

Policies and Procedures
for
The High School Student Research Volunteer Program

sponsored by Neurology Research
Barrow Neurological Institute®
of
St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center

I. Goals and Aims of the Program.

The goal of the high school student volunteer program is to introduce exceptional students to scientific research. The scientists that volunteer their time as mentors do so out of a personal commitment to enrich the educational experience of highly motivated students without regard to race, religion, nationality, or socioeconomic background. Students will gain "hands-on" experience in various scientific techniques under the direction of the scientific staff. In addition, students are expected to perform a wide range of tasks to assist the professional staff including, but not limited to, Xeroxing, glassware washing and sterilization, solution preparation, data analysis and computer entry, etc. Students may present their work in local and national science competitions.

II. Method of Application and Selection of Students.

Student applications will be solicited once per year in September or October. Letters introducing the program and soliciting applications will be sent to the principals and science department chairpersons or AP Biology Teachers of local area public and private high schools in September or early October. *Each school may nominate 2 students only*; however, current participation in an AP or Honors Biology class is not a requirement, and any teacher or school principal may nominate a student. Teachers are encouraged to share the application materials with other teachers in their school, pre-screen students and nominate only students who have a strong desire to work in a research laboratory.

A completed application will include: 1) a recommendation letter from a teacher (or principal), 2) an application form completed by the student and including a signature by a parent or guardian, 3) a letter from the student describing why he or she wishes to be part of this program, and 4) a picture of the student with the student's name on the back. Any instructions or requirements in addition to these are listed on the application form. Instructions provided with the application form supercedes these stated in this policy. Incomplete applications and applications received past the due date specified on the application will not be considered. Only the two students listed on the school nomination form will receive application material.

Copies of the application materials from all nominated students will be given to the scientists/mentors the day after the designated due date. The student program secretary will contact the students by email/phone to schedule interviews. Typically, students will be interviewed in groups. Students who are not chosen for an interview will be notified in writing as soon as possible.

Preference is typically given to Sophomores who are interested in continuing through their Senior year, although some laboratories will accept Juniors and Seniors. The program is highly individualized, and the scientist/mentors tailor their interactions with the student to maximize the benefits to both the student and the laboratory.

III. Staff Expectations and Responsibilities:

The ***Scientific Enrichment Program for Students*** is administered by the Neurology Research Department at the Barrow Neurological Institute® of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center. In addition to Neurology Research faculty and staff, faculty members participate in this program from a number of other institutions in Phoenix and the surrounding area. Regardless of location, professional faculty and staff members who accept students in their laboratories are making a commitment to the student. The supervising faculty and/or staff member is expected to be intimately involved in the training of the student, and is ultimately responsible for his/her safety while in the laboratory. The faculty and staff members act as mentors, and are responsible for the student's progress in the laboratory with regards to experimental and theoretical aspects of scientific research. If a faculty member agrees to accept a student that wishes to pursue an individual research project, he or she is making a significant commitment to the student, and therefore the student must indicate their desire to pursue a research project in their application to the program. The faculty member and his/her staff will work with the student on a research project that can lead to a submission in local and/or national science fair competitions. However, *a project will be assigned only if the student demonstrates maturity and an appropriate sense of responsibility in the laboratory as determined by the faculty member, laboratory supervisor and his/her laboratory staff.* Projects are typically not begun until the second year that the student is in the laboratory. If the student decides to pursue a project but did not indicate this in his/her application, it is the prerogative of the mentor to accept or refuse this request. If the student chooses to participate in science competitions, it is the student's responsibility to follow all rules and regulations pertaining to the submission and to make his/her mentor aware of any forms or letters required in as timely manner. The mentor is not obligated to accompany the student or be responsible for him/her while participating in science competitions outside the mentor's laboratory, particularly if the competition leads to travel outside of the local area.

IV. Student Expectations and Responsibilities:

Students must be aware that participation in this program is a privilege. The scientists agreeing to act as mentors are volunteering their professional time to work with students. The laboratory is a place of business, not a high school classroom. Students are expected to act in a mature fashion at all times, and to follow the instructions of their mentors and the laboratory staff. Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated, and constitutes grounds for dismissal from the program. Students participating in this program are expected to be self-motivating. Mentors will assist in finding appropriate reading material. Mentors and other laboratory staff members may discuss their work with students; however, the rest of the research experience is up to the student. Students who wish to pursue a project but do not attempt to read independently, meet deadlines for project progress established by the student and mentor, or fail to work on the project in advance of the due date may find that their mentor is unable to help them meet their deadline. Please remember that the professionals have responsibilities and deadlines of their own. Students should discuss deadlines with their mentor as soon as possible, so a mutually agreeable project schedule can be established. If competition in a science fair or demonstration requires travel outside of the mentor's laboratory, it is the student's responsibility to obtain appropriate adult supervision and parental permission. Furthermore, the student must provide proof of this to the mentor if requested.

The student is required to establish a work schedule with the staff member he/she works with. The student is expected to notify this staff member if they cannot attend on a scheduled day. The student is expected to work a minimum of 2 days after school (work days are Monday – Friday between 8am and 6pm) totaling a minimum of 6 hours for the week, and is required to participate in

the summer program unless other arrangements are made between the student and mentor. The summer program requires a minimum of 4 full (6-8 hour) days per week for about 10 weeks. While in St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center (SJHMC), the student is expected to obey all rules governing hospital volunteers, and all rules governing volunteers in the Neurology Research Department. Students volunteering in other laboratories in SJHMC, or at other institutions are required to obey the rules in those laboratories and institutions. In the absence of specific written or oral policies for an individual laboratory, the student is required to obey the guidelines set forth in this Policy and Procedures document.

Students may make arrangements with their school and their supervising scientist to obtain course credit for their participation in this program. If course credit is initiated, the student remains responsible to his/her high school teacher for all progress reports and deadlines. The supervising scientist does not agree to act as a high school teacher.

V. Personnel and Disciplinary Issues:

Students will initially be assigned to a laboratory, under the supervision of a faculty member and full time staff member. Students (and/or mentors) may request a change of laboratories after the first month if the student's experience would be improved in a different research environment due to personal or professional conflicts that cannot be resolved following discussion with the laboratory supervisor or mentor. A request for transfer may be initiated by speaking to the Director of the High School Student Volunteer Program (Dr. Adrienne C. Scheck), or to the student's supervisor. The decision to transfer a student to another laboratory will ultimately be made by the entire professional staff and is contingent on the availability of a position in a laboratory, and on the acceptance of the transferring student by the supervising scientist. Students should be aware that a considerable amount of time and money is required to train them, and there are a limited number of available laboratory positions. When a student accepts a position in a research laboratory, they are making a commitment to that laboratory; therefore, it may be difficult to accommodate requests for transfer.

In the event the staff member determines that the student's work is not satisfactory, or that the student is not acting responsibly in their work habits, attendance, or behavior while in the laboratory or on hospital grounds, the faculty member is expected to immediately notify the student and document this notification with a memo or phone call to the Program Director (Adrienne C. Scheck, Ph.D.). If the situation does not immediately improve, the mentor must notify the student, his/her parent and his/her sponsoring high school teacher in writing. This may be done by the mentor (with a copy sent to the Program Director), or the mentor may request this be done by the Program Director. If the problem continues, the mentor may request that the student be dropped from the program. At any time during a student's participation in the program, the student, his/her mentor, or the student's parents may request a meeting with the Program Director (Dr. Adrienne C. Scheck, Ph.D.). These meetings will typically involve the student, his/her mentor and/or supervising staff member and the student's parents, although individual discussions may occur at the discretion of the Program Director.