

2022-SARAS : Students Feedback

“Whose parents forced them to come here?” was the first question we were asked as we sat down for the annual 2022 SARAS program. Although not a single student, including myself, raised their hands, truthfully, despite attending this program voluntarily, my primary motivating factor was simply to use this opportunity to list another extracurricular activity on my resume. I did not think that I attended this program to solely learn more about medicine. Surprisingly however, that soon changed, especially after an unforgettable presentation. When the surgeon from the Department of Orthopedic Surgery came to this program to present to us a basic understanding of bone tumors, he began by explaining how we learn to help patients. Although it might have been an obvious statement for those pursuing medicine, it was an eye-opener for me. He continued to explain how we should not learn only to get good grades or get into a renowned college but to use this knowledge to treat future patients since their health will be dependent on our education. From this moment on, I viewed what I was learning and will learn with a newfound interest and motivation, to be a person for those that are ill can look to for a solution. Furthermore, from listening to lectures about diabetes to viewing a hamstring tendon being taken out of a patient’s leg, what I was able to learn and experience was truly unforgettable and helped me develop a passion for medicine, something I never thought I would have.

Thank you for the amazing experience!

Sincerely,
Abigail

Hi Dr Pentyala,

I finally decided to take your advice to heart and not procrastinate longer about the feedback!! SARAS was definitely a phenomenal experience that taught me a lot. Your ability to bring together new doctors and researchers each day was an amazing feat. I loved the snack packs too. You should continue getting the garlic knots and samosas. The lumbar puncture activity was particularly fun. During one of the last sessions, a fellow SARASer asked for undergrad schools that you think would be best for law and you replied Thanks for sharing your knowledge even after SARAS has ended. Thank you for the opportunity to attend this program.

Adam

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I had an amazing time participating in SARAS this year. I was exposed to several fields of medicine, which helped me understand what specialties I was interested in. My perspective regarding certain specialties changed greatly as I learned different aspects about them. Being able to hear from top researchers and professionals in their fields was so amazing. Listening about your own research on the last day was one of my highlights of the program because it was so interesting to learn about the crazy stories behind the research process and how they lead to amazing results. This program has allowed me to gain incredibly interesting information. Whether it was learning about brain-eating bacteria or being able to extract cerebrospinal fluid from a model, I enjoyed every moment of it. Aside from engaging in presentations about biomedical sciences, I also was able to learn valuable information regarding preparation for medical school. The snack packs were also a plus! Although there were restrictions due to COVID-19, I still really enjoyed this experience. Thanks so much to you and your team for working so hard to organize this program.

Sincerely,
Alex

Dr Pentyala: I wanted to say that the SARAS program really helped me broaden my horizons in the medical field and also has inspired me mostly in neuroscience, research and ophthalmology. Overall, I have a very good impression of it. Thank you once again for your time

-Amit

Hi Dr. Pentyala,

This is Anika. I found the SARAS program to be very useful overall. I liked how there was a variety of specialties and medical/science fields. I appreciated how the CEO of the hospital came to talk to us, and also the physical therapist because those are not directly involved in the med field. I also really liked your jokes and the snack packs. Thank you so much for this wonderful opportunity, and I hope the rest of your summer goes well.

Best regards,
Anika

Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed all of the guest speakers lectures over the course of the last 3 weeks. I feel like this summer program gave me the opportunity to learn more about options in the medical field. I know that I am definitely interested in oncology now. With every lesson being so enjoyable, my interest in the medical field has increased.

Ashna

Some things I liked about SARAS was definitely the anesthesiology presentations and I really enjoyed the movies we learned about dentistry.

Brian

Dear Uncle Srini

Thank you for a very exciting experience that only increased my curiosity and made me even more passionate about medicine, research, and the art of helping others! The entire program was very well planned and consisted of a great balance of surgeons, other healthcare professionals, and researchers who were all very passionate about their careers. I even made some friends during this program, where we all share the same interests. Overall, it was an amazing experience, and I gained a lot out of it (especially the college admissions help, as many of us are entering a stressful, to say the least, period in our lives). Thank you for everything!

Christina

I thoroughly enjoyed the SARAS program. It was exciting to see such a variety of professions in the medical field. Coming out of the program, I realized that there are more parts of the medical field than I thought there were. Thank you!

Jacob

Hey Mr. Pentyala,

I enjoyed my time in SARAS a lot, especially your humor and some of the games we played. Thank you for organizing such a great event every year. The snack packs were a great addition since early morning I barely got to eat anything. I've learned a lot from the past 3 weeks, and I'm now kind of interested in ophthalmology. Also, before I thought that with so many scientists and so many years of study, there would barely be any new inventions. But now, you inspired me to look for new things from your accidental findings. Thank you for making the mood more lively, since at first it was a room filled with genius kids that are sleep deprived and barely knew each other. The word games and your jokes made SARAS a whole lot better. Thanks again for such a great summer camp.

