



# The Vulcan Letter



Voice of the MSTP at the University of Alabama at Birmingham

Winter 2006

## Welcome New Students

Our program welcomes many new students this year. Nine are incoming first year students and two are transfer students, one from UAB School of Medicine and one from Tulane University. We are very excited to welcome them into our program and wish them well!



**Michael Alberti**

**Michael Alberti** graduated summa cum laude from California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, California (near Los Angeles). He received his degree in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology with a minor in Mathematics. During his time at CLU, Michael received many prestigious awards for academic excellence and was highly involved in the local Habitat for Humanity program. Additionally he won an award to assist in hospital patient care for several hours per week. Following graduation, he worked for a year as a research assistant under Dr. Utpal Banerjee at UCLA. Dr. Banerjee's lab studies a zebrafish model of myeloid leukemia. His project focused on designing and developing Multisite Gateway technology for use in the assembly of transgenic constructs used to express oncogenes. In his spare time Michael enjoys playing the piano.

**Asher Albertson** comes to us from Casper, Wyoming. He attended Casper Community College for two years and earned an associate's degree in biology. He then attended the University of Wyoming in Laramie, where he received a B.S. in Zoology and Physiology and a Master's degree in reproductive biology. His hob-



**Asher Albertson**

bies mostly involve outdoor activities. He enjoys fishing, hunting, hiking, mountain biking, skiing and Tae-kwon-do. As for his future research focus, he wants to study neuroscience and he has a specific interest in neurodegenerative diseases.



**Juan Calix**

**Juan Calix** was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, although most of his family resides in El Salvador. He graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans with a degree in Biological Sciences. After graduation, he enrolled in Tulane School of Public Health, but deferred because of Hurricane Katrina. Last year, he worked for Catholic Charities in Hurricane Relief and was subsequently hired to work for Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans, where he was Program Coordinator for disaster services. He wrote grants, acted as a liaison to the state government and developed counseling/health related projects. In December of 2005, he moved to Catholic Community Services of Baton Rouge where he had similar duties. His hobbies include playing guitar, writing music, drawing and outdoor activities. He plans to have a research focus in Infectious Diseases.



**Vishnu Cuddapah**

**Vishnu Cuddapah** joins us from New Orleans. While growing up, Vishnu spent a lot of his time admiring art. His love of art was so great in fact that he attended Tulane University to study Art History. When he graduated Tulane in 2006 with his BA in Art History, he also received his BS in Neuroscience. It is Vishnu's interest in neurobiology that led him to summer work in a neuropharmacology lab and ultimately to UAB. Now that he is at UAB, he is making his way through his first year classes and looking forward to more laboratory time in one of the numerous neurobiology labs. If he is able to pull himself away from his books for an extended time, Vishnu would love to get back to his favorite vacation spot - Bangalore, India.



**Alex Feldman**

Alabama native **Alex Feldman** graduated from Alabama in 2006 with a degree in Microbiology. Additionally, music is an important part of Alex's life. Alex satisfied his musical impulses by joining ensembles and becoming involved with the music fraternity, Phi Mu Alpha, while he finished his degree in Microbiology. He even was

able to work with the Tuscaloosa Symphony on occasions. Alex is very passionate about health issues and wants to pursue a degree in infectious disease. He decided to apply to an MD/PhD program after several positive summer research experiences here at UAB. Ultimately, he hopes to join the Epidemic Intelligence Service program at the CDC. Currently, Alex is still involved in music through the acapella group Infusion and also participates in many diverse organizations through the medical school.



**Lena Gamble**

**Lena Gamble** joins our program after relocating from New Orleans, Louisiana. Lena is a native of Washington, D.C. and graduated from Xavier University with a degree in Biology in 2002. Her primary research interest is in the area of breast cancer, having studied the interaction of cancer cell receptors and the surrounding stroma during previous lab experiences. Continuing in this area of study, Lena has joined the lab of Dr. Andra Frost in Pathology, where she is investigating what role hedgehog pathway activation plays in breast cancer development. In her spare time, Lena enjoys playing chess, basketball and football.



