

Final Reflection on My 2021 Summer Enrichment Experience at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics

By Samuel Wang

My “Introduction to Pharmacology” course has ended and I have had so much fun! During my last week, I spent “in class” time with my teacher Dr. Carla Coste Sanchez, and fellow North Carolinian peers. We used our pharmacological knowledge to study the effects of varying alcohol levels on the brain through an exciting lab. We also learned about one of the newer fields of pharmacology called “pharmacogenomics,” which, in other words, is personalized medicine designed for the individual patient. Later, we discussed the ethics of such treatments because though the drug might have greatly beneficial results, the company that made your drug now also has your entire genome entirely at their disposal.

The course ended with final project presentations. Each student made infographics about the drug they chose, which treated a certain disease, and presented them to the whole class.

My project was over the drug Allopurinol, a drug that treats the chronic disease of gout and kidney stones. This drug was #49 on the list of most prescribed drugs in the United States in 2018, and is the number one prescribed drug used to control uric acid, the cause of painful gout attacks.

At the conclusion of these three weeks, I know I have a well-rounded understanding of the fundamentals of pharmacology and this has increased my passion to continue learning as much as I can because, frankly, this world we live in has lots of fascinating things to explore!

I am thankful that the Garwin Family Foundation has given me the opportunity to cultivate myself through education in an engaging, challenging, and fun manner.

My time with NCSSM this year has come to a close. I had lots of fun, learned plenty, and have ignited my desire to continue pursuing excellence, and not mere perfection.