Upper Year Advice: MS1 Summer Experiences

Fifty-five second, third and fourth year Sidney Kimmel medical students provided information regarding their summer between first and second year. Below are a few statistics that give more information regarding students' decisions as well as their written statements detailing their experience. Some students provide their email and invite you to email them if you have any further questions regarding their summer experience.

What would you categorize your summer experience/work under?

Answered: 55  Skipped: 0

- Research
- Public Health Work
- Global Medicine
- Other (please specify)

Answers to the section titled “Other” include: Innovation, Clinical Experience (5), Leadership/Wilderness Experience, Travel, Anatomy Lab TA, Addiction Medicine/Work/Travel, Got married, Private tutoring, Relax (2)
Those who answered yes listed: Plane Ticket (~$1,000), Program Fees ($800 including room and board), Living Expenses (hostels, food, trains, activities, etc), Misc ($500).

Those who answered yes listed: Foerderer Grant, Stipends ranging from $1,000 to $5,000 (avg ~$3,000). The addiction treatment program provided free transportation and lodging. NOLS - ~$7000 for my specific course (there are MANY courses available).
RESEARCH

“I participated in the National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive, and Kidney Diseases summer research program. I conducted research with the Chief of General Internal Medicine for 8 weeks at the University of Chicago. My project used focus groups to understand baseline knowledge, preferences, and skills related to food, nutrition and living a healthy lifestyle for third through fifth graders in Chicago. I developed the research question, made connections in the community, wrote the IRB, passed the IRB, and moderated the focus groups. In August, I attended the NIDDK summer research symposium at Vanderbilt in Nashville where students in the NIDDK program came from all over the country to present the project they worked on over the summer. I also participated in the Betty Ford Drug and Addiction Medical Student Immersion program for one week. I was immersed into the inpatient setting at Betty Ford and really had a once-in-a-lifetime experience learning about addiction and addiction medicine. The program honestly changed my life (in one week)!! This was one of the most rewarding summers I have experienced. I highly recommend both programs.” - Brooke Scheidemantle (bx036@jefferson.edu)

“I participated in Jefferson’s Dean’s Summer Research Program. I worked in the MFM department at Jeff OB/GYN doing various things: wrote a case report and gave grand rounds, worked on a clinical research project with a fellow, and did lots of fetal echocardiography and general OB/GYN shadowing. The shadowing opportunities were easily the best part of this summer, as I got to go into the OR, L&D, clinical office, and see tons of patients for ultrasounds.” - Whitney Bachow (whitney.bachow@jefferson.edu)

“Deans summer research + orthopedic externship” - Rachel Schneider (Rhs002@jefferson.edu)

“I did the orthopedics externship through the Depalma orthopedics society. Additionally, I did orthopedics research which I set up independently and performed through the Rothman institute. I was nominally a part of the Rothman summer research program but this didn’t really mean anything, as there were no responsibilities or pay associated with participation.” - Eric Secrist (Ess011@jefferson.edu)

“American society of Pediatrics society for pediatric research. I applied and was granted a stipend to spend my summer in any participating lab, ranged from us in
California to Hopkins in Maryland. I chose to do pediatric oncology research at Hopkins in Dr. Robert Arceci’s lab. I did mostly methylation chip analysis with some tissue culture and bench work. Regarding induced pluripotent stem cells of Ewing sarcoma. It was great.” – Michael.barbato@jefferson.edu

“1. Clinical research (patient chart data collection) - Neurosurgery. 2. Take time to travel!”

“I designed a study in the OBGYN department, submitted it for IRB approval at the beginning of the summer, recruited several hundred participants over the course of 6 summer weeks plus the first couple of the school year, and now have all my data and am writing it up to be submitted for meetings and publication. This was rewarding because I studied and made new insights about something I care deeply about (the intersection of health legislation on women’s contraceptive decisions), and I got to shadow and learn more about the profession I am most strongly considering pursuing.” – Julia Durante (Julia.Durante@jefferson.edu)

“I worked in the Division of Population Science in the Medical Oncology department looking at the quality of life in African American breast cancer survivors. The project was through the Summer Research Program. I really enjoyed seeing research projects in various stages of the research process, from finding funding to submitting a paper. I learned a lot about the research process.”

