



Editor: Rachel Baugh

Photo Credit: Susan Urmy

## Aspirnaut™ in the News: Amber Crabtree



Congratulations to Aspirnaut™ and Berea College alum Amber Crabtree on her featured story on the *CBS Mornings* August 1 broadcast. Amber is a Ph.D. Candidate and Neurodiversity Inspired Science and Engineering Fellow at the Frist Center for Autism and Innovations at Vanderbilt University. Amber has focused her research on designing and inventing several implantable assistive hearing devices to mitigate the effects of hyperacusis, a rare and extremely debilitating hearing disorder characterized by unusual intolerance to ordinary environmental sounds.

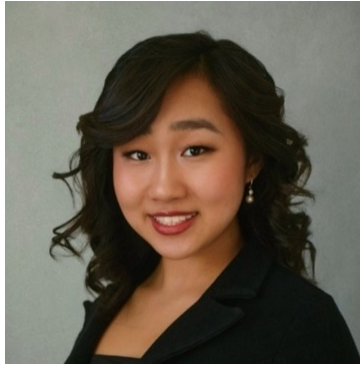
Amber described her daily challenges in the broadcast. She has lived with autism and a hearing disorder that makes sounds physically painful. "It is uncomfortable enough that I almost start crying. It's

that physically uncomfortable."

Her experiences have led Amber to develop a device that allows the user to selectively enhance or mitigate sounds in a complex environment. About her progress, Amber states, "Our lives can be so much easier."

Watch the *CBS Mornings* feature [HERE](#)

# Medical School Admission



Britney Hsu, 2020 high school Aspirnaut™ participant, graduated from Rice University with a bachelors degree in cell biology and genetics. She started medical school at Saint Louis University School of Medicine, class of 2029.

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## 2026 Application Opens in October.

Please check our [website](#) for updates.

**Application Deadline: January 14, 2026**

We will be accepting applications for high school and undergraduate Aspirnaut™ Summer Research Internships starting in October. We are looking for students who have achieved excellent grades and test scores in math and science and who have demonstrated a commitment to pursuing a career in a STEM field.

[DONATE NOW](#)

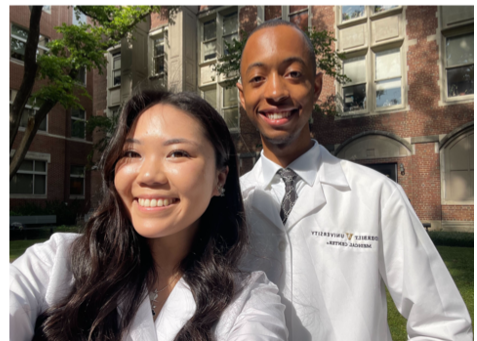
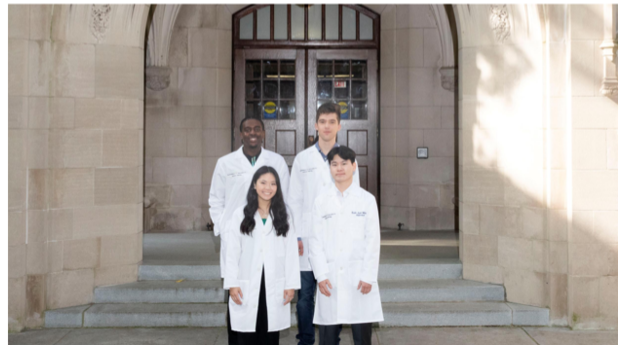
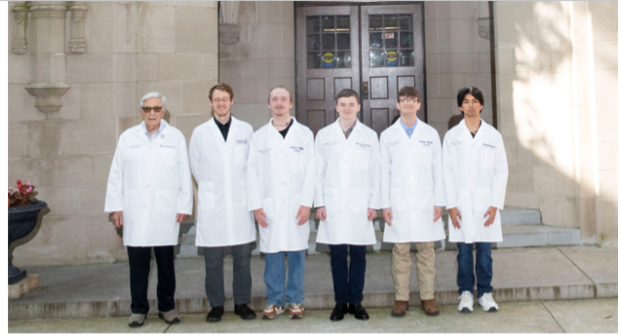
## Summer 2025 was OUTSTANDING!!!