Thanks,
Daniel

Hi Dr. Srini,

Through SARAS, I was exposed to many interesting medical topics that I had heard of, but never truly looked into. I was also able to become more familiar with the type of work researchers do, and to see the practical applications that research had.

Thanks,
Emily

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I would like to start by thanking you, the staff, and everyone who made SARAS 2022 possible. Without it, I don't think I would've gained knowledge about the many medical fields such as ophthalmology, anesthesiology, cardiology, gastroenterology, etc. Over the past few weeks, I've learned things I would never have if it wasn't for this program and I've eaten things I never would have if not thanks to the snacks. Jokes aside though, all the talks were very informative and being able to interact was a refreshing opportunity that I enjoyed. Your sense of humor and intriguing lectures made the experience that I would've thought would be dull into something that opened my eyes. Everything was a perfect blend of humor, information, snacks, and I enjoyed listening to different speakers each day with new insights into each topic. I enjoyed your last day class specifically where you mixed in jokes with the research projects you did and hopefully I will have a chance to work with you in the future.

Best wishes,
Erinn

Dear Dr Pentyala and Staff,

Thanks for a memorable experience that was both informative and entertaining! This was a great introduction to Health Sciences as well as to Stony Brook University. I really enjoyed playing my Guitar NYSSMA piece for you during the Talent Show and the snacks were a great treat to look forward to at the end of the day. I hope to return for whatever other opportunities you may recommend. Thank you very much!

Sincerely,
Daniel and Flavia

Dear Dr Pentyala,

Thank you so much for this experience. I never would've expected it to have impacted me as much as it did, and the only thing I want to do now is get in a lab and start doing research! Another thing I'd like to do is make sure that the information I gathered sticks in my brain. Once again, thanks so much for truly one of the best education experiences of my life.

George

I want to thank you for such an amazing experience! SARAS was an amazing program and I wish it was even longer! The speakers taught me so much and I am looking forward to my future in medicine. The speakers immersed us in so much and truly solidified my goal of becoming an anesthesiologist! Looking forward to being part of the research world and now I'm chomping at the bit to contribute! I would recommend this program to everyone I know! Thank you so much and I hope you have an amazing rest of the summer!

Grace

I loved learning about the different medical fields. The speakers were wonderful: there were funny, informative, and interesting. Every expert, workshop, and lecture was new and enjoyable.

Heli

Hello Dr Pentyala: I would like to thank you for creating this program and giving me the opportunity to attend this summer. It was one of the most eye opening experiences I have had in my whole life so far. I used to think that going into the medical field meant being either a doctor or a nurse. Seeing all the different medical professionals from orthopedic surgeons (my personal favorite) to respiratory therapists helped me to realize how vast the medical field really is. Though I am not certain of what my future may hold, there is one thing I am certain of: It would be of my greatest honor if I can become like one of you. Thank you for this wonderful program, you really are very comedic and loving towards us. Thank you for the snack packs, jokes, advice, and encouragement. Thank you for an amazing summer experience.

Sincerely,
2022 SARASer: Isabel

Dear Dr. Pentyala:

Overall, SARAS was a very educational program that taught a lot about different medical careers. As the coordinator, you were very entertaining and responsive. I usually got replies within the same day and I'd love to stay in touch. I've learned that I do not want to be a urologist, and remain unsure about pursuing medical school. The time and stress that doctors have to go through may not outweigh all the other benefits if it's not a passion. However, there are still ways to be involved if I'm interested in pursuing engineering. The lessons on 3D bone printing were pretty eye-opening, especially the costs for the tools. I didn't know anyone going into the program, but I did leave with a couple of new friends. The program is very enjoyable, and to be honest, I was surprised on the first day by the sheer number of participants. Every day, I tried to spend each day to the fullest, as engaged as I could. Your lessons were very practical. I loved how frank you were, and now, I came out with knowledge about mentoring and researching.

Thank you for everything,
Jackie

Good afternoon Dr.Pentyala,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Jasmin and I was part of the SARAS program this summer. The program was wonderful. It was awesome to hear from a variety of experts, to be able to ask them questions and receive gifts if we asked questions too :). I thought it was great that we were able to know which expert came on which days; it allowed us to mentally prepare ourselves. The way you and your team conducted the program was great too, everyone was kind and helpful. Thank you for your time and have a great day!

Jasmin

I really liked SARAS. It was fun meeting new people that share interests with me and meeting all of the professors was nice. I met a bunch of people since you FORCED us to sit in the front the first day (still talk to some of them).

