. I think this program is especially unique because it is led by real experts in their unique fields. They were able to cover all aspects of healthcare, even the business side which I had never really thought of before. I have always known that I wanted to go into medicine but this program has definitely provided me with a new prospective on what field I would like to pursue in the future.

Dear Dr. Srini

Attending SARAS this past summer has made me realize that a career in medicine is still in my future. I've always loved science and how the body works, but after SARAS I have this whole new appreciation for medicine. It has made me realize that the human body is fascinating- but the people who get to fix and help the body is what fascinates me even more. I was excited and interested in all the different positions- and endless possibilities, in a hospital setting. What made SARAS memorable to me was the hands on experience we had in a lab setting, it made me envision myself doing that in the future and I was really happy about that. Overall my experience at SARAS was an unforgettable one, I wish I was still there.

I hope you continue this wonderful program.

Brooke

SARAS was a great experience. I made so many new friends from many different places! Before this program, I didn't really think about the possibility of research being a part of a physician's

career. I always knew that I wanted to be a physician, but didn't really think about research. SARAS has inspired me to want to work in a lab doing research and maybe come up with an invention that could benefit mankind someday. This experience has opened my eyes to an enormous amount of other careers in the field of science other than just a doctor or a nurse. I am even looking up labs in my community, so I can get the experience of working in such a facility. Thank you for having this program, because it really affirmed that I do want to work in the medical field.

Thanks,
Shreya

Dear Dr. Pentyala

SARAS was an amazing program. I had a great experience. I was not expecting to get so much information out of this program. I learned about many careers that I have never heard of. My interest was also sparked into a career I never thought I would like. Many things that I learned will stay with me forever. One thing I found was very important is that not everyone should become a Doctor for the money but to help people. If that is the case then this career will not be very enjoyable. SARAS has helped me make some wonderful new friends and keep in touch with many doctors who spoke.

I loved going into the labs and working with actual people from that career. It made me feel like I was in their shoes, which was a really cool experience.

Overall, I liked spending my summer here.

Thank you for everything,

Simmi

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I had an amazing time at SARAS. I made new friends and I even talked to people that I wouldn't have ever talked to before. I even met people from different states. Also, even though there were many different lectures throughout the day, I never got tired of SARAS, and I looked forward to the next day because I was always excited for the next day. I would recommend SARAS to everyone I encounter. My cousins are going to SARAS next year, and they are from California!! I miss everyone there, and I hope that we will see each other again!

Thank you for an amazing three weeks!
From,
Shinyi

My experience this summer at SARAS was nothing like any of my previous experiences. Before coming I was not looking forward to sitting through lectures all day and making a huge commute. However, after the first day I saw what the program was about. We were not simply listening to lectures but experiencing every aspect of the medical field. This exposure was unique to this program and is something I could not have gained anywhere else. I'm so thankful to Dr. Srinu and all his staff and all of the experts for teaching me so much and enhancing my love for the medical field. It made me realize how much I love this area and showed me the kind of doctor I will strive to be. The best part was when we did the ultrasounds, spinal tap and ER simulator. Doing hands on activities and not just watching videos made the program so much better and gave me an experience I can't get elsewhere. I made so many different friends that I cannot have hopes to meet anywhere else and I'm so appreciative for that.

Thank you,
Sarah

Dear Dr. Pentylala,

I had a great time at SARAS this summer. I enjoyed the lectures and I am one hundred percent sure I want to become a doctor. Each day I learned many new and interesting things. Thank you for an amazing three weeks where I gained tons of knowledge and friends.

From, Sajel

Dear Dr. Pentylala,

Thank you so much for organizing this truly amazing program. It really was an eye opener into the field of medicine and helped open my eyes to all the different paths I'm capable of claiming as my own. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to create relationships with many different people and mentors throughout the science community. I hope you know that you have an outstanding organizing committee, and a wonderful daughter. I wish you all the best and hope you continue to create many years of successful SARAS programs. Good luck on global SARAS and enjoy inspiring many others to become great scientists.

Thank you,

Robyn

It has been about 2 weeks since SARAS ended. I can't believe it. Although in the beginning I really didn't want to go to SARAS, I ended up truly enjoying the program. On the first day of SARAS, I came in with a really bad attitude. I didn't want to meet anyone or talk to anyone new.