We kicked off a fantastic summer with 17 high school Lu-Springer Research Scholars from twelve states and 10 undergraduate research interns from eight states, Kazakhstan, and Saipan. Aspirnauts experienced full-time discovery science in biomedical research labs, professional skills development, and wellness training at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. (Photo gallery below)

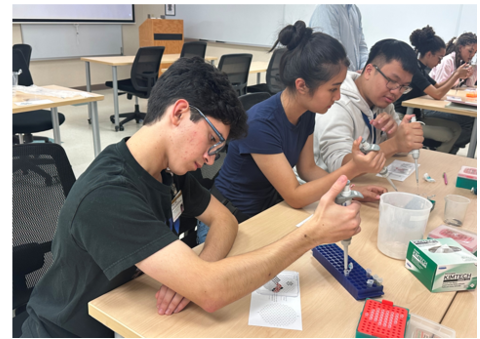
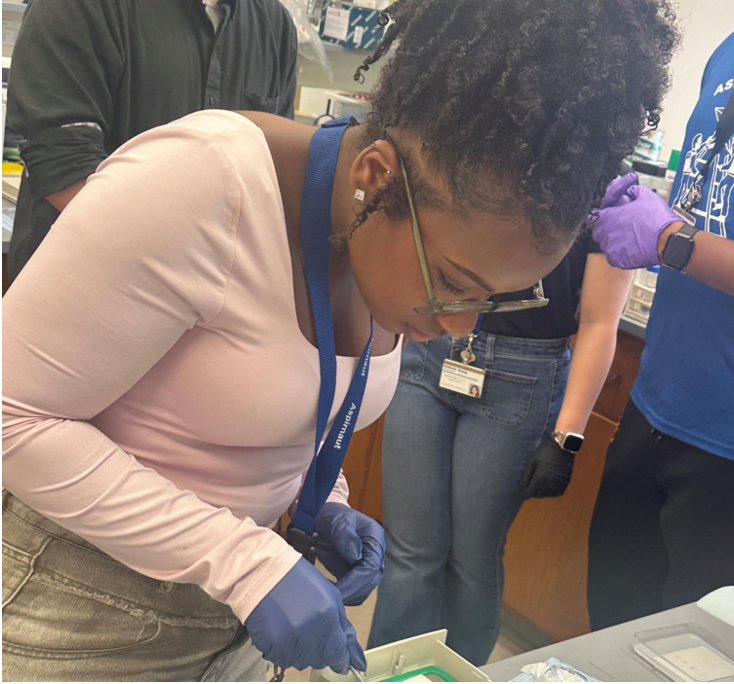
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## Summer Photo Gallery

