

VUMC Reporter

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Aspirnaut scientific symposium set for Friday, July 14

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Julie Hudson, MD, far left left, and Billy Hudson, PhD, far right, with this year's cohort of 19 high school students from eight states who participated in the summer research program at VUMC. (photo by Susan Army)

by *Bill Snyder*

The Vanderbilt University Medical Center community is invited to attend a scientific symposium on Friday, July 14, presented by high school participants in the [Aspirnaut](https://aspirnaut.org) (<https://aspirnaut.org>) K-20 STEM pipeline for diversity and wellness.

Now in its 16th year, the pipeline offers a summer research program at Vanderbilt primarily for rural and diverse high school and undergraduate students.

Since 2009, 334 students from 34 states have participated in the program, funded largely by donations and grants.

More than 200 program alumni have 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 directly entered the STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) workforce.

"Aspirnaut provides students with the experience and skills to access and persist in STEM studies," said Aspirnaut 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.

The symposium will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in room 1220 MRBIII. For more information, visit <https://aspirnaut.org> (<https://aspirnaut.org>).

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