



## PREP-KC Students Explore Careers as Scientists through KUMC Internships



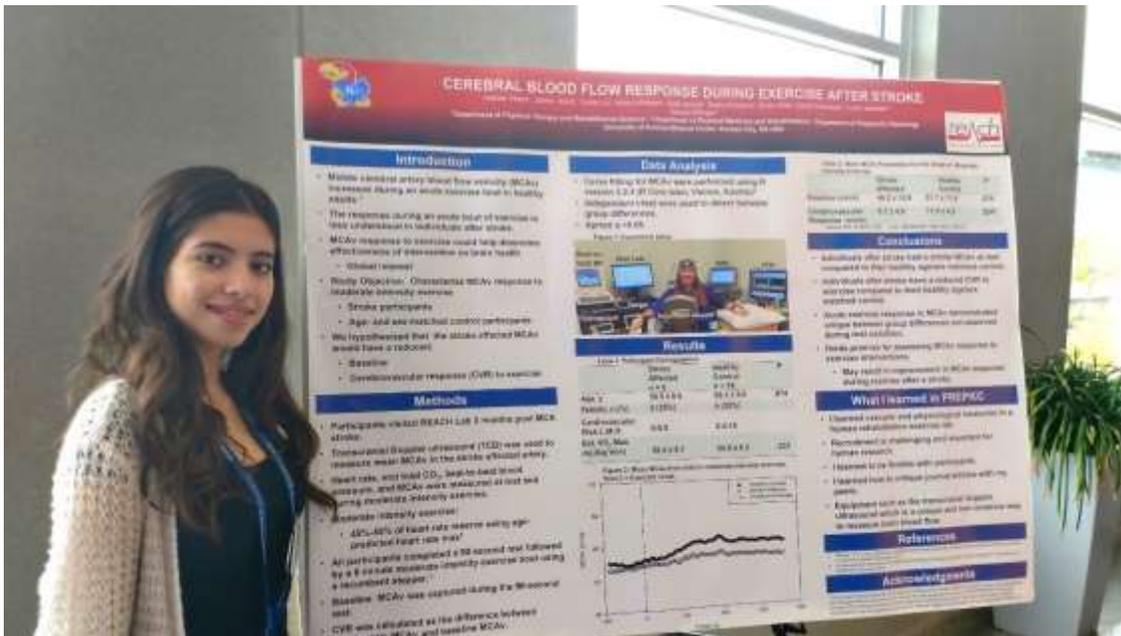
Interns with Dr. Wates (top left) after the end-of-summer reception and poster presentations.

This past summer, with leadership and resources from PREP-KC, ten Kansas City, KS Public Schools high school students spent six weeks at the University of Kansas Medical Center engaged in paid laboratory internships in the Schools of Medicine and Health Professions. The internship experience for summer 2018 was coordinated and managed by Dr. Kellyann Jones-Jamtgaard, PREP- KC's Career Academies Liaison, and Dr. Rebecca Wates, Senior Scientist in the KU Cancer Center. The participants were alumni of the district's Bio+ program co-taught by Ms. Zulma Perez-Estrella and Ms. Angela Consani. Bio+ students earn college credit in biotechnology, biomanufacturing, and cell and molecular biology.

Interns took part in a weekly professional development program learning about lab etiquette, scientific reading and writing, emerging scientific technologies, and a career panel with scientists and clinicians from KUMC, Stowers, and CEVA. At the end of the internship, students presented posters of their research projects.



Pictured from left; Dr. Bruno Hagenbuch, Professor of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics, Shanel Vazquez (senior, JC Harmon HS), Geovany Alvarado (graduate, FL Schlagle HS & freshman, Donnelly College), and Keysy Martinez (graduate, Wyandotte HS & freshman, University of Kansas).