“I worked with Dr & Dr Shields at Wills Eye Hospital. They specialize in cancers of the eye and are world renowned for their research, so it was a great opportunity. The work was approximately one third clinical (shadowing Dr Shields and helping) and two thirds research. The research was partly gathering data from patient charts for large studies, and partly small projects that Dr Shields assigns to each student so they can be first author, usually case studies or review articles. Don’t expect it right away because Dr Shields doesn’t offer a project until you proved yourself by working hard, learning and helping.

“In my year and in previous years, everyone who was in the program got a publication as first author. Even if you think that you aren’t capable of doing it, Dr Shields guides you and advocates to editors for you. Everyone that followed her guidance got published because she is incredibly talented, dedicated to students and respected by editors of Ophthalmology journals. I felt like I learned a ton and I got two publications as first author, as did many others. The hours were approx. 7:15am to 4pm, Mon - Thurs (variable) so only do it if you are really willing to work hard and put the time in to it.” - Yonah Ziemba (yonah.ziemba@jefferson.edu)

“Worked on a research with the Emergency Department and Department of Urban Health (through CWIC-population health) and interviewed 100 ED patients about why they decided to go to the ED, rather than go to their PCP. Wrote a paper and did a few poster presentations. I also got married and went on a honeymoon for 3 weeks total.” - Lev Malevanchik (lxm066@jefferson.edu)
“Department of Family and Community Medicine
- research project with Dr. Mills and Dr. LaNoue
- qualitative research on cardiovascular risk assessment and communication.”

“I did research at UPenn which was funded by the NIDDK. I did research with stem cells and pursuing the possibility of using them as therapy to regenerate cardiac tissue after MI. The program paid for all of the students in the program to go to Nashville at the end of the summer to present our projects.” - Alison Trainor (alison.trainor@jefferson.edu)

“I spent my summer creating a database using Hopkins pediatric obesity data and Johns Hopkins Pediatric Sleep Center sleep studies in order to investigate the relationship between obstructive sleep apnea and obesity in children. I was paid $10.00/hour by the pediatric pulmonary department at Hopkins. I also spent 3 weeks working full-time as a Program Assistant at the Center for Talented Youth that summer. Making money and being able to see my family every day was well worth it.”

“Research at the Philadelphia Hand Center.” - Heather McMahon (Heather.mcmahon@jefferson.edu)

“I participated in the Deans Summer Research program and continued working on a project in the Department of Cardiology under Dr. Mather and Dr. Entwistle.” - Lauren Sharan (las020@jefferson.edu)

“The INBRE summer research program is a NIH-funded research program in Delaware at Christiana Hospital. The program is mostly for undergraduates, but they sometimes take medical students. I worked with some Neonatologists at Christiana and had a fantastic experience. I was able to take charge of and complete a research project, publish a manuscript, and get some great clinical experience in the Neonatal ICU.” - Lisa Strouss (lisa.strouss@jefferson.edu)

“I did the Dean’s research program in anesthesia. It was great! I really liked the doctor and classmates I worked with. I was doing about 30 hours a week, got paid, and still got to relax, spend a week with my family, and go to Sips every week and enjoy my summer. The summer after 1st year is awesome. You can do something, or you can do nothing--you can literally lie on your couch all summer if you want to! (Personally I didn’t choose that because I know I would have gotten bored eventually, but that’s just me.) The most important thing is to SAVOR this break, because the summer after 2nd year is sadly not a break. It’s 5-6 weeks to study for step 1 and then some recovery time before you start 3rd year. So no matter what, enjoy yourself. Don’t pre-read for 2nd year. Don’t think about boards. Don’t stress about the "recommended summer reading" they give you. Just relax, visit your family, spend time with friends, work if you want to, go out, and rest before 2nd year. You deserve it!! Good luck."
“Deans summer research program as a student in the CwIC - CTR curriculum. Worked in the ENT department on multiple projects.” - Doug Adams (dra009@jefferson.edu)

“I did emergency medicine research. Now that I am at the end of med school, my advice to First years would be to take the summer off. Unless you are going into optho, derm or ortho there is no need to do research all summer. 2nd year is the hardest and most important year of medical school so take time off to rest and enjoy the summer.”

“Society for Vascular Surgery research grant.”