**David Gaston**

**David Gaston** is from Birmingham, Alabama and graduated from Birmingham-Southern

## Welcome New Students

College. He was recently married this summer to Kate Gaston, who is from Pell City, Alabama, and went to Bryan College in Dayton, Tennessee. His interests outside of medicine and science coincide with his research interests. He has a growing interest in social injustice. Specifically, he is interested in the work of a local group, "Make Way Partners", which is a local advocacy group on human sex trafficking and slavery. When asked to describe himself, he says, "basically I am a Christian". His hobbies include playing the guitar.



**Hirotomo Nakahara**

**Hirotomo Nakahara** enters the program after graduating from Georgia Institute of Technology. Hiro, pronounced "hero", was born in Japan and lived there until grade school when he moved to Atlanta, Georgia. He is fluent in Japanese and his hobbies include working out, hanging out with friends and traveling. He is interested in volunteering and student government. He is the Vice President of the first year class.



**Matt Rutherford**

**Matt Rutherford** comes to UAB from Lucedale, Mississippi. He attended college at the University of Mississippi, majoring in chemistry and math. Matt did post-baccalaureate work at the National Institute on Drug Abuse, studying opioid pharmacology. His hobbies include literature, bowling, omelettes and science.



**Daniel Schreder**

**Daniel Schreder** joins the MSTP from the School of Medicine. After finishing the second year of medical school at UAB, Daniel received a Howard Hughes Medical Institute Research Training Fellowship for a year. He liked research and his project so much that wanted to continue with it and applied to the program. He is originally from Huntsville, Alabama and attended Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. It was there that he met his wife, Jenny, who went to Hollins University, a school not far away. They got married after a few years of dating and just celebrated their 1 year anniversary. In his spare time he enjoys whitewater kayaking and traveling.



**Faraz Sultan**

**Faraz Sultan** comes to us from Naperville, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. He went to Rice University and graduated in December, 2005. Faraz arrived in Birmingham in June 2006 and did a summer rotation with David Sweatt, the neurobiology chair. His hobbies include basketball, running, reading, studying, lab work and biomedical research.



# Robin G. Lorenz, M.D., Ph.D. Named Director of UAB's Medical Scientist Training Program

Dr. Robin Lorenz was named Director of the UAB Medical Scientist Training Program on October 1, 2006. Dr. Lorenz attended Stanford University from 1980 to 1984, where she received a B.S. in Biological Sciences. From 1984 to 1990 she attended Washington University School of Medicine as a Medical Scientist Training Program Fellow and received her Ph.D. in Immunology and M.D. in 1990. Her graduate work was done in the laboratory of Dr. Paul Allen, in the Department of Pathology at Washington University School of Medicine, and focused on the recognition of self antigens by the immune system.

From 1990 to 1994 she was a resident in Laboratory Medicine (Clinical Pathology) at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. During that time she did a post-doctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Dr. Jeffrey Gordon, focusing on the development of novel animal models to study the development and differentiation of the gastric epithelium. From 1994-2002 she was an Assistant Professor in the Departments of Pathology and Medicine at Washington University. In addition to directing a basic science research lab focused on chronic inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract, she was co-director of the Joint Clinical Immunology Laboratory of Barnes-Jewish Hospital and St. Louis Children's Hospital, and Associate Director of the Laboratory Medicine Residency Training Program at Barnes-Jewish Hospital. Dr. Lorenz joined the UAB faculty in 2002 as an Associate Professor in the Departments of Pathology and Microbiology. The National Institutes of Health and the Sandler Program for Asthma Research fund her laboratory

research investigating the mucosal immune system. She has been a member of numerous NIH and American Cancer Society study sections and currently serves as the Co-chair of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation Research Training Awards Committee. At UAB, her administrative duties include being the Associate Director of the Pathology Residency Program, Program Director of the SIBS Undergraduate Research Program and Associate Director of the Mucosal HIV and Immunobiology Center. She is married to Dr. Kevin Roth and has two children, Theo and Loren.



