

# Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center Training Navigator Newsletter

## August 2024 Newsletter Volume 7

Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer  
Center National Cancer Institute  
(NCI) Training Navigator Program  
Administrative Supplement

Have a question about a  
cancer education or career  
opportunity at UNMC?  
Email Misty Pocwierz-Gaines  
at [misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu](mailto:misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu)



Misty Pocwierz-Gaines, MA,  
Lead Training Navigator,  
UNMC

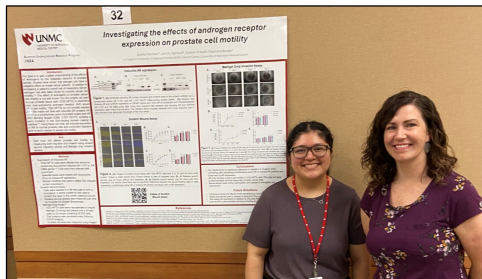


Erin Higgins  
Assistant Training Navigator

## Happy 2024-2025 Academic Year!

This month we are excited to highlight two great opportunities for undergraduate students. The first is the Eppley Institute Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) at the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and the second is the Cancer Research Interns Summer Program at the NCI.

## UNMC Eppley Institute SURP