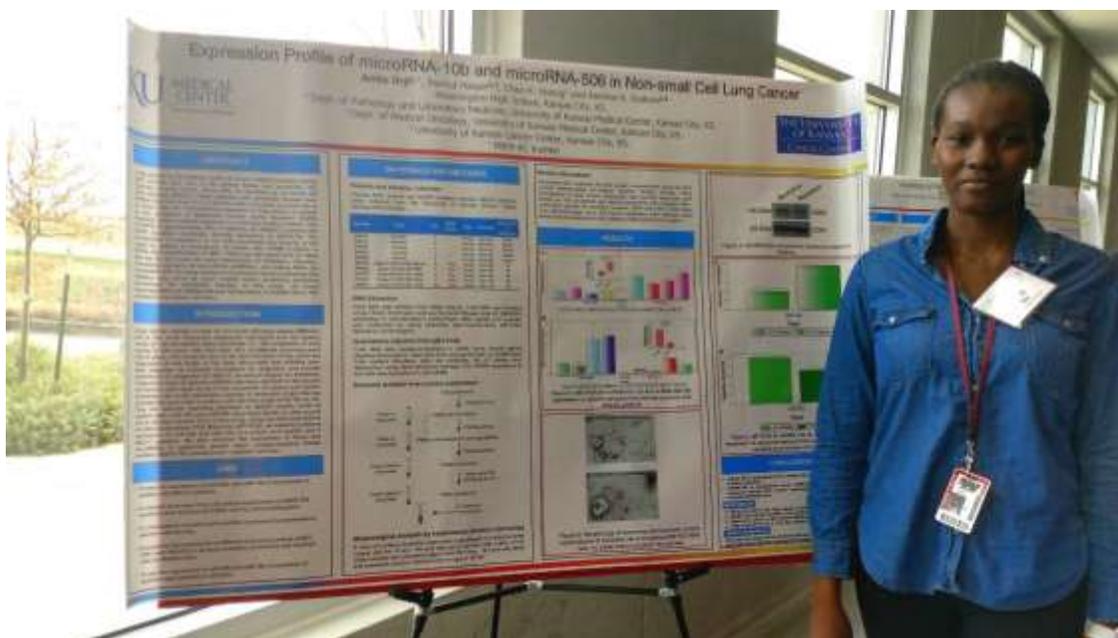


Andrea Villeda (senior, Wyandotte HS) presents her poster during the high school student competition at K-State Olathe's "One Health Day." Andrea was an intern in Dr. Sandra Billinger's lab in the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Sciences.

PREP-KC interns have continued to shine into the fall 2018 academic year:

- Andrea Villeda (senior, Wyandotte HS), Damariz Vazquez (senior, JC Harmon HS), and Anita Orji (senior, Washington HS) presented their research at Kansas State Olathe's "One Health Day." Andrea and Anita won the high school poster competition
- Anita Orji and Cristal Pesina (graduate, Washington HS & current freshman at Avila University) presented their research at KUMC's "Heartland Undergraduate Biochemistry Forum"

### Intern Spotlight: Anita Orji, senior at Washington HS



Anita reflected on her internship experience saying she participated because the lab experience would "help me before going to graduate school and it also made me understand more about what a researcher does." Anita wants to pursue either optometry or an MD/PhD program to become a researcher.

Dr. Inamul Haque, Anita's mentor, said the following about her: "She is a highly intelligent and investigative person. She has exhibited an ability to work independently and sufficiently. Anita's eagerness to learn, scientific curiosity and analytical skills make her a perfect candidate for a highly competitive undergraduate program."

PREP-KC is grateful to support very talented students and provide them tools to help them succeed in the lab and beyond.

*Special thanks to Kansas City, Kansas Community College and KUMC's Kansas Idea Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (K-INBRE) for providing stipends to our interns and to BioNexus for sponsoring weekly lunches and the reception.*

PREP-KC has placed interns at KUMC since 2014 and we are excited to create more internship opportunities! We are grateful to the KUMC Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics for being the first department to open their labs to PREP-KC students.



Dr. Jones-Jamtgaard recently presented PREP-KC's on-going work at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the American Society for Cell Biology in San Diego, CA. Her poster was entitled "PREP-KC's Life Sciences Academy: Preparing Kansas City's students for College and Career Success" and highlighted the market- value assets that PREP-KC offers students in health and science.

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