**Dr. Robin Lorenz**

#### **From Dr. Lorenz:**

It was a great honor to be selected to become the new Director of the UAB MSTP and I accepted the position with great enthusiasm. I have always felt that it is part of being a physician-scientist to give back to the next generation, and this position allows me to fulfill this mission. I have both short and long term goals for the MSTP at UAB. In the short term, I plan on immediate changes in both the structure and the policies of the MSTP office. The previous position of financial assistant has been upgraded to an administrative associate. This person will not only be responsi-

ble for MSTP student financial issues, but will also develop new tracking procedures for reimbursements and other student requests. I plan on this position also having the responsibility of timely updating the new MSTP website. In addition to this staff change, I am reviewing and clarifying all of the current MSTP policies. I appreciate any input that you have regarding current policies that are unclear or need to be updated. My long term goal is to make the UAB MSTP program one of the top training programs in the country. Part of this goal will include a complete evaluation of our current curriculum (both graduate and medical), as well as an inspection of the transition periods between the two types of training. The pending implementation of a new medical school curriculum gives our program the perfect opportunity to evaluate our training and how it integrates between the graduate and medical schools. In addition, I believe that the program could be improved by enhancing the career development opportunities that we offer. This could include, but not be limited to, a seminar series focused on issues of particular interest to physician-scientists and the introduction of real role-models from our UAB community. Finally, I want to say that I have been very impressed by the level of student involvement and commitment to the UAB MSTP. This is a very unique and wonderful component of our program and I believe that all of you are critical to the achievement of my long term goal. My door is always open for discussions and I look forward to working with each and everyone of you.



# Electronic Theses & Dissertations

by Janice Baird

Beginning with the Fall 2006 semester, the Graduate School and the UAB libraries introduced a pilot project for the electronic submission of theses and dissertations (ETDs). The initial stage of the ETD project is voluntary and is open to students in any discipline.

## Why choose electronic submission?

If you write your thesis or dissertation on a computer using any word processing application, you are already producing a digital (electronic) document, so the transition into electronic submission and publication is, any many ways, a simple one. It also has many advantages:

- Rather than printing your document over and over as you make changes and progress through the final review process, you will be able to simply make corrections to the electronic file and submit the final version to the Graduate School on a CD as a PDF file.
- You may include additional information (e.g., data or multimedia files) that might not be possible or appropriate in a paper document.
- The Graduate School review process is greatly accelerated.
- You will not need to pay to have copies made.
- You will not need to pay for having your copies bound.
- While paper copies spend months waiting to be bound and then are available only at the university library, your electronic document will be available almost immediately to a world-wide audience.

The thesis approval forms and some other required forms will still need to be picked up in the Graduate School and submitted as a printed document when you turn in the thesis as a PDF file on a CD. The approval form will be signed by each member of the thesis committee and the graduate program director.

# Dr. Fuller Retirement Party

by Travis Lewis

On September 30, over 40 MSTP students gathered to celebrate the retirement of Dr. Gerald Fuller from his role as co-director of the UAB MSTP program. Emotions were mixed as thoughts bounced from memories of his caring stewardship, to the fear of negotiating our years left in the program without this thoughtful sounding board. The party went off just as countless others have over the past 20 years of Dr. Fuller's affiliation with the program—with laughter, great company, delicious food and tasty beverages.

He kindly hosted the event in his home where his beautifully landscaped Japanese gardens were the perfect backdrop, making everyone feel closely connected with the man who has consistently been more than just an administrator, but often a confidant and true friend. Dr. Fuller graciously showed off the perpetual work-in-progress that is his backyard. He describes trees as the perfect organism, providing humanity with shade, warmth, transportation and housing, and renewing the earth with oxygen and enriching the soil with mulch. His garden seems like the perfect place for students to renew and enrich their own spirits, and he may be unhappy to find second year students sprawled across it this spring as the USMLE approaches.

Students came together to create a pot-luck feast that included a delicious slow-roasted pork shoulder and delectable puff-pastries. As the sun began to set, the group congregated under Dr. Fuller's pagoda next to the koi pond. There the students presented him with a plaque to honor and commemorate his dedication and commitment to the program and its students. The heartfelt inscription read:

The UAB MSTP thanks you for your years of commitment to the education of our students. Your constant support and guidance gave us direction. Your patience and kind demeanor gave us strength. For all that and more, we thank you.

Dr. Fuller reflected on what the program has meant to him over the years. He asserts that "the program fosters the kind of interaction that makes being involved worthwhile...the people involved are not just students, but friends."