“Research- Dean's Program, Neurosurgery Department
- Orthopaedic Externship at Rothman through DePalma Orthopaedic Society at Jeff
- Medical Volunteer at Himalayan Health Exchange- found out from previous Jeff student at lunchtime talk.” - Cory Bovenzi (cory.bovenzi@jefferson.edu)

“I participated in the Dean's Summer Research Program. Specifically, I did research with the OB-GYN Department's Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine. I did not enjoy my experience nor did I find it very stimulating intellectually. I extracted data from patient charts all day long-- the research and analysis portion was secondary to my assisting a fellow with her own work. There was little in the way of mentorship and at times, I felt I would not complete the assignments required by the program. However, I believe this bad experience was specific to my mentor, who is no longer at Jefferson. I tried to speak up to make sure I was more mentally invested, but it did not work. Ultimately, I wish I had looked for a specific mentor or project and secondarily found funding, not the other way around. I was kind of stuck by the time I entered the program; other than the money I earned, which supplemented my rent, there was little redeeming quality in this "research" experience.” - Leah Winer (lkwiner@gmail.com)

“I did research in orthopedic hand surgery and neurosurgery. I worked for the Philadelphia Hand Center under Dr. Taras and Jefferson Neuro Department under Dr. Judy. I was paid via stipend under the deans summer program and worked throughout summer.” - Samuel Spiegel. (sjs016@jefferson.edu)

“I worked for an academic pediatrician (Dr. Chung) in the Pediatrics department over at 833 Chestnut. I basically spent the summer writing my own review article (obviously with Dr. Chung’s guidance) on breastfeeding and maternal drug dependency. Luckily I was qualified for work-study and got paid by the hour. It was essentially a 9-5, 5 days a week job and I had all my nights and weekends free and submitted my paper for publication by the end of the summer. All in all it was a great experience. I should probably mention this is not exactly the norm for most students. It is usually difficult to get funding without being a part of a specific program but for me it just worked out!” - Julie Gallagher (julie.gallagher@jefferson.edu)
“I worked in the research department at the Rothman Institute doing joint replacement research. I had a job there before school, so I was basically working on projects that I had started before school and was working on throughout the year. Rothman does a ton of research so there are always projects and I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in ortho, since it is a specialty that seems to care about field specific research. I also got married, so there is time to do something not medical related.” - Anthony Tokarski (att005@jefferson.edu)

“Spine surgery research at Rothman. Very easy to get a project to do, and often can get some autonomy. Best if you have some experience, as you are expected to get stuff done independently. Working with big name surgeons is worthwhile for the future.” – Andrew (Anf003@jefferson.edu)

“I returned to my old position at the Dept of Defense as Biomedical Engineer in the Traumatic Injury Research Program, which explores the connection between traumatic brain injuries and psychiatric illness in the military population. I had held this position prior at a slightly higher payscale for the 3 years before returning to school. I took on a similar role while also absorbing additional duties compiling public health data on study participants. I cannot thank them enough for allowing me the flexibility to return to my position and the mentorship they provided. I was able to take this work and complete my CWiC summer project as a final presentable.” - Brenna Rosenberg (bmr006@jefferson.edu)

“Research with the Department of Surgery and Rothman Institute, eventually got two papers published. Be proactive.”

“Rothman research in shoulder/elbow division. Resulted in 2nd author pub.” - Garret Sobol (gls002@gmail.com)

GLOBAL HEALTH
“I went to Ecuador with CFHI. It was a great experience that really helped improve my Spanish skills and confidence in speaking with Spanish speaking patients. I highly recommend going abroad!” - moira.black@jefferson.edu

“I worked at a primary care clinic in Cochabamba Bolivia with a pediatrician and a family practice doctor. It was organized through a non profit called Sustainable Bolivia. I also took Spanish classes 6 hours a week with the NGO.” - Bonnie Wong (bonniewong.111@gmail.com)

“Worked in Labor and Delivery at High volume government hospital in Mombasa, Kenya.” - Stephanie Rand (Stephanie.ayn.rand@gmail.com)

“Stayed with Dr. Pablo Ortiz in Costa Rica. Combination of medical Spanish and in-clinic immersion. Info will be available through both my International Medicine
Society talk and my journal which will be shared by the Office of International Affairs on the study abroad website.” - Emily Sluzas (emily.sluzas@jefferson.edu)

“Traveled to Kenya with an organization called Touch Africa. I spent my days in a village called Mutsengo, and worked with Community Health workers. I helped arrange for sessions to help them learn topics that they were interested in - including first aid, agricultural methods, soap making, and brick-making. I also helped organize some events including chigger treatment, vitaminadministration, and deworming for school-children.

