
[Immunology Summer Camp 2023](#)

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Diabetes Center proudly sponsored [ImmunoExplore](#), an immersive 3-day free summer camp in which underrepresented minority (URM) Bay Area high-school students from under resourced communities learn about the field of immunology at UCSF Parnassus campus. Through interactive games, lectures, Q&A sessions, patient panels, and live anatomy dissections, UCSF students and faculty engage with high schoolers to expose them to exciting careers in science and medicine involving the immune system.

"ImmunoExplore truly exceeded my expectations for what I thought can be taught to high school students like me in 3 days," said camper **Janani Harish**, a senior at American High School, a top-rated, public magnet school in Fremont. "The innovative activities and lectures were assiduously planned by extremely impressive students who served as wonderful and kind mentors. They were able to educate everyone about convoluted areas of immunology in a way that I can still remember and utilize months hence."

"Outreach programs like ImmunoExplore are an exciting opportunity for getting young students excited about science," weighed in **Mark Anderson, MD, PhD**, who spearheaded this important sponsorship. "A particularly exciting component of this program is demonstrating how collaborative approaches can really lead to innovation and new discoveries."

Our community appreciates what ImmunoExplore Founder [Anita Qualls](#), an MSTP student in Gardner Lab, has envisioned and done. "I created ImmunoExplore so that under-represented minority high school students could learn from and be inspired by the amazing immunology research and community at UCSF," she said. "The Diabetes Center has so much to offer to the next generation in terms of exposing them to career opportunities in biomedical science."

Others at the center were thrilled to participate. [Pierce Hadley](#), a graduate student in Tang Lab, noted how "incredibly rewarding it was to see the students step up to the challenge of such a complex field and come away from the experience wanting to pursue careers in Immunology," happily adding that the camp was "a definitive statement that immunology *is* possible to teach to high schoolers *and* that the outcomes make it worth continuing in the future."

Envisioning a broadly diverse community, as well as a culture that is welcoming and supportive, Diabetes Center was honored to be a part of this program. The department has executed a comprehensive strategic plan for diversity, outreach and anti-racism that supports UCSF's mission of advancing health worldwide. A big thanks to everyone at Diabetes Center who participated: **Jay Gardner MD, PhD**, **Anita Qualls**, and **Nolan Horner** of Gardner lab, **Pierce Hadley** of Tang lab, **David Berrios** of Parent and Hebrok labs, and **Sofia Wyszynski** of McManus lab.

With 175% increased knowledge of science careers, 100% increased interest in PhD programs, 120% increased interest in MSTP programs, and 100% increased preparedness for college, "our first year of camp was quite a hit, said Qualls. "I am so proud of what we were able to create and ready to start planning for the next one."

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