

May 20, 2016

Nine Students Selected for UTD Summer Research Program

The Plano ISD Board of Trustees recognized several student scholars recently who will participate in the Plano ISD / University of Texas at Dallas Summer Science Research Program. The scholars attended the May 17 school board meeting where they were introduced and shared their areas of science interest. Plano ISD's Karen Shepherd, secondary science coordinator, introduced UTD Professor Dr. Paul Pantano, who invited students to introduce themselves.



2016 UTD Summer Scholars

Pictured above with Dr. Paul Pantano, UTD Professor, and Karen Shepherd, Plano ISD Secondary Science Coordinator, are the following summer scholars: Ira Gulati, Plano West Senior High School; Nisha Rajesh, Plano Senior High School; Rahul Hayaran and Rithvik Ramesh, Plano East Senior High School; Taylor Carson, Plano ISD Academy High School; Kaitlynn Li, Shepton High School; Joanna Martin, Clark High School; Katherine Lei, Vines High School and Ben Randoing, Williams High School.

The Plano ISD / University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) Summer Science Research Program began in June of 2005. More than 75 students submitted applications that first year. This year, there were 100+ applications for the nine coveted spots. Over the years, areas of interest have varied but have included quantum physics, superstring theory, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, nanotechnology and applied neuroscience. UTD research scientists work with students during the summer, setting up a schedule that's manageable for all. Students give up their traditional summer vacation and exchange it for a summer of study and opportunity to live the daily routine of a research scientist. Academic study is an integral part of the program as students must be prepared to enter the laboratory and begin working on research areas with independence and thoughtfulness

Dr. Paul Pantano, a chemistry professor at UT Dallas, has 20 years of summer scholar program experience. This will be his seventh year as the scientific advisor of the PISD/UTD Summer Intern Program. In addition, he's a 20-year resident of Plano, he's graduated two children from Plano East, and he's a winner of a PTA lifetime member award. Dr. Pantano said that the summer scholar internship is one of the most visible programs of the Hi-TECCC Coalition of Collin County, a group whose members include Plano ISD, Collin College and UTD and other companies. "Students are chosen upon their academic records, but most importantly, by their drive and motivation and the recommendation of their science teachers," noted Dr. Pantano. The students live the life of a scientist with summer being the best time for this opportunity, because professors are not teaching as many classes or grading as many papers. Students will be working with million dollar instruments as part of a team. They'll learn from other scholars from other schools. And they obtain college experience.