Optimizing R25E summer pre-doctoral internship program requirements

Suzanne Gronemeyer, PhD and James Marmion, BA (Hons)  
St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital  
http://www.stjude.org/poe

Neither Suzanne Gronemeyer, nor James Marmion, nor any of their immediate family member (including their spouses), have any financial relationship(s) relevant to the content of this educational activity.

ICEC 2014 Suzanne Gronemeyer, PhD, James Marmion, BA (Hons)  
St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital  
http://www.stjude.org/poe
**St Jude Pediatric Oncology Education (POE) Program**
**Inspiring the Next Generation of Cancer Researchers**

*Our POE program is a short-term summer research experience designed to:*

- Provide pre-doctoral students with an opportunity to do high quality, contemporary cancer-related research with a faculty mentor.

- Introduce students to the latest pediatric cancer research, treatment, and prevention approaches in a Lunch & Learn seminar series designed especially for them.

- Encourage students to choose careers in cancer research and/or cancer patient management.

- Provide students interested in careers in cancer research and/or cancer patient management with knowledge and experience to foster their interest.

- Follow participant career paths and evaluate the long-term impact of our program.

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- The POE program has been in existence since 1978 (36 years). It is geared for college juniors & seniors, M1, PharmD, and graduate students. Those with a cancer career interest are strongly preferred. Prior relevant research experience is required.

- Suzanne Gronemeyer, PhD has been director of the POE Program since 1997. She was the 2009 recipient of the AACE’s Margaret Hay Edwards Achievement Medal For Outstanding Contributions to Cancer Education.

- James Marmion, BA (Hons), is the POE program coordinator.

- In our 31st year of NCI support (5 R25 CA023944-31)

- 1116 participants since program inception (1978-2013). 767 (85.8%) of the 894 who have completed their degree work hold a doctorate, including 176 (80.7%) of the 218 under-represented minorities in the cohort.

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- Program announced via email to over 2400 university faculty and cancer researchers. Many recipients forward to students and other faculty. Some post on department websites and/or include in internship listings.

- The number of applicants increased to ~700 for 2012, more than we could adequately handle. Many did not have research experience, so were unlikely to be selected.

- Since 2013, we have required prior relevant research experience for all applicants. This has reduced the applicant pool size to a manageable number (~500). The 2014 applicant pool included students from 260+ schools and nearly every US state, DC and Puerto Rico. For several years, the average applicant undergraduate GPA has been ~3.8 on a 4.0 scale.

- 51 US citizen students from 39 schools in 20 states and the District of Columbia participated in POE 2014. Their average undergraduate GPA was 3.80. They included 17 medical students and 30 undergraduates. Ten (20%) 2014 participants were prior class members returning for an additional POE rotation. Fifteen (29%) were under-represented minorities.

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St Jude Pediatric Oncology Education (POE) Program

Applicants

- Applicant Schools

Beginning 2013: Prior Research Experience Required

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Gronemeyer POE Mentors & Speakers
Meeting 1.9.14
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- Ongoing assessment and evaluation of the program is provided by pre- and post-experience testing of the student's knowledge of pediatric cancer and related areas, and by post-experience surveys completed by all students and mentors.

- Experienced cancer educators from prominent cancer centers reviewed the program as on-site consultants in July of 2005, 2009, and 2013. The next reviewer will visit in July, 2015.

- POE alumni include 27 pediatric hematologist-oncologists, 5 of whom are currently at St. Jude as faculty members (3) or clinical fellows (2).

- POE alumni also include over 50 PhDs, 29 MD/PhDs, 17 medical oncologists (two at West Clinic in Memphis), and 12 radiation oncologists.

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St Jude Pediatric Oncology Education (POE) Program Components

- Unique focus
- Program director who is passionate about the program and who is enthusiastically supported by the institution
- Committed and involved faculty mentors
- Current and complete program website with an online application process
- Large external network referring top students to the program
- Extensive, diverse, and highly qualified applicant pool meeting rigorous application requirements
- Meticulous matching of faculty mentors with mentees
- Adequate financial support for participants (stipend and housing)
- Outstanding basic science and clinical research infrastructure
- Training in the protection of human subjects, responsible conduct of research, and research with vertebrate animals
- Comprehensive lunch and learn seminar series
- Oral and written participant presentations of their research results
- Ongoing internal and external program evaluation
- Long-term participant tracking (Google and social media)
- Continuing program innovation

51 Participants from 39 schools in 20 states and the District of Columbia

19 (37%) Minority
15 (29%) URM
29 (57%) Women

3.80 Average undergrad GPA

30 Undergrads
17 M1s
4 Graduate / PharmD / post-bac
10 (20%) Returning Students
All with prior research experience

St Jude Pediatric Oncology Education (POE) Program

2013 CURE Scholars (URM undergraduate POEs)
3 P30 CA021765-34S1

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