My friend Tim ended up joining the program last minute so I planned to talk to him the whole 3 weeks. Then, I ended up meeting my long lost friend Nitasha. I was so happy because I could also talk to her too and catch up on things. Nitasha is very loud and friendly so she introduced me to another girl named Sruthi. We became inseparable for the next few weeks. While I did have fun during the program, I also learned a lot too. I learned about new fields in medicine and other career choices. I came into the program not wanting to be a doctor, but after watching all the speakers, I see that I have many options. I also liked the SAT prep that went on the first 2 Fridays. It really helped me be aware of the kind of questions the SAT asks. I also loved the instructors.

So, I just want to say thank you to the SARAS crew, for making me a lot more open minded and for making this experience fun. Through this program, I met a lot of new people who I still keep in contact and plan to keep in contact for a while. I hope to visit and keep in contact with the SARAS team as well.

-Reshma

Overall, the SARAS program was a great and interesting experience for me. It opened up my mind to the different fields of medicine. Prior to coming into the SARAS program, I didn't know if I wanted to spend the rest of my life in this type of field. However, after hearing all the doctors talk about their daily lives, it has become obvious to me that the medical field is where I belong. I like the fact that I can help others, and for me it is a rewarding profession. Throughout the program I had many opportunities to meet new friends, get acquainted with them, and become very close. All in all, the SARAS program should be experienced by all students who have an interest in pursuing a job in this type of field or even in other fields which require a higher degree. It is an awesome experience!

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

My name is Nakul. I was one of your students at the Stony Brook SARAS program this summer. I truly enjoyed the experience, and I feel extremely lucky to have been placed in to such a great program, ran by some very inspirational people. I met many wonderful people with amazing abilities, and I am fortunate as to be able to stay in contact with them as friends. It was a truly life-changing experience, and it helped me confirm the path which I would choose to take in my own research, as well as in my own life and career. Having such high-profile experts come and speak to us about what they do was a true eye-opener, and I was fascinated by what these people do for the good of human-kind. It inspired me, and I really want to be able to carry out my own

research. I also was changed by the talk you gave yourself, and it lead me to ask you if I could have the honor to be able to work in your lab and carry out research.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration,

Nakul

Upon writing this reflection, I am still in shock to see how my three weeks in SARAS are already over. In the beginning of July when I walked into the Stony Brook hospital I honestly wanted to be anywhere but there. In the end, going to SARAS was truly worth it. Being able to go and listen to the work of such prestige physicians and specialists was something that I may never get an opportunity to do again. Also, upon entering SARAS I knew I wanted to pursue medicine when I grew up, but I was not completely sure what field I was interested in. After SARAS I had a better idea of what I want to do. Another great thing that came out of SARAS was the advice given by these experts. At school you do not really get to personally ask questions and get advice on things like what prerequisites you need to take for different medical professions. For me SARAS was a truly irreplaceable experience and I am really grateful to those who organized it so I could be a part of it. It was a great opportunity and I hope for SARAS' success in the future.

The SARAS program at Stony Brook was a program with many rewards and benefits. It allowed me to further appreciate the Medical field and how it helps many individuals satisfy their need for a better quality of life. The Stony Brook Medical Center was a great environment for us to learn about different Medical Professions and what those people do every day to help others. What I really appreciated the most was the opportunity for us to ask the experts questions. Every answer they gave increased the depth of my interest in the Medical field. I am happy to say that because of this program, I would like to major in medicine. I thank the lecturers for their time and influence on my life. Science has always been an interesting topic for me and by attending SARAS my knowledge has grown to new levels.

The day where we visited the veterans' home really stood out to me because of how captivating it was to listen to the veterans experiences. Lunch was great every day. Thank you Dr. Pentylala, for organizing a program like this and constantly updating us with your e-mails. I can truly say that I am happy to have done the SARAS program this summer.