I stayed with a host family, and really got to know the people in the area. And the food was delicious! I think what I found most rewarding about my summer was the ability to interact and work closely with the Community Health Workers, toward the goal of improving health in the community.” – Steven Fox (steven.fox@jefferson.edu)

PUBLIC HEALTH
“I did the Bridging the Gaps internship. It was a paid seven week community health internship, where I got to work at a primary care LGBT office in Center City (Mazzoni Center). I got to shadow a transgender intake counselor, several physicians, and several case managers. I also spent my summer looking into why the LGBT population has increased rates of smoking, and I worked with many patients on smoking cessation plans.” - Leor Krichilsky (lrk004@jefferson.edu)

“I worked for the center for urban health at Jefferson researching best practices for diversifying the physician workforce and suggestions for what Jefferson can do about it.” - David Halpern (djh005@jefferson.edu)

“I participated in a program this summer called Bridging the Gaps. The basis of the program is to 'bridge the gaps' between some of the public health issues and the students studying in health professions. Some of the sites we were placed at included homeless shelters, day camps for kids with various learning challenges, senior centers, the Mazzoni Center, and other such organizations. I did not find my site to be very rewarding. I worked at an activity center for older adults that had many programs and activities already established. I would say 99.9% of the seniors were not interested in any if our presentations because they already had other plans to attend. I did thoroughly enjoy the Wednesday lectures and found them to be highly stimulating. The speakers were fantastic and gave talks in subjects such as healthcare, health literacy, adolescent health, treating patients who have suffered from abuse etc.”

“I worked with the Department of Family and Community Medicine on a qualitative analysis of student ideas to improve diversity training at SKMC. It was great to work
with DFCM staff and have support from the Dean's Summer Research Program so I could live in Philly without having to go to school full time.”

“I did the CUPID Summer Fellowship at Johns Hopkins University. This 7 week program is designed as a way for students interested in working with disadvantaged populations to get involved in the field of oncology. I worked in an immunotherapy lab researching the role of perineural invasion in pancreatic cancer. I learned so much from working in the lab, from lab techniques to mechanisms of cancer metastasis to how to present new data and findings. The program also held lunch lectures every day where leaders in the field would speak to us on a variety of topics like cancer health disparities, novel therapies, and cancer pain management. I would highly recommend the CUPID Summer Fellowship to anyone interested in working with disadvantaged populations, who may also be curious about research or the field of oncology.” - Caitlin Callaghan (cjc021@jefferson.edu)

“I conducted my research in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. My project was a retrospective study which focused on quality metrics of CPR following an in-hospital cardiac arrest.” - Danielle Levine (dll007@jefferson.edu)

CLINICAL
“Spent four weeks rotating through various orthopedic surgery specialties, spending time in both the office setting and operating room. Gained experience in evaluating patients with common orthopedic complaints and gave a presentation on the evaluation and management of patellar tendon rupture.”

“I worked in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PMR). I applied and received a stipend through their national organization, but was paired with a mentor at Jefferson. My mentor set up an 8-week schedule for me where I shadowed different physicians in different aspects of the specialty. I did 4-weeks in pediatrics down at DuPont and 4-weeks in adult up here, splitting my time between Jefferson and Magee Rehabilitation Hospital. The hours were quite extensive (7am-5pm most days), but the experience was amazing - basically a 4th year rotation before your 2nd year. I gained SO much knowledge from this experience, met so many amazing physicians in the field, and also had a case report accepted to the national conference next year, to which the program will pay for me to go!!” - Cassie Coleman (cjc019@jefferson.edu)

“I shadowed physicians involved with treating cancer patients across various departments. I went to JeffHOPE once a week and enjoyed summer!” - Andymatts@gmail.com

“Travel - I took advantage of an opportunity for a free trip to central america. I spent 10 days experiencing a new country and new environment (rain forest!). I would categorize this as 'personal growth/having fun.'
Educational Program - I participated in the Summer Institute for Medical Students (SIMS) program at the Betty Ford Center in California. It was a one-week program that provided a $500 flight voucher and a week of lodging at a nearby hotel. The program was an emotional and immersive experience. Time was split between lectures that were aimed at the team of 16 medical students (on topics related to the disease and treatment of addiction) and attending treatment sessions with patients (during which we watched patient-directed lectures or participated in 12-step meetings and small group therapy sessions with the patients). It was a life-changing experience both because of the medically relevant information I learned about addiction (which is a disease that every doctor will see among their patients) and because of the personal reflection I did while attending. I would highly recommend it.