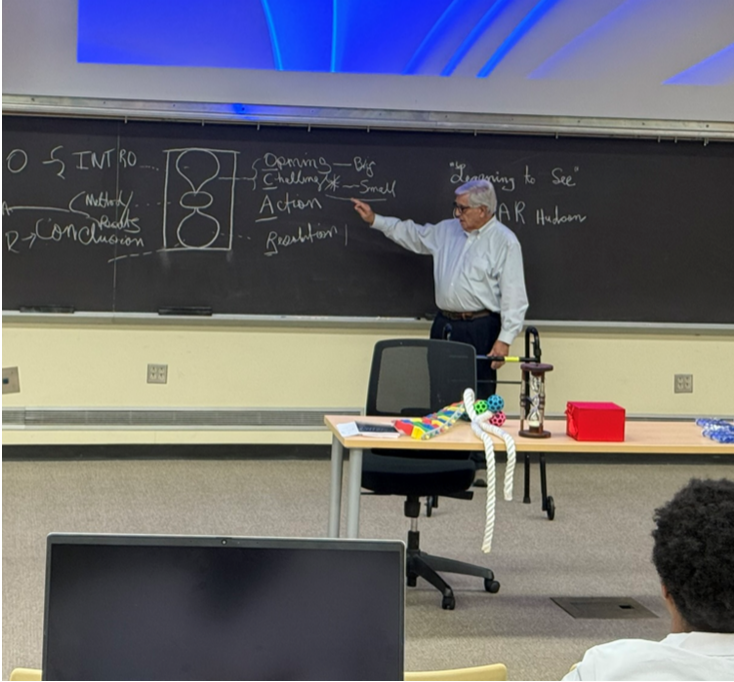
### White Coat Ceremony



**Lab Skills Course (Elena Pokidysheva, Ph.D., and Team)**



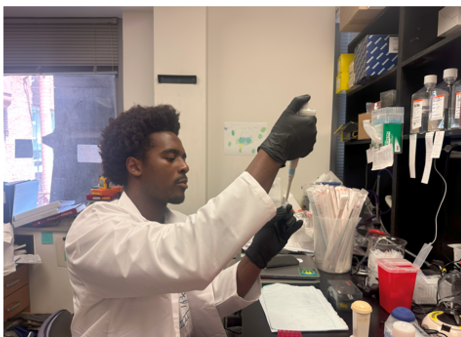
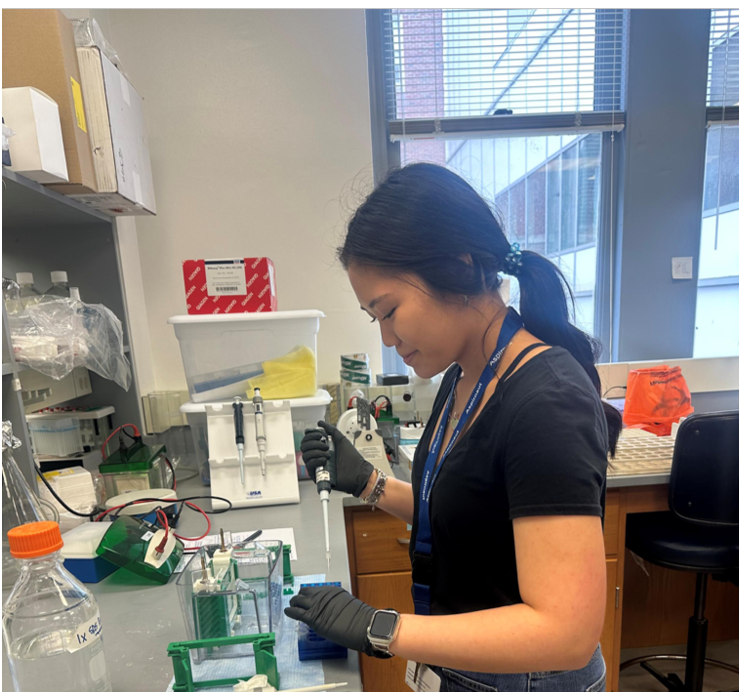
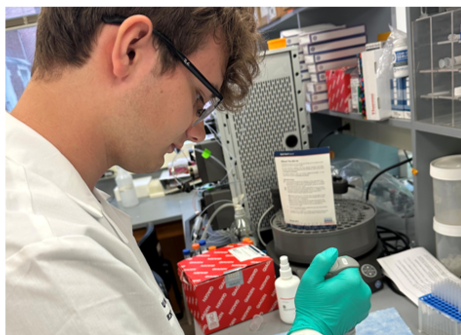
**Science Communication (Susan Allison, Ph.D., Bradley Clarke, Ph.D., Billy Hudson, Ph.D.)**



