

## Med school at first glance

Though you can't know exactly what medical school is like until you're a med student, a weeklong immersion will give you a pretty good idea. This past summer, once again, more than 50 hand-picked high-schoolers from across Florida got to be med students for a week in the College of Medicine's SSTRIDE Summer Institute. The program was demanding, but all who filled out evaluation sheets said it helped them prepare for college.

SSTRIDE (Science Students Together Reaching Instructional Diversity and Excellence) seeks to introduce underrepresented minorities to the possibility of a career in medicine. Summer Institute participants were chosen from schools near the College of Medicine's regional campuses and rural training sites.

For five days, they took blood pressures, visited rural health centers, spoke with people their grandparents' age ("seasoned citizens," one student called them), explored the latest in technology, absorbed many lectures and generally soaked up information. Afterward, organizers asked for their

frank appraisals of everything. For some participants, it was life-changing.

"I definitely see the hard work and determination needed to become a physician," one student wrote, "but I found out mostly that medical students are just normal people trying to do good for the world. (At least the ones I met at FSU.)"

"I think becoming a physician would be amazing," another wrote. "I've really enjoyed this past week and I would do it all over again in a heartbeat."

From another student: "It opened my eyes to a new experience and helped me decide my career."

According to the evaluations, the most popular activities were visiting the anatomy lab, exploring the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center, and shadowing physicians.

"This was probably the best experience of the whole week!" one participant said after shadowing. "It gave me an eye-opening and inside look into the jobs and tasks of doctors. It was something I wouldn't be able to do anywhere else."



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