Work - With the remainder of the summer I worked to earn money in a non-medical/science field. I chose to do this with a specific desire to take the summer off from science and as a way to continue developing skills in other areas of interest.” - Nate Graham (ntg003@jefferson.edu)

“I participated in a Reproductive Health Externship through Medical Students for Choice. I chose to complete my externship at the University of Rochester Medical Center.”

“I learned about family planning, including contraception and abortion care, and was able to observe and assist in pregnancy counseling, contraception counseling, and first and second trimester abortion procedures. The experience was incredibly valuable. I appreciated being able to practice taking medical histories, counseling, performing exams, and assisting in the OR as first year student. I also found it eye-opening and rewarding to care for patients with extremely complex social histories who were making emotionally difficult medical decisions. I think the experience would be valuable for a broad range of medical students -- all doctors who care for adult women will have patients who have had an abortion or are seeking abortion and contraception care.” – Allison (ags006@jefferson.edu)

PIONEERED FOUNDATION OF FREE CLinic

“My plans for my summer between MS1 and MS2 were to relax and enjoy the break! I wasn't planning to do anything of great significance because I felt I needed a break.

I went into summer with that in mind, but two days into my break I was approached by a community member from my hometown about an idea I had thrown around during the Winter -- starting a free health clinic! I never thought it would really happen, but it did!

I spent my summer holding community meetings, organizing and applying for tax status, and recruiting volunteers. It was incredible and still gave me plenty of time to rest and relax!
The clinic opened this July. Here’s the website for anyone interested in learning more: [http://www.hopedclinicpike.org](http://www.hopedclinicpike.org) - Valerie Good (valerie.good@jefferson.edu)

**RELAX**
“I was advised to take the summer off and enjoy myself. It was a very good decision! I was told it would not have a negative affect on my residency application.”

“It’s your last free summer. You’re already in medical school. Enjoy it.”

**TRAVEL**
“I spent three weeks backpacking through Europe with my two sisters. We traveled to 8 different countries, experienced all kinds of different foods, saw famous landmarks and architecture, met countless people from different cultures, and had a great time. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for my sisters and I to all be free at the same time to go on this backpacking trek. I had some amazing life experiences and broadened my worldview. After returning from that trip, I visited with family around the US for two weeks, and then I volunteered at the Bhutanese American Organization of Philadelphia for the rest of the summer. I was able to write a CwiC paper and poster about my volunteer work with no problems. I have absolutely no regrets about traveling during my final summer and I think it was a fantastic life experience.” - Sarah Wells (sarah.wells@jefferson.edu)

**OUTSIDE THE BOX**
*Private Tutor*
“I entered into the summer assuming that I’d relax and find a volunteer position to keep busy. I have tutoring experience so I made a profile on universitytutor.com, and I was contacted by a student who needed help with biology and general chemistry in preparation for the MCAT. I tutored him 3 times a week and made $60/hour. I was just busy enough where I didn’t get bored, and I had more than enough time to read, watch TV, and travel. It was everything that I thought it could be. I made about as much as the stipend offered by Bridging the Gaps, and I had so much more freedom and flexibility.

The only drawback here is that finding students is not a sure thing, but if you are ok with the possibility of doing volunteer work if you can’t find other work, then this plan for the summer is the way to go in my opinion.” - Matt Nazarian (matthew.nazarian@jefferson.edu)

*Anatomy Lab TA*
“Great hours and free weekends to travel, it’s not all summer. Avoid staring at a computer all summer.”

*Leadership/Wilderness Experience*
“National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS)(www.NOLS.edu). I went mountaineering - traveling on and off glacier, summiting peaks, etc, - with a group of
15 people for a month in very remote Alaska.” - Lindsay Young
(lindsay.young@jefferson.edu)

Innovation
“I was involved in creating an online learning tool for residents that aims to assess their training as well as compile their medical knowledge in order to create a comprehensive health information website for patients.” - Niko Mouchtouris
(nikolaos.mouchtouris@jefferson.edu)