

2014 Mid-summer Student Evaluation Summary

On Thursday, July 10 during the **CaRES Career Development Seminar**, **CaRES** Evaluation Director Dr. C. Michael Brooks administered a two-page questionnaire with 8 open-ended questions designed to find out what was going well, and what was not going well, with the ongoing **CaRES** internships. N=43 of 44 (98%) of students responded. Students were invited to schedule an appointment with the Evaluation Director if they wished to discuss any matters behind closed doors.

When asked about the aspects of their **CaRES** internships that they liked most, the most frequent answer was the helpful and supportive nature of the preceptors, mentioned by about 1/3 of respondents. Mentioned second was the interesting nature of the research and the opportunity to gain research experience. The flexibility of work schedules and a pleasant work environment that fostered teamwork and collaboration was noted by several students. A few students stated that the opportunity to co-author publications was their primary source of satisfaction, while other sources of satisfaction mentioned were learning laboratory techniques, learning to analyze data, the opportunity to apply classroom material to a research project, and the chance to improve their research credentials.

Regarding what the respondents liked least about their **CaRES** internships, responses were varied and tended to correspond to specific projects. The most common response (by only six students) was that they were called upon to do data entry, coding, chart reviews, or other tedious paperwork that they did not expect to do. Mentioned second was that the summer was too short for completion of their projects. A few others mentioned dissatisfaction with the slow progress of their research, delays in completing experiments, or setbacks experienced when data were lost. Most students recognized all of these sources of dissatisfaction as natural aspects of the research process. Other concerns stated by one or two students each were limited resources to finish their projects, dealing with impolite patients, the need to work with animals, and having a research plan that seemed a little vague and unstructured.

Forty-two of 43 respondents (98%) stated that their expectations had indeed been met by the **CaRES** program. The student whose expectations had not been met expressed disappointment that the project he / she ended up doing had not been described accurately on the **CaRES** website. This student did not request a meeting with the **CaRES** Evaluation Director for discussion of this concern.

When asked to describe the most important anticipated outcome of participation in the **CaRES** program, the most common answer was the research experience that they gained and their enhanced understanding of how research projects are begun and brought to completion. Mentioned next was the guidance afforded them in the preparation of posters and manuscripts, and the opportunity extended to them to be co-authors. The most important outcomes for a few respondents were the discovery that teamwork is essential for quality research, and the realization that all collaborators should help one another as their background and skills allow. Two students stated their appreciation of the translational nature of their research projects that link the bench to the bedside. A few students stated that they intentionally chose to do **CaRES** projects outside their "comfort zone" and were glad that they did, as they now have a better appreciation of research methods outside their main areas of research interest.

None of the respondents requested a personal interview with the **CaRES** Evaluation Director, and none expressed extreme dissatisfaction that could trigger an immediate transfer to another **CaRES** internship. Several students extended their appreciation to the **CaRES** faculty, staff, and preceptors for their efforts.