Jeremiah

My name is Kunal. I would like to say that my SARAS experience was incredible! I have learned many things from the program and yourself in particular. I came into the program in order to learn about exploring the medical field. I received what I wanted and even more. Many of the lectures that occurred were far too inspirational and convincing. This fantastic experience has allowed me to encounter some of the greatest doctors on the Stony brook campus, including you. With the focus on anesthesiology, I took many notes during the lectures, and I will certainly look back at those notes in order to decide in the future what my favorite aspect of the medical field, specifically anesthesiology, is. Additionally, I enjoyed the lunch experience, as that relaxation time served to be a temporary break from the lectures, as well as time to converse with other

people and make new friends, as you strongly suggested we do. Occasionally, after the lunches would be laboratory activities, which helped focus on some hands-on techniques. I especially reminisced the good times that had occurred over the three weeks of the program at the party on the last day, which connected many parts of the program that will certainly serve to be beneficial in the students' future potential medical careers. I thank you very much for all you have done to found this inspirational program and give us an enormous amount of medical knowledge in advance. Thank you once again, and I hope we meet again in the future.

Hello Dr. Pentyala,

I wanted to let you know that I enjoyed the SARAS program this summer. There were many interesting presentations. I liked it best when we went to different stations for hands on activities. I really enjoyed the visit to the veterans' home too, which was fun and informative. I think the program was really good. Thank you again for running this program close to home.

Sincerely,
Jared

Dear Srini,

Thank you for this amazing opportunity to learn and meet new people who are interested in the same things I'm interested in. Coming into SARAS, I honestly didn't know what I was getting myself into. I thought it would be really boring and I wouldn't have any fun. It turned out to be the total opposite. I made so many new friends both in the program and in the dorms! And the food was surprisingly good! The lectures were really interesting and I learned a lot. I enjoyed the lecture about maxillofacial surgery and the trip to the veteran's home was a moving experience. I'm really glad I decided to sign up for SARAS and I have come out of it feeling satisfied and less unsure about my future.

Thanks again,
Lakshmi

I can't even begin to express how much I've learned over the past three weeks. From absurdly devoted scientists to engaging workshops, I always had something to share with my family after I arrived at home. I've shared so many laughs with my teammates and loved all of Dr. Pentyala's jokes. I sincerely hope that this program will be open to future high school students because it provides so much insight, and it definitely broadened my perspective of career choices. I know a lot of younger students who have no clue as to what they aspire to become. I've spoken with some younger peers, and most were astonished to hear about respiratory therapists and people who study sleep patterns. There were even some who didn't know who anesthesiologists were. However, as long as this program exists, I'm sure I won't be preoccupied with their future

choices. Not only have I been able to augment my knowledge of the sciences, but also I made many new friends who share the same passion for science. I'm very thankful to have attended this program, and I wish Dr. Pentyala and his team the best of luck with their research and with the future 20 YEARS of this program!

Rachel

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I'm Julien. Thank you for enrolling me into this camp. It was quite a privileged experience, hearing from the professionals who came to speak to us, even with their busy schedule. I appreciate it very much; please let them know if you can. In addition to the professionals who came to speak to us, your assistants were also very respectful, professional, and absolutely delightful. Please thank them on my behalf.

The program during the weekdays was very informative. Each expert in their field was very knowledgeable, and had no trouble answering any of the students' questions. I think that your method of getting students to ask questions was creative, and I'm sure many students appreciated your little gifts, as well as being able to have a question or two answered. My personal favorite during the days was the workshops. Getting to interact with many of the people who live and breathe medicine was absolutely fascinating. It was a one-in-a-lifetime experience from which I have learned what the professionals do in their day to day lives. It was the highlight of the day for many students, and I've taken much away from these sessions. They mean a lot to this program; if the program continues next year, I would definitely promote this a heavy and meaningful part.

The lunch was great. There was so much variety, and plenty of food to feed everyone.

This program has definitely influenced the decisions I will be making, in just a few years. It was a shock to me; how many careers I didn't know existed behind the scenes. My options have been clearly laid out for me.

Overall, the program was well organized, and I'm happy to say that the program director was very nice and humorous. He had a great charisma and had befriended many of the students. I'm really glad that you were our host, Srini. You were excellent. I cannot thank you enough.