# American Physician Scientist Association

by Jennifer Guimbellot

The American Physician Scientists Association ([www.physicianscientists.org](http://www.physicianscientists.org)) is a rapidly growing organization devoted to the career development and community building of future physician scientists, including students in MD/PhD programs and MD students with an interest in pursuing research. It was founded in 2004 by Freddy Nguyen at the University of Illinois College of Medicine at Urbana-Champaign and a diverse group of future physician scientists from across the United States. Currently, 48 institutions have representatives, of which 23 are NIH MSTP funded programs. APSA is supported by the American Society of Clinical Investigation (ASCI), the Student Doctor Network and the Swiss MD/PhD Association.

Each year, APSA holds its national meeting in conjunction with the ASCI/AAP meeting in Chicago. The third annual meeting will be held April 13-15, 2007. Those attending the APSA meeting will have the opportunity to interact with leading physician-scientists from across the nation and to present their research at the ASCI Poster Session.

APSA has developed an excellent website containing a wealth of information regarding all aspects of a physician scientist's training and career path, including an extensive collection of pub-

# Interview with Christopher Ransom, M.D., PhD.

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by Christina Whelan Habela

I recently interviewed Dr. Christopher B. Ransom, an alumnus of UAB's MSTP. Chris completed his undergraduate studies at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo and came to UAB in June of 1995. He did his doctoral thesis work in Harald Sontheimer's lab in the Department of Neurobiology and defended in 2001. After four months of post doctoral work with Dr. Robin Lester and Dr. Lucas Pozzo Miller, Chris returned to the clinics and graduated from medical school in May of 2003. He is presently the Chief Resident in Neurology at Yale and lives in New Haven with his wife, Eve, and 14 month old son, Ryder. His hobbies include surfing, snowboarding, skateboarding, golfing and guitar, although these days he spends most of his free time with Ryder.

As most MSTP students realize, we have begun a long challenging process which does not end with graduation. Our futures are determined as much by what we do afterwards and in some ways this time may be the most challenging part. I wanted to talk with Chris, because he is still creating his path and might share a point of view that we don't get access to very often. In addition to being very successful in his career so far, Chris has been described to me as a kind person who has enjoyed life along the way and one whom we would all enjoy knowing. I have found this to be true. I asked him to discuss his experience of the program.

**Christa (Q): What led you to do a MSTP?**

**Chris (A):** Like many aspiring medical students I arranged to work in a laboratory one summer as an undergraduate. To be honest, at the time I viewed this as a necessary ingredient to my application so I was pleasantly surprised when I found how much I enjoyed it. I worked a second summer in the laboratory and my advisor told me about the MSTP and encouraged me to pursue this. This is likely a common story amongst MSTP students but in my case it became clear that I enjoyed science and an MD/PhD program was the way to go.

**Q: What did you think were the major strengths of the program while you were here?**

**A:** One of the biggest strengths when I start-

ed was the director of the MSTP, Frank Griffin, a great character and advocate for his students. He was fiercely devoted to the concept that his MSTP students receive rigorous training in the basic sciences. Of course the enormous wealth of human talent and opportunities at UAB and the access to all departments afforded to UAB MSTP students was huge. People were working in departments as diverse as computer science to behavioral neurobiology while I was there. The interdepartmental collegiality was another plus.

**Q: How about weaknesses?**

**A:** Tough one. To be honest, and coming from the perspective of currently training at Yale, the scientific and clinical environment at UAB is absolutely stellar. I'm very proud of coming from UAB and the training provided there is on par with anywhere in the world. You guys will see when you leave for residency how exceptional the clinical faculty and operation of University Hospital really is.

**Q: What were your favorite things about Birmingham?**

**A:** Coming from the west coast (Chris grew up in Half Moon Bay, CA), Birmingham presented a lot of novelties that I came to love; southern culture, SEC football, sweltering summers. My wife and I had our first date at the botanical gardens and I eventually proposed to her there so that has to be included in the list. The Garages. Highlands Bar and Grill. Robert Trent Jones golf course. I liked that Birmingham was still a pretty small city.

**Q: How did research influence your residency application process/ decisions?**

**A:** It certainly influenced the whole process; people do want to hear about your research and this can be an advantage during interviews because you have a lot to talk about intelligently. The department I'm working in has a lot of successful clinician scientists and having these individuals as role models definitely influenced my decisions.

**Q: What else influenced you?**

**A:** You need to find a place that will be enjoyable for you and your family during your residency; residency can be painful so it's important to find an environment that

will provide a lifestyle that you're going to be happy with. My friends in Boston all think New Haven is a horror story but we really like it. It's a small town with a lot going for it and easy access to big cities, coastline and mountains.

