

Primate Center celebrates 15 years of student outreach

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For 15 years, students enrolled in summer fellowships at the Tulane National Primate Research Center have gained first-hand experience in scientific research and veterinary medicine. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

For the past 15 years, undergraduate and veterinary medicine students enrolled in [summer fellowships](#) hosted by the [Tulane National Primate Research Center](#) (TNPRC) in Covington, Louisiana, have gained first-hand career experience alongside the center's innovative team of researchers.

Though the center receives applications from students across the nation vying for a spot in the annual programs, only five undergraduates and two veterinary students are invited to take part each year.

Cariappa Annaiah, an assistant professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, has coordinated the two TNPRC fellowships — the Summer Research Program and the Summer Veterinary Program — since 2016.

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“They go through all of the ups and downs of scientific research.”

— *Cariappa Annaiah, coordinator of the TNPRC Summer Student Research Program*

“Running from June through early August, the Summer Research Program aims to expose undergraduate students to the process and principles behind how a research project is done,” said Annaiah. “They go through all of the ups and downs of scientific research.”

Undergraduates take on biomedical research projects over a nine-week period while paired with TNPRC faculty mentors in fields like comparative pathology, microbiology and immunology. The program culminates in a presentation of their findings to the center’s faculty and staff.

Students are also invited to attend center-wide seminars, lab meetings and pathology clinics in order to enrich their experience.

While undergraduate students do not encounter the nonhuman primates housed at the facility, participants within the Summer Veterinary Program are granted an exclusive introduction to primate medicine.

“The veterinary students are paired with the primate center’s veterinarians,” said Annaiah. “They’re able to go on rounds and have contact with the primates.”

Working side-by-side with teams in departments like surgery and pathology, program participants are introduced to core concepts within diagnostic and clinical veterinary medicine, such as colony health surveillance. At the program’s conclusion, veterinary students present their case reports to the TNPRC faculty and staff members.

For more information about TNPRC summer research programs, email summerprog_tnprc@tulane.edu.

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