Julien

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I was very excited when I signed up for this program because I wanted to use up my summer wisely and also, I wanted to validate my dream of becoming a Neurosurgeon and whether or not I was interested in the science/medicine area. Through this program, I was able

to indeed confirm that I do want to become a doctor. I think the major change of mind for me is probably the fact that I also want to do research along with my other goal. Before this program, I have taken some school research courses in which I researched and wrote a paper on the treatments and causes of brain cancer and it was a very interesting experience that also won the best paper in the class (to show you my interest). I wasn't that enthusiastic about research before but through this program, I quickly learned that research is very necessary to explore new things and make a positive impact on the world. Knowing that you have created such great inventions to solve problems relating to the brain, I too want to pursue research (hopefully with you as a starter) geared towards solving problems of the brain. I was fasting during most of the program and so, I explored many areas of the hospital in that duration of time. The overall SARAS program was amazing and the lectures were entertaining and some of them I really took to mind and they motivated me. All the staff was amazing. The SAT test prep classes were amazing. From this program, I am inspired to research and create. This program was very interesting and an excellent use of my time. Thank you for the amazing experience at SARAS and I hope I can be an alumnus next year because I would like to share my experience with the future students and see how SARAS improved or changed.

Dear Srinii,

This summer at SARAS was truly an unforgettable experience. The course was a daily adventure that none could resist. While meeting new peers who traveled from all across the country, the opportunity to meet extremely talented, world renowned experts was a gift as well. From the SARAS program at Stony Brook, I not only intensely explored the medical field, but thrived in a social environment that I had never been in before.

In the span of just three weeks, I became immersed in an unimaginable amount of knowledge about the field of medicine. My first reaction could definitely be characterized as bewildered and perplexed beyond what I was prepared for. The program truly opened my eyes to the endless amount of possibilities, such as physical therapy to oral surgery to even financial decision making. It was also inspiring to see adolescents like me discover their passion whether it be instantly discovered or sought throughout a lifetime. As for me, my direction was guided by the talks as well, as I was able to witness such creative minds at work. This camp has motivated me to new heights and has given me steadfast assurance in my decisions for my future. It has been a rewarding journey with life lessons from the study of life itself.

Right from the first day, life lessons were introduced to 126 naïve students who knew no one and nothing but their passion for medicine. And this common point of contingency was enough for each and every one of us. All the subtle conversations of a simple "Hi, do you mind if I sit here" set lifelong friendships into motion and soon everyday became a conversation to look forward to, whether it be with someone foreign or known. I've once heard that life only truly begins when one leaves their comfort zone, and I think I was able to genuinely experience life at SARAS. The versatility of all the people and all the thoughts in that single lecture room was actually overwhelming to be

frank. But it was a rewarding mix, as I am sure to remember not only my fellow peers who have grown so close to my heart, but the staff who were like a second family to me.

And who knows, I might end up seeing a familiar face on the cover of a science blog, the face from that student who sat three seats down. Or that face from the girl who fearlessly aced all the orator activities. Or that face from the boy who refused to take an answer and continued his quest on stumping the expert. Who knows. But for now, I am positive that SARAS 2013 will not only stay in a facebook group, but in the very crevasses of my heart and mind.

Hanna

Overall, my experience in the SARAS program has been both insightful and intriguing. I was given the opportunity to listen to the lectures of experts from various medical fields (who share a heart-warming and motivational passion for their unique career and research), while interacting with many science-driven people. Through the SARAS program, I gained a better understanding of the career paths that lie ahead of me, which in turn aided the design of my future goals and ambitions. I would whole-heartedly recommend this rewarding program to anyone who has a passion for science and medicine as I do. I tremendously appreciate the countless hours everyone put in to allow for this program to run smoothly (the students, Dr. Pentyala e.g.). Thank you so much for such a wonderful experience and I wish you the best of luck in all of your endeavors!

Liz

Dr. Pentyala,

I have to say I was skeptical about going to SARAS on the first day. I thought it was going to be a very boring program, but I give you a lot of credit for how impressionable the first day was. Overall; SARAS presented tons of amazing experts. He made me realize that I don't just want to be an oral surgeon, but I want to be an oral and maxillofacial surgeon. I would also like to mention the trip to the veterans home. Learning about geriatrics sure was interesting, but speaking to the veterans was truly special for both them and us. I truly believe I learned some lessons from him. The last thing I want to mention is how much your lectures meant to me. Your stories as well as your daughter's stories were very inspiring. They were very inspirational lectures. Thank you so much for giving everybody such a great opportunity Dr. Pentyala. Forget all of the stuffed animals and pens, the real gift you gave us was the program as a whole. Take care!

