



July 10, 2024

## Aspironaut Summer Research Symposium is July 12

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By: Bill Snyder

High school participants in the 2024 Aspironaut Summer Research Program will give oral presentations of their projects during a scientific symposium on Friday, July 12, at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

The VUMC community, supporters of the Aspironaut K-20 STEM pipeline for diversity and wellness, and the interested public are invited to attend the presentations, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in room 1220 MRBIII.

Now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the Aspironaut pipeline offers a summer research program at VUMC primarily for rural and diverse high school and undergraduate students. Since 2009, 334 students from 34 states have participated in the program, which is funded largely by donations and grants.

More than 200 program alumni have earned college degrees (83 are still in college), 51 have graduated from medical school, 28 have earned a PhD, and seven have dual MD/PhD degrees. Another 75 students have completed master's degrees or have entered the STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) workforce.

"Aspironaut provides students with the experience and skills to access and persist in STEM studies," said the program's executive director, Julie Hudson, MD, VUMC Vice President for Medical Center Relations. "Persistence in STEM studies is a gateway step in accessing competitive STEM careers."

Hudson co-founded the program in 2007 with her husband, Billy Hudson, PhD, the Elliott V. Newman Professor of Medicine at VUMC, his brother, Johnny Hudson, and his sister, Ann Kincl.

For more information, visit <https://aspironaut.org>.