ACC Young Scholars Mentorship

The Academic Section, in collaboration with Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama Chapters of the American College of Cardiology have partnered together to develop the American College of Cardiology’s Young Scholars program. The goal of this program is to educate the next generation of scientists about science and research in cardiology by giving high school and college students the opportunity to learn more about a career in health science focused on cardiovascular disease, and to introduce high school and college students to the basics of investigational research, affording them the opportunity to work with a mentor on a research project.

The American College of Cardiology’s Young Scholars Program is a 1-year program in which students will be paired with a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology for a dedicated year of mentored research. Each student will work directly with their mentor on a research project most appropriately suited to their level of experience. In addition to one on one mentorship for each accepted student, the program, will include regularly scheduled webinars to allow students to gain additional knowledge about careers in the field of cardiovascular disease, and information related to the basics of research in medicine.

This year, our 1-year program will begin with a virtual kick-off meeting during Annual Meeting weekend, May 15-17, 2021. Students will be paired with an ACC Fellow in Training or early career fellow and begin their journey of exploration. Following the ACC Annual Scientific Sessions each of our students will then be paired with a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology to help mentor them over the ensuing year. Additionally, The Young Scholars Program includes monthly webinars. A rich curriculum has been developed for our monthly webinars. Our webinars will feature sessions outlining the basics of investigational research, discussions about career choices within medicine and lectures on cardiovascular health and diseases.

Expectations of Mentors:

Mentors will guide students on a research project, and serve as a source of support to help the student understand the best way to navigate one’s educational journey to achieve their career goals.

1. Mentors should be an FACC and ideally work in an academic environment
2. Mentors should be willing to work with high school and college students as an advisor/mentor and provide guidance and supervision as needed
3. Mentors should develop a suitable research project for their student to lead, or allow their student an opportunity to be part of an on-going research project.

*Please note that while students are encouraged to work with their mentors on a research project and encouraged to volunteer their time to help with some form of research, this was not delineated as a mandatory requirement to be part of this program. Therefore, it is possible that some students may not be prepared or able to
dedicate time to research. In these situations, we encourage the mentor to create a way in which the student can learn more about research without having to directly commit to a research project.

4. Mentors should provide the student with opportunities for shadowing to allow for direct observations of the clinical world of cardiology.

5. Mentors should meet with students on a regular basis to discuss their education goals, extra-curricular work, and help the students to learn about the various fields of medicine/research and a field of study that is best suited for them. Meetings should occur about 4 times a year, ideally in-person, but given the pandemic, phone calls or facetime meetings are also acceptable forms of communication when necessary.

6. Mentors should be available for informal communication/troubleshooting when needed through additional phone calls or email correspondence.

7. We welcome any comments or suggestions to the structure of the mentorship program.