Gerard

SARAS has taught me much and it is a wonderful program that when I first heard about through a family friend, I thought that it was too good to be true. There is tasty food, many lectures that feed your passion for biomedicine in the standpoints of a businessperson, pharmacologist, surgeon, physician and researcher and all with a fantastic staff that run it. A couple of my favorite lectures included the transplant lecture, the clinical trials, and the diabetes lecture. Another important factor is the experiences gained, like the stumping of the experts and the visit

to the veterans home. There was no struggle for me to get up every day, take notes and laugh during the camp and if school was like this program, we wouldn't want to miss out. The experts are nice and gladly share their knowledge in a simple yet satisfying way, the workshops are hands on, and the experiences gained warmed the aorta, vena cava, and the apex (heart). The counselors and the experts make you feel like you belong, and if the program was 1 month it would still feel like one week. So I thank you with full respect for making this one of my memorable summers

- Gabriel

Hello Srini!

My name is Emily and I was a student at the 2013 SARAS program. To be honest, I wasn't too ecstatic to be walking into a program whereat I was to sit in a lecture hall for much of the day, but fear was quickly replaced by excitement by the second day there. I loved it! Previously, I didn't even consider entering any medical fields of profession, being mostly interested in research (and also not being too fond of the blood) but after 3 weeks of learning about the different opportunities I think I've warmed up to it, and have definitely began to consider professions in med. I made a lot of good friends and met some really cool inspiring people, so overall I would say it was a huge success in my book. It was one of the best decisions I've ever made with my summer, and I thank you for putting this program together.

Have a wonderful rest of your summer Srini, thank you for making mine very much worth it

Emily

Prior to the first SARAS day, I never thought that I would come out of it knowing what I wanted to do with my life. Although there were many great, enthusiastic expert speakers, one told me that I was hooked. I can officially say to curious people, "I want to be a dentist", instead of the banal "um... I'm not sure yet". Thank you Dr. Pentyala for giving me this awesome opportunity to indulge in this intellect prospering environment, and I wish you all the luck in everything you will do! Have a great summer!

Rui

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

Thank you so much for creating this program and it was definitely an experience I'll always remember. SARAS really opened my eyes to all the different types of medical and science jobs there are. Not only that, but I made a lot of friends I don't plan on losing touch with. Three weeks was the perfect amount of time, and it passed so much quicker than I expected it to. I was dreading the program before I came but I was not disappointed and do not regret coming at all. Thank you so much again!

Thanks, Emily

My name is Denisse and I am glad to share my reflection towards SARAS. I loved everyday because I would learn new things everyday. I made new friends. The first day of SARAS I wasn't sure what I wanted to study in medicine. In the beginning I didn't know what career I wanted. I knew I wanted a career in medicine or in the field of science. Throughout the program I learned about the different careers a medicine and science and I got to thinking. Now I know that I wanted to be. I want to be an orthopedic. I am so thankful that I had the privilege of meeting physicians and scientists and getting to know what they do in their career and how they change the world. I am also thankful that I got the chance to meet you Dr. Pentyala because if you didn't do the program I wouldn't know what career I wanted in medicine or in the field the science. I would still have doubts towards what I wanted to study. Now I know what I want to study. I am glad that I had the privilege of being in the SARAS program and meeting you. Hopefully I have the privilege of meeting you again. Thanks You.

SARAS was a very impressive, comical, and eye-opening experience. Not only were you able to spend quality time with your friends, you also got to see a whole new field of science. The workshops were great, and the lectures, allowed me to think in a different way- the way researchers think. All in all, SARAS gave me enough insight to consider other career fields. Prior to SARAS, I was interested in engineering. However, this program showed me how beneficial research and medicine can be, something rather obvious that I've never thought of much before.

RunDa

Thank you very much for putting your time and effort into the S.A.R.A.S program. I appreciated the lectures and I found many of them intriguing. It has helped me realize how many specialties there are in the medical profession. Still, I am undecided to what field to specialize in but, this program has helped me narrow the choices down tremendously.

