

# SORF Annual Journal

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## From our Graduates:

Anthony Tran graduated from Jefferson Medical College and attended the SORF program in 2013. Here is what he has to say about the program:

After finishing a grueling first year of medical school, where I spent far too much time with rote memorization, I landed an opportunity to participate in the Summer Oncology Research Fellowship (**SORF**) Program. I chose Dr. Epstein's lab, to study medulloblastoma and pediatric brain tumors. I actively participated in experimental design, experimental execution and troubleshooting and my efforts resulted in a co-authored publication with Dr. Epstein. This was almost 10 years ago.

I have since taken time to participate in research projects in different labs. I am now finishing up my last year of residency at the combined Columbia University Irving Medical Center & Weill Cornell Medical Center program in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation and will be starting a fellowship in Pain Medicine at MD Anderson Cancer Center (August 2022). I aim to incorporate research into my career as an interventional cancer pain and cancer rehabilitation physician. SORF has certainly made a valuable contribution to my development.



# Updates from the SORF Director

Welcome to our very first SORF Annual Newsletter!

The goal of this annual newsletter is to help connect SORFites to each other and maintain a SORF network. Please contribute by sending us musings, ideas and updates on your successes and whereabouts: highlights will be included in the newsletters.

Our USC/CHLA Summer Oncology Research Fellowship (**SORF**) Program has been continually active since it was founded in the late 1970's. We have had 357 SORFites to date.

SORF goal is to help medical students with an aptitude for scientific research succeed in their quest to become physician-scientists. We (Children's Hospital Los Angeles and the Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Southern California) are recipients of a prestigious R25 award from the National Cancer Institute to run this program for medical students interested in oncology research. Another important source of funding for SORF are philanthropic donors. Together with institutional support, these make SORF possible.

In 2020, with the beginning of the COVID pandemic we temporarily converted SORF to a Remote Format. For 2021 things were still uncertain and we therefore planned a Hybrid (remote and on site) program and accepted 20 top students (see sidebar and photos).

New areas of research in 2021 were bioinformatics research, computations biology, preventive medicine, in addition to laboratory research and clinical research. Overall, the summer was very busy, and students worked hard and well. We hope to be back in person in summer 2022.

Have a great year, and we hope to hear from you!

Anat Epstein



# 2021 SORF Updates

Twenty amazing SORFites participated SORF 2021. Continued COVID limitations necessitated a hybrid Remote/On site (Keck/USC/Norris and Children's Hospital Los Angeles) combination. Seminars, meetings and workshops were by WebEx. For those in the Los Angeles area, we even had a few fun in-person outside mini-events that included **"Pizza in the Park"** in Griffith Park, and **"Picnic at Pickwick"** in Dr. Epstein's back yard.



Picnic at Pickwick



Pizza In the Park

The culmination of the summer was a WebEx presentation by SORF students of their research projects to faculty and trainees of the Division of Hematology-Oncology at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, other SORFites, SORF mentors, their lab/group members, donors and other faculty. There were close to 100 participants in these virtual presentations! They all did amazingly well, and the audience engaged them with insightful questions.

A new aspect of the program is that we can continue support for students who wish to continue their mentored projects remotely during the school year. This will help bring the projects to completion. The output will be included in next year's newsletter.

## Class of 2021

### Manal Ahmidouch

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill  
School of Medicine

### Alec Allee-Munoz

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Sai Batchu

Cooper Medical School of Rowan  
University

### Danae Bowen

University of California, Riverside School  
of Medicine

### Brannon Cha

UC San Diego School of Medicine

### Ryan Cooper

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Emma Gong

New York Medical College

### Holly Huang

David Geffen School of Medicine at  
UCLA

### Yunjoo Hwang

Eastern Virginia Medical School

### Marjorie Jones

University of South Alabama College of  
Medicine

### Charlotte Kwok

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Jonathan Lee

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Jihoon Lim

University of Central Florida College of  
Medicine

### Shale Mack

Sidney Kimmel Medical College at  
Thomas Jefferson University

### Aaron Oh

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

### L. Nate Overholtzer

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Sonal Sharda

University of Massachusetts Medical  
School

### Victoria Sun

California Health Sciences University

### Cole Urnes

Keck School of Medicine of USC

### Maximilian Wengyn

University of Miami Miller School of  
Medicine

Please help spread the SORF word to promising future physician-scientists  
<https://www.chla.org/fellowship/summer-oncology-research-fellowship>

## Upcoming Events

- **SORF 2022 Application:** *spread the word to potential applicants!*

Application period for summer 2022 begins November 1, 2021.

Last day to apply for early admission is December 13, 2021.

Last day to apply for regular admission is January 10, 2022.

<https://www.chla.org/fellowship/summer-oncology-research-fellowship>

Download SORF flyer [here](#)