## Distinguished Speaker Luncheon Series



## In The Lab



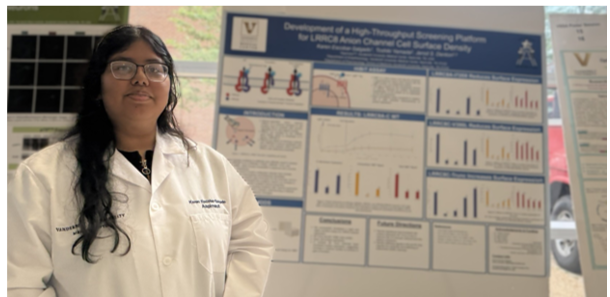
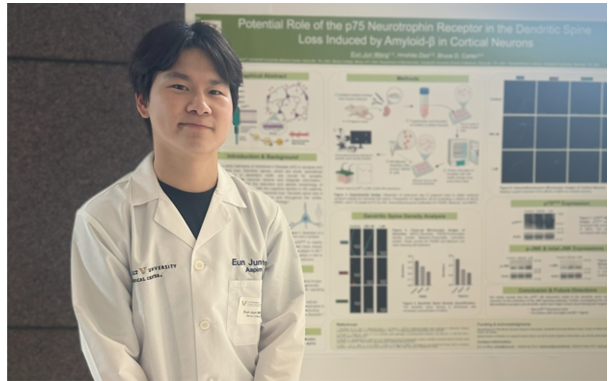
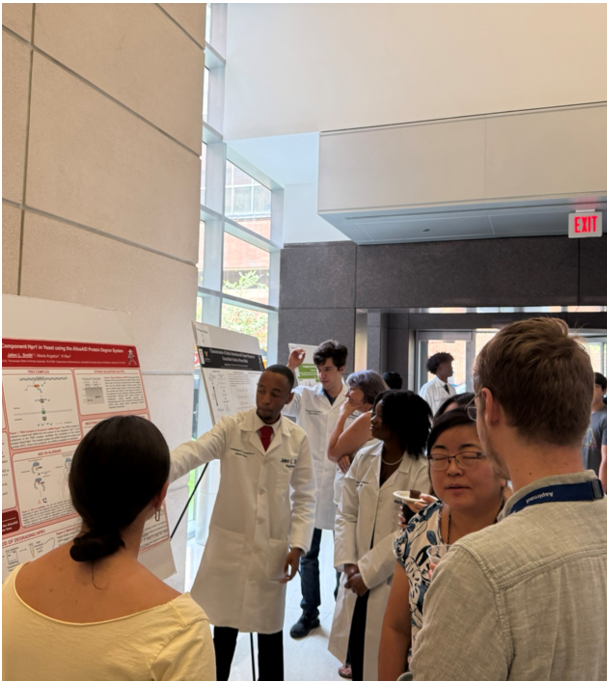
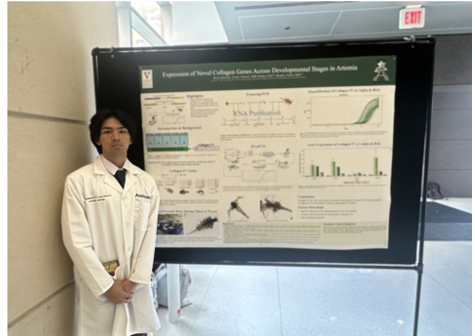
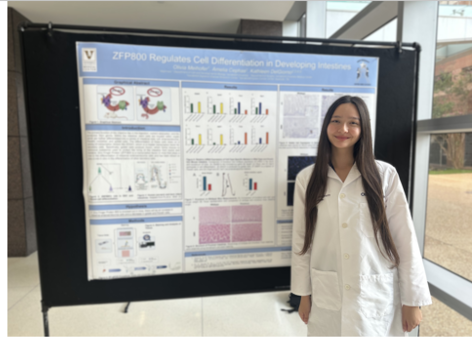
**College Counseling (Cynthia Nash), ACT/SAT Prep (Gary Moss & Team), General Chemistry Prep (Kimberly Hoang) & Organic Chemistry Prep (Eun Jun Wang)**



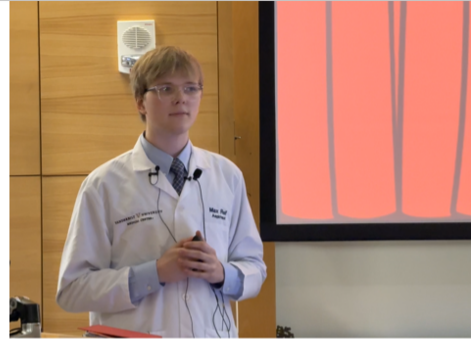
## Wellness & Fitness Training (Rachel Baugh, M.S., OLY, NBC-HWC)