Sincerely,
Christopher

I could not have thought of a better way to spend the month of July. I enjoyed listening to the speakers. I believe that all aspiring physicians, like myself, should have as much exposure to the medical field as possible. The SARAS program did just this for me. I also met amazing new

friends that I plan on keeping in touch with. I looked forward to going everyday and was very upset when it was over! Thank you for the wonderful experience!
With gratitude, Jacquelyn

I thought that SARAS was a lot of fun. The games and competitions we had in between lectures were fun and helped to liven up a sometimes dry day. I really liked SARAS I looked forward to going every morning and I missed it as soon as it ended! Also the food was great and Srini and his students were awesome. Thank you guys for everything!
Brittany

Hello Dr.Pentyala

My name is Daniela and my overall impression of the SARAS program was great. It was a fun and interactive way of learning. It gave me new options of careers that I might be interested in. I made new friends and had a great time. The food was good too. It was three weeks very well spent and I learned a lot of what I might want to do and about my future and working for it. Thank you Dr. Pentyala.

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

First of all, thank you so much for organizing the SARAS program, providing us with lunch everyday and making the last three weeks fun and exciting. I made many new friends that I will keep in contact with in the future. Honestly, I thought the last three weeks would be boring because listening to lectures didn't sound fun at all. However, I realized that the lectures were informative and vital for me to choose a career path. I've always wanted to help other people through the medical field, but I did not know what path I would choose in the many medicine fields available. Also, the program helped me open my eyes and really understand the business of biotech and how arduous the research is to pass a drug or a scientific product into the market. My overall impression of Srinivas Pentyala is that he is an incredible man. Organizing this program for the last ten years must have been so time consuming when you have many things to take care of such as research, family, urology, anesthesiology and more. You've taught me the importance of relationships in order to succeed in the future. And I have incredible respect for you because you are so self-less! You didn't make SARAS for the \$\$, but you do it for the students. In conclusion, you are self-less, incredible, hardworking, friendly and knowledgeable (jack of all trades). In the future, if I need help with mentors for research projects I will definitely come back to you for help. Thank you once again for making my three weeks at SARAS, productive. You have built the road for me to walk on and become a physician and all I need to do now is start on that journey. Thank you Dr. Pentyala for your hard work.

From,
Brian

Dear Dr.Pentyala,

SARAS has not only been an enriching experience, it has also been a life changing one. To me, knowledge is a true passion and just having the opportunity to listen and gain understanding about health care from top tier physicians and specialists is incredible. After listening to many lectures I have opened my eyes to the future of health care and research and believe that this field shall be my profession. Prior to SARAS, I was unsure if I really wanted to have my future involved in health care. After seeing the research based lectures, I caught a glimpse of what I would like to do. The research side of science is particularly appealing to me. Personally, I think in a very different way than other, always looking to do something more differently than the next person. From what I have seen, this is the type of person that calls for research. In the future, our society will need people that think outside of the box, not only to help make our lives better, but to have our mark on the future make an impact. SARAS has taught me that passion must drive my profession and that I must put my life's work into what I am truly passionate about. Dr.Pentyala, I cannot thank you enough for creating such a program. I am absolutely grateful of the opportunity that thousands of other people around the world would be praying for. It really was nothing short of life changing. Thank You

Sincerely,
Brandon

Hi, my name is Ariel and I was a camper at 2013 SARAS.

I really enjoyed SARAS. I entered the camp with the hope of becoming a researcher. However, thanks to SARAS, I now also have an interest in gastroenterology, oral and maxillofacial surgery. I think the funny slideshows helped on the first day when people were probably a little nervous. I also really liked the non-medical-related activities dispersed throughout the camp (e.g, Storytelling, Writing & Rhetoric, Web Safety). Handing out stuffed animals was an effective way to motivate students to ask questions. The food was delicious; my favorite was Dominos' chocolate lava cakes. Overall, I think SARAS was very fun and informative. Please keep running it!