**Q: Do you plan on doing research in the future?**

**A:** Yes, I'm doing a small amount of research now and plan to start a project as part of a scientific/clinical fellowship in epilepsy when I finish my residency next June.

**Q: What is your ideal career path?**

**A:** I still have the dream of a career in academic medicine. I said it in my medical school application and I'm saying it now; I want to be a great scientist, a great doctor and a great teacher.

**Q: Are you on this path?**

**A:** I think so. I hope so. I'm at a scary point, however; things are quickly becoming less defined with regards to the next step. It's a point we all have worked a long time to get to, but it's a point where we need to start creating things and plans for ourselves. I'm about to leave the mapped road of medical education but I feel well-prepared to tackle the uncharted territory ahead.

**Q: Given the chance to do it again would you come back?**

**A:** Absolutely, I doubt there are many people who have come to the MSTP at UAB and regretted it. My wife and I made so many good friends and have so many great memories from Birmingham. We were happy to be moving on when we graduated but sad to leave Birmingham; it's a very comfortable place to live.

**Q: Any comments to the students?**

**A:** Enjoy graduate school, it's a wonderful time. Everyone works hard but it will be the last time you have anything resembling control of your schedule for many years. Ahhh, I miss those happy days!

Thank you Chris for taking the time to talk with us. We all know that your time these days is limited and we appreciate it!

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## Congratulations to...

Matt Alder and family for the birth of daughter Morgan Elisabeth, born on September 12th.

Nola Jean (Sieber) Ernest and family for the birth of Caden Isaiah on July 9th.

Chris Dodd and his family welcomed a new baby girl named Anna Kathryn Dodd into their family on October 24, 2006.

Louisa Pyle, who married Chris Ross-Gill in October, 2005 in Scotland.

Chris Yuskaitis, who married Erin Elizabeth Wederbrook on Oct. 22, 2006 in Charlottesville, VA, where they met at the University of Virginia.

David Gaston married Katherine Leanne Landry on July 1, 2006 in Birmingham.

Christina Whelan was married to Ehren Habela on October 7, 2006 at her parents' home in New York.

## Our New PhDs!

Kevin Nash: "KISS1 metastasis suppressor secretion is required for metastasis suppression" Mentor: Danny Welch

Kelly Harms: "Mechanisms of p53-mediated apoptosis" Mentor: Xinbin Chen

Paul Harms: "Modulation of Cell Signaling by Tomoregulins in Embryogenesis and Cancer" Mentor: Chenbei Chang

## Research Awards!

Aimee Merino and Ryan Wells were selected as Short-term Finalists, and Katie Davis, Stephen Jordan and Kevin Nash were chosen as Long-term Finalists at Medical Student Research Day on November 14th.

# Medical Scientists in Training and Community Service 7

By Nicole Brossier

Time. It's a precious commodity, often valued more than gold - or, in our modern society, more than positive bank balances. Almost every MD/PhD student, whether they are in the medical or graduate phase of training, will say there's never enough of it. And yet, many MSTP students at

UAB manage to find the time to serve others despite their hectic schedules.

Current third-years Olusimidele (Simi) Akinsiku and Eva Clark started their first year by volunteering at the Jimmy

Hale Soup Kitchen with other members of their medical school class. Every Monday afternoon, they would serve meals to the homeless and clean up afterwards. "They always seemed to have plenty of food donations, but they needed volunteers for all meals of the day," Eva explained. "Volunteers could go to the office and sign up to serve as many meals as they wanted."

Later that same year, Simi decided to extend her service efforts into community education. She began tutoring at the Sixth Avenue Baptist Church Tutorial Center, where volunteers offer academic assistance to students of all grade levels in a Christian environment. Some need help with homework or advanced courses, while others come to prepare for standardized tests like the ACT and SAT, but whatever the need, the Center tries to meet it.

**“... a desire to make a difference in the lives of others, no matter how little time they have.”**

And Simi is not the only MSTP student who chooses to focus on education. Lisa Nowoslawski, another third year student, volunteers at the McWane Science Center GENEius Lab. In her *Drosophila* lab, children learn about the anatomy and life cycle of the fly, and then a little about DNA and mutations. "Kids will come into the lab just to look at the bugs or play with the microscopes. But when prompted just a little, they will begin to think and ask questions about why insects might look or func-

tion differently than we do. It is rewarding to think that maybe just a few of them will keep asking questions about the world around them when they leave."