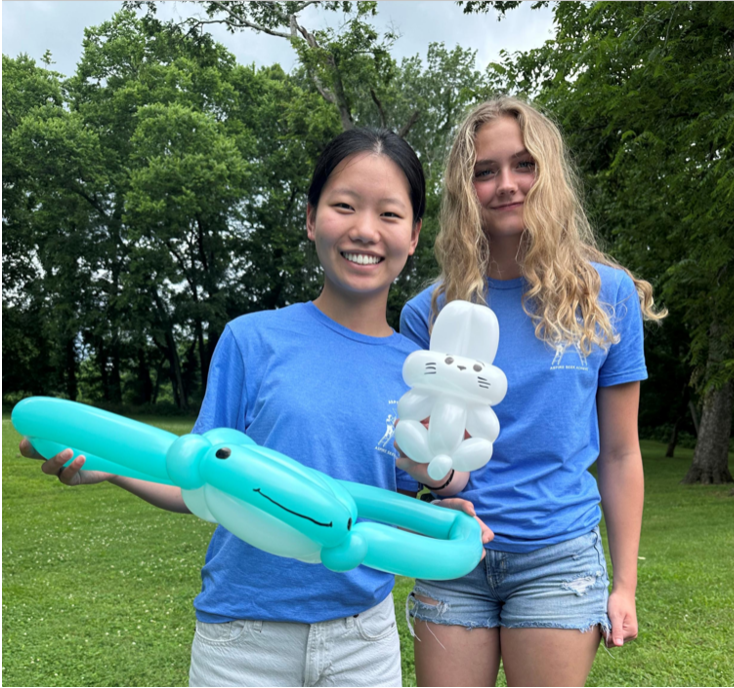
## Poster Presentations



## Oral Presentations



## Nephrology Division Picnic



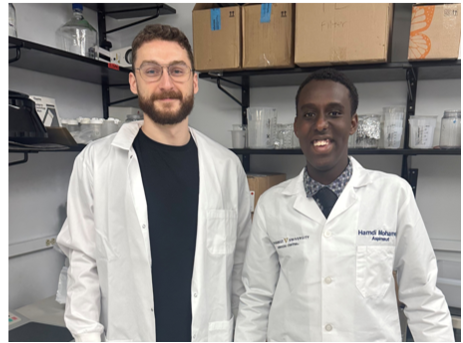
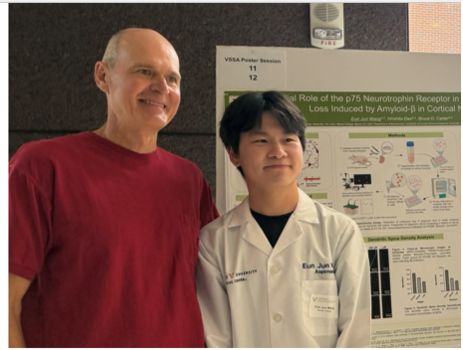
## Juneteenth



## 4th of July Picnic



## Amazing Mentors



## Celebration of Summer Success





## Friends for Life





## Summer Program Impact: In Their Words...

- "Aspirnaut is like a big family, and everyone treats you like a brother or sister...I want to express how deeply I felt like this was a second home."
  - **"Participating in the Aspirnaut Summer Research Internship has significantly enhanced my scientific skills and deepened my passion for research. Personally, it has strengthened my resilience and confidence; professionally, it has provided invaluable mentorship and a clearer vision for my future career in science."**
  - "What makes the Aspirnaut program unique is its holistic approach. Beyond just scientific research, it focuses on personal growth, leadership development, and providing mentorship that supports both academic and life skills. This well-rounded experience helps interns grow not only as researchers but as confident and resilient individuals prepared for future challenges."
  - **"The people are what make this program amazing."**
  - "This program has opened the door to science for me. I learned so much in a few weeks that I might never have been taught in school. Aspirnaut gave me tools to plan my future."
  - **"This is one of the best experiences that I have ever had."**
  - "Aspirnaut has motivated me to work harder and has shown me that I truly love to learn. Aspirnaut has pushed me to be the best version of myself, regardless of those around me and whatever circumstances come my way."
  - **"The Aspirnaut Summer Research Internship not only provided me with a place to conduct biomedical research, but it also allowed me to grow as a collegiate student and has made me a better person. The tools I've taken from Aspirnaut will propel me great distances in life."**
  - "Aspirnaut did a lot for me, and I hope to be able to pay the favor forward for the next generation."
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**DONATE NOW**

If you are interested in getting involved or sponsoring an Aspirnaut™ experience, please contact Rachel Baugh at [rachel.baugh@aspirnaut.org](mailto:rachel.baugh@aspirnaut.org).

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