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

The SARAS program has truly had a tremendous impact on me this summer, it has taught me that the science field offers a wide range of careers other than being a doctor. After listening to lectures from various experts over the past 3 weeks I have gathered what the life of a surgeon, researcher, lab technician, CPR specialists, and a sleep therapist was like! This program has definitely reaffirmed my passion for science and I recommend this for anyone that is even just slightly thinking about going into the science field when they get older. I have found experts that I know that I will definitely want to stay in contact with in the future as a result of their talks with us. Before this program I knew that I wanted to go into the science field but I thought that being a doctor was the only job in the science field other than being a teacher and now; I have found that I am interested in microbiology, proteomics, and biomedical engineering. Now I am

going to pursue those topics in my science research class at my High School and in College. Aside from the educational gain from this program I have made a lot of friends in this program. I met these friends and became close with them from riding the train with them every day. One experience that I would say my “train group” and I had the chance to experience that no one else was able to, was that on the shuttle bus that we would take back and forth to the train station we had the opportunity to meet students that went to other science camps, that were stony brook students, and students that were doing independent research. We were able to interact with them and make plenty of great memories. Overall, again I would recommend this program to anyone that is interested in the science field or even to those that are just thinking about it. It was a great experience and I gained a lot and I would do again in heartbeat. So thank you Dr. Pentyala for an amazing 3 weeks!

From,
Amelia

My overall impression on the 2013 SARAS program at Stony Brook was good. I very much enjoyed my time there, everything from taking the train with newly made friends to listening to the interesting lectures we received from experts. I though the program was very enjoyable and a pleasant experience for me. I have nothing but praise for the SARAS program and all those who helped run it this year. I learned many new things during the program and was able to get a better understanding into the different fields of medicine. This program helped me decide that I really do want to become a doctor.

Hello, Dr. Srini!

I'd like to thank you for all the work you did before and throughout the program. It was a truly enjoyable experience. I am in a research program at my own high school, and I thought it would be interesting to get ideas and inspiration for new projects. I attended SARAS with my sister and a family friend, who also had similar motives.

Many of the speakers were so interesting, and you could see the love and appreciation they had for the work they did. Many had inspirational experiences and their presentations were outstanding. As a growing child myself, I can assure you that both my peers and I enjoyed lunch everyday as well.

Once again, I'd like to thank you for providing this opportunity for me. I learned so much, and I won't forget the experience. I can't wait for school to start, so I can apply all this knowledge in my research class, my physics class, and my AP biology class as well. I hope you succeed in all of your endeavors and I hope that you continue to run this program so that others may gain as much from it as I did.

Thank You!!!

Alyssa

When I first came to SARAS, I expected it to consist of mainly lectures with a few workshops. It would be the usual notetaking and very similar in structure to school. However, SARAS exceeded my expectations. It allowed me to learn about different fields and I was able to discover jobs that I could possibly strive for in the future. Many of the lectures were very interesting and engaging. One of the funniest and most memorable lectures would have to be the lecture about urology. I learned about professions that I have never even considered or heard of before and SARAS really did expose me to many new paths. I have to admit that I did find some lectures boring, but overall I found it to be great and enlightening (I now know of which professions that I would like to pursue and which I would not pursue). I loved the workshops and it would be great if there were more workshops. I find it so much easier to learn when I'm doing something hands-on rather than sitting and listening to lectures.

SARAS didn't just focus on medical knowledge; it also focused on the pursuit of knowledge and intellectual stimulation. We learned about business and how to apply for college, which is knowledge that is crucial for the future. All in all, I thought SARAS was a great program and I'm glad that I never missed a day of it.

SARAS was recommended to me by one of my close friends who enjoyed the program last summer. I have always been interested in the science of medicine ever since I was in elementary school. I began my quest for a career that involves science and makes me happy. I decided last year that I should look into environmental science. So when I review that SARAS program it was mostly the research aspect that appealed to me so much.

My participation in the SARAS program made me become hugely interested in research and made me respect the value of interdisciplinary research. What I mean by that is how many science fields can be connected through research. Many of the speakers and even your stories showed that.

Many of the presentations were inspiring and gave rise to many ideas. I think we were given very useful information that I will carry with me throughout my education and my life. I may even change my career path to some sort of laboratory technician.

Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity Dr. Srinivas

-Alexandra

Overall, I liked the SARAS program. I think it was very intellectual and informational. I'm glad that I took this opportunity; it really opened my eyes to new scientific research professions and opportunities.