Jonathan

My initial thoughts were that the program was not going to be worth it, by the first week I had already found invaluable knowledge regarding the medical field. Firstly, your project on the nerve cell proteins I thought was amazing. Your first day presentation with the colorful nerve cell photos is oddly the one I remember the most and I didn't even think to take notes on. I thought I wanted to be a biomedical engineer, and now I am even more confident on that thought after your findings. I also have confirmed some thoughts on what I hate. I will never be an ophthalmologist, and I will never be a urologist. What I think I took in the most was their personalities. What all the professionals had in common was a hardworking and determined attitude. Thank you and your team for organizing this program.

Kevin

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

My head is still spinning from all that I learned in the SARAS program about the field of biomedical science. I'm a "science geek" who wants to pursue a career in medicine, and I had no idea just how many different options there are out there to combine these two passions. Thank you so much for putting this program together and for making it not just informative but also a lot of fun too. The speakers were all so dynamic, and I appreciated that they spoke to us quite candidly about the many challenges that exist in the field today -- from gender bias and discrimination to disinformation to political interference, among others. All reasons to always keep up with the news, as you reminded us frequently. Luckily, my mother bought us a digital subscription to *The New York Times* earlier this year. A few of the presentations really resonated with me, particularly on the growth of robotic surgery, Videos showing how cataract surgery uses similar technology to how video game players work on their consoles, the rise of mental disorders (and how they are often neither acknowledged nor properly addressed), and presentation on the history of anesthesiology. I also found the presentation on Nursing Home Care quite interesting and have applied to become a volunteer at the Long Island State Veterans Home. Beyond the presentations, I also enjoyed the more lighthearted aspects of the program like the gag gift prizes (I won two red mini-footballs and a dinosaur stuffed animal), the delicious snacks and, yes, the talent show. I plan to add some new magic tricks to my routine in case I ever have to entertain an audience again ... or just a few of my future patients! Thank you again for this amazing opportunity. Your enthusiasm for the biomedical field was "contagious" in the best possible way. Sincerely,

Kevin

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

Thank you so much for organizing such an amazing program, SARAs really changed my perspective of the medical field and opened my eyes to just how much goes into becoming a doctor. I really enjoyed coming everyday even if it meant I had to wake up early but at the end it was worth it I think. The amount of knowledge I earned during the course of this program doesn't compare to any other program like this I've attended. It was truly an amazing experience getting to know what these experts do for a living and meeting new people, I would attend every year if I could!

Best Regards,
Lavleen

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to participate in the SARAS program. You and all of the staff did such an incredible job at making our time at SARAS memorable. I had such an amazing experience and learned so many new things about different fields of medicine over the summer. I have always had a passion for science and medicine but this program has also helped me open up to possible career paths I may want to take in the future. I was extremely interested in the orthopedic lectures and I would love to possibly pursue a career in this area of study. I enjoyed the hands-on activities like learning how to put on sterile gloves, culturing bacteria and making different types of red blood cells with clay. I loved learning about the ongoing development of technology in the medical field and how it will help to improve more patient outcomes in the future. This program has so many great things to offer and I am so grateful for you and the team. Thanks again!

Leanna

Hello Dr. Pentyala,

This SARAS program has taught me a lot about medicine. It has been such a pleasure to meet all of the amazing doctors at STONYBROOK and learn about their specialties. It has opened my eyes to a new view of medicine I had never thought about before. I can't wait to come back next year! Thank you for doing this program,

Linda

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I had a lot of fun at the SARAs Program this year! I really loved when we watched Bollywood music videos or did the chair exercises in between lectures. They really woke me up after lectures I wasn't too interested in. But, I think my favorite were the My Little Pony toys we got! I was also happy that we got a notebook to take notes in! Since I will only be a sophomore next year, I feel like I will be ahead of the other students because I learned so much from the lectures. I always thought I would be interested in Pathology, but this program had such a wide variety of topics. I really found Orthopedics and Radiology the most interesting! I'm so glad I got the opportunity to attend this program this summer, even if it meant waking up at six in the morning to catch the train. It was always worth it in the end!

P.S. I told my dog about the program and he is very excited to attend next year!

Maylin

Hey Dr. Pentyala!!

These past few weeks have honestly been the best. I had the most awesome time at Stony Brook listening to all these experts. I learned a lot and made a lot of great friends as well. Honestly if you added another week of SARAS I would 100% do it. Also, thanks for printing my 3D design!!! That was also super cool. Thank you so much!!

Michelle

Good afternoon, Dr. Pentyala

Firstly, thank you so much for organizing the entire SARAS program! I loved attending the program every day and I feel as though I have learned so much and grown professionally as well as personally. I especially enjoyed your talk regarding your research, and you have definitely further inspired me to pursue research. I was truly The whole program seemed very organized and ran smoothly. Thank you so much for everything!

Best,
Natalia

Hi Dr. Pentyala, overall I really enjoyed the SARAS Program. I feel like I have dipped in to a world full of medicine. The program makes me very interested in Pediatrics and I really want to do more research. Thank You so much for conducting this program!!

Nichole

Hi Dr. Pentyala,

After a very quick 3 weeks, I completed the SARAS program. I learned the various branches of the medical field as well as how to succeed in the academic field, such as networking. The experiences of learning how to put on sterile gloves and making different RBCs using Play-Doh was memorable. I was especially interested in the physical therapy experts as well as the orthopedic surgeons that touched on the sports aspect. There was always something to look forward to because of the variety of experts that touched on various fields of work (I also loved the snack packs). I believed all of them were articulate with their lectures and answered thoroughly when received questions. Thank you for the experience!

Rohan

Dr. Pentyala,

My name is Senuki and I am a high school student who participated in the SARAS program earlier this summer. I am emailing you regarding some particular questions I have on your past research, as well as explore possible research opportunities for high school students at Stony Brook Laboratory. To start, I would like to reflect on my time at SARAS 2022. Truthfully, it was one of the most fun and informational programs I have ever attended. Prior to the event, I was very close minded about the field of study in medicine I wanted to pursue, however all the information and labs conducted by medical professionals broadened my interests to topics that I wasn't previously familiar with. It also made me a bit more excited to go to my urologist internship, which I was previously nervous about due to my lack of knowledge on what the field actually entailed. The program even helped me fill out my summer research logbook for my research class during the school year! Thank you for the wonderful opportunity! That being said, SARAS also heightened my motivation to dig deeper into my passion for research. I have some particular questions regarding your research on bone tumors (Novel Positioning Feedback System as a Guidance in Bone Tumor Resection, and 3D-Printed Guides in Bone Tumor Resection: Studying Their Error and Determining a Safety Margin for Surgery). In addition, I was quite fascinated by the research you are doing on Parkinson's disease, and hope to ask some more clarifying questions. Research is one of my greatest passions, and I aspire to be an accomplished researcher like you one day. I find it so impressive that you have a plethora of research work that pertain to very different topics in science!

Thanks,

Senuki

Thank you for organizing this program, I learned a lot! The interactive workshops were the most memorable, especially the day of SAT prep for those of us who had already finished taking the SAT because we had a chance to freely talk to new and interesting people. Overall, it was a great exposure to science and medicine.

Thanks again,

Serene

Dear Dr. Pentyala

Thank you for putting on the SARAS program and allowing me to be a part of it. This program has given me so much insight into the healthcare industry and I am very grateful that I got this exposure. All the experts that were brought in taught me a lot and helped me figure out what I might want to pursue in the future. I especially enjoyed the talk on vascular diseases and minimally invasive surgery as it was very interesting to learn about the inner workings of the heart and how surgery has evolved over time to be less invasive and let patients have an easier recovery time. Thank you again for giving me this experience. Sincerely,

Sonika

Hi Dr. Pentyala,

I really enjoyed all the lectures and activities that we had. This was such a fruitful experience for me as I was able to learn a lot about the medical field. I enjoyed all the lectures, but my favorite was the Orthopedic Oncologist. I just wanted to thank you for everything. You have such amazing advice that I will definitely implement throughout my life. Thank you so much again. I really appreciate it!

Sincerely,
Suhani

Dear Dr. Pentyala,

I wanted to thank you for such a memorable experience at SARAS this year. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I enjoyed all of the presentations and received an enormous amount invaluable information regarding so many topics. I came into the program with a passion for science and I now have a serious desire to be part of the medical field.

I thoroughly enjoyed the presentation about regenerative medicine being a viable solution to the international organ donation shortage for organ transplantation. It truly ignited an internal spark within me and I am actively pursuing options in this field of study. I am seriously considering a research project on this topic. I also enjoyed the presentation on 3D Bio-printing. It offered new insights into the potential possibilities open to Bio-printing, especially its potential with organ regeneration. This program has been enlightening and life-changing for me as a student. I have found a field of study that has truly inspired me. I can't thank you enough for everything you did to present this program and make it a success. You and your team did an outstanding job with every presentation and you made learning fun! I especially enjoyed the talent show and the different college presentations. I also loved the afternoon snacks (they were always tasty and delicious). Thank you for everything and I hope to return next year for more exciting presentations. I look forward to staying in touch and advising you of my progress in my new field of study.

Thank you for everything!

Regards,
Zach