Other students devote their time to improving the lives of the sick. Lauren Van Duyn, a fourth-year student, joined Magic Moments after a friend in her lab introduced her to the group. The organization is devoted to granting non-medical wishes to chronically ill Alabama children, particularly those suffering from illnesses that limit major life activities. Wishes range from Disney World trips to Wal-Mart shopping sprees, but each one provides an opportunity for the kids to forget about their illness for a brief time and just have fun being a kid. When asked about her community service efforts, Lauren said, "I realized how wonderful it is to help people less fortunate than myself. They are always so happy and thankful. It puts life into perspective.

And then there are those who extend their desire to help the sick beyond the borders of the U.S. Fifth-year Jennifer Guimbellot

became involved

with Medical Mission Ecuador, a non-religious medical missionary group that provides corrective surgeries for patients with cleft palate, hydrocephalus, heart defects and other conditions, after recent MSTP graduate Geoffrey Young introduced her to it. While many volunteers travel to Ecuador to assist physicians in treating patients, there's also plenty of work to be done at home. Jennifer keeps herself busy preparing fundraising materials, helping with computer work and grant-writing. She is also developing a research project to determine why microtia, a congenital lack of development of the outer ear, is more common in Latin American populations than in other ethnic groups. All that is in addition, of course, to her thesis work on the effects of hypoxia on CFTR expression. "Research is intellectually stimulating," she says, "and in principle you know what you are doing will have an impact on people, but often you don't get to see that impact. It [community service] is a connection that helps keep me motivated when I am somewhat isolated in the laboratory."

Just to the south of Ecuador lies Peru, an area that Eva Clark became interested in following a trip to Iquitos with an

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## American Physician Scientist Association

lications relating to physician-scientists in general and the Medical Scientist Training Program in particular. Forums, co-hosted with The Student Doctor Network, provide a place for individuals at all levels of training to ask questions and give advice, including information regarding the application process, choosing a mentor and residency selection, among many other topics. Another section lists funding opportunities specific for physician-scientists, pre- and post-doctoral as well as for junior faculty. News pertaining to the association, links to relevant websites and contact information for the organization's leadership are also listed.

For more information, visit APSA's website to subscribe to the organization's mailing list to receive updates and newsletters or contact Jennifer Guimbellot, UAB's current representative ([guim@uab.edu](mailto:guim@uab.edu)).

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## Research Awards!

MSRD Category winners: George Atkinson (Neurosurgery), Louise Pyle (Cell Biology), John Hammond (Neurology) and James Gladden (Cardiology)

Kelly Harms 1st Place UAB Cell Biology Scientific Retreat Poster Presentation

Jennifer Guimbellot Outstanding Genetics Doctoral Student at the graduate school honors convocation in May

Jonathan Lehman 2nd Place UAB Cell Biology Scientific Retreat Poster Presentation

Christa Whelan 1st Place Department of NBL/CIRC Poster Contest

Kevin Nash Top Oral Presenter in 2nd Annual Pathology Graduate Student Research Day

Lauren Van Duyn 1st Place in 2nd Annual Pathology Graduate Student Research Day

Kevin Nash 1st Place "The Robert Durant award for Excellence in Cancer Research", UAB Comprehensive Cancer Center

MSTP Retreat Awards – Kelly Harms 1st Place Poster Presentation, Kevin Nash 1st Place Oral Presentation

## Medical Scientists in Training and Community Service

Evangelical mission group. Since that time, she's been back twice, once to shadow Padre Raymundo, a physician-priest who started the HIV home called Hogar Algo Bello Para Dios ("Something Beautiful for God"), and once for a tropical medicine internship program through Amazon Promise. "It was awesome because we were able to help so many people who otherwise wouldn't have received healthcare," she says of Amazon Promise. "So even though the standard of care that we provided wasn't as high as the standard of care in the U.S., it was still more than was normally available to them. They depend on this organization for their lifetime healthcare."

Whether providing healthcare to the poor in South America or taking an interest in community education, these MSTP students have obviously not forgotten what brought them into the program in the first place: a desire to make a difference in the lives of others, no matter how little time they have.