Aditya

SARAS is definitely a good choice for anyone interested not only in the medical field but in making new friends. I personally enjoyed it because I made many new friends as well as learn about several different possible careers. Despite the vast variety of possible careers, I decided to focus on becoming an anesthesiologist, and never would have if it wasn't for the SARAS program. Overall, the friends I made and the experiences at SARAS are things that should be cherished and I certainly can't find anywhere else.

Dr. Pentyala,

Even though SARAS was only a few weeks long, I felt it was extremely informative. Before coming here I thought I knew most about what a career in health care would bring me, yet after only the first day I realized how truly wrong I was. Fortunately, I have now come to realize how many different aspects of healthcare there actually are. Granted that my eventual goal is still to pursue a career as a physician, the topics the various research scientists spoke to us about definitely piqued my interest. These various lectures gave me some ideas on possible future research topics for myself. I felt that some of the most important topics were those that dealt with getting into college and medical school. I already knew that succeeding as a physician would be extremely difficult and would require my maximum dedication but I appreciated that the lecturer of this topic was frank. Overall I felt this experience in SARAS was worth it and will help me in my future plans.

Adarsh

During the weeks prior to the start of the SARAS program, I did not know what to expect. I did not know any other members and after reading Dr. Pentyala's emails, I didn't know what to expect of him either. But by the very first day, all these feelings were diminished; I made friends quickly, and I was reassured

upon meeting Dr. Pentyala. I found most of the lectures interesting and informative. The experts taught me a lot more than what their careers were about. What I also aimed to absorb from the experts was their advice on success and how they got where they are. A common theme was the idea that the efforts to becoming a physician, scientist, or anything start now; we shouldn't wait until right before college applications to start working hard or doing research in a lab. I thought the program was a great experience that had a helpful impact on my life as a student and a scientist. I will continue to look for more opportunities like this. Thank you for making it an enjoyable and educational experience.

Akash

SARAS was a wonderful program which I really enjoyed. I met a multitude of people that I know that I now keep in contact with. It was truly amazing to see so many people that share the same interests. I enjoyed speaking to them, and I know that many of us will keep in contact for the rest of our lives. I actually reconnected with friends that I had left when I had moved away from their school district. One person actually lives on the street that I moved away from. It was a humbling experience.

Then, of course, there was the real reason I came to SARAS. The presentations were just amazing. I plan on being a physician, and this program just reinforced and solidified that for me. Some presentations were so intriguing to me, and others were humorous. I realized the horizons of opportunity that I had. Before, I thought that being a physician would be rather dry. But after the program I understand that the opportunities are endless, and there is a spectrum of specialties that I can pursue, including clinical research. It was such a privilege to have such educated and knowledgeable people speak to you. Moreover, we were permitted to ask questions and to learn about what they did. As a rising sophomore, this truly narrowed my vision into the field of medicine. The hands-on experiences in the labs truly gave me a foretaste of what I would be experiencing during my long years in medical school. I also enjoyed getting a taste of SAT

preparation, which I know I will consume myself in soon enough. I also know what the future has in store: the MCAT. The best part of all the fascinating presentations, the wonderful food, and the learning was that it was all done at a beautiful and accredited university.

I want to lastly thank Dr. Srinivas Pentyala for conceiving such a wonderful program. This is something that I will remember for years to come, and I truly feel indebted to you. Thank you so much for your dedication to the future generations. I wish you and the SARAS program the best for the future years. I am sure that those that enroll next year will enjoy the program as much as I did. Once again, thank you.

I was unsure of what would lie ahead after signing up for the Stony Brook SARAS program this summer. I went into the program not knowing what to expect and came out a rising junior with a greater idea of what I want to do with my future. Listening to each of the doctors and professionals each day gave me a larger understanding about what field I am truly interested in. Not only was SARAS highly informative and allowed everyone to get a taste of a field they enjoyed, the program allowed us to bond with other people our age who all share a common love for science and knowledge.

Going to the veterans home was a truly life changing experience for me. Speaking with, and hearing the stories of the brave souls who fought for our country truly left a large impact on my life. After SARAS, I am more aware of what is out there and is attainable for me. I have gotten the contacts of future mentors and distinguished professionals who can help me on my science research journey through high school, and beyond.

Thank you for your work and dedication to the program for the past 10 years and hopefully for many more. I find SARAS to be extremely beneficial for all high school students who not only love science, but also love to learn.