

Summer Science Internship Program for High School Students

Program Mission

The major mission of this program is to motivate area high school students to *consider careers in science*. Understanding what is involved in medical research, how the research can make an impact in new discoveries that help cure diseases, or to understand the impact of industrial science where novel innovations and products are developed can help the young mind to decide if this career is challenging enough for them and to want to pursue it.

The summer science research mentoring program offered through the department of Biomedical Sciences at the College of Medicine Rockford is a long standing collaborative undertaking between the Thermo Fisher Scientific (Pierce Biotechnology of Rockford) and the College of Medicine to serve the students in the Rockford School District and nearby communities. The program has been going on for over 31 years and aims at imparting **new laboratory skills** to the selected students. Research laboratories at the University of Illinois, Rockford campus, conduct cutting-edge research to find a cure for cancer, develop vaccines, and design and develop new drugs.

Another major mission of this program is to **provide invaluable experiences** to the students by working side-by-side with leading scientists in the field at the University of Illinois. One of the great experiences the students learn is to work as part of a **research team**. During this process, the students develop a **mentor relationship** that often goes well beyond the summer internship. Mentors guide them and write letters of reference from their college admissions to career interviews.

Each year the program receives approximately 40 applications from the area high school students for the five (5) internship positions available. The students receive various career building training such as preparation of resume, interviewing skills, oral and poster presentation skills, leadership skills and ability to work as a team all during the two months of internship training. Each student is paid a stipend sponsored by Thermo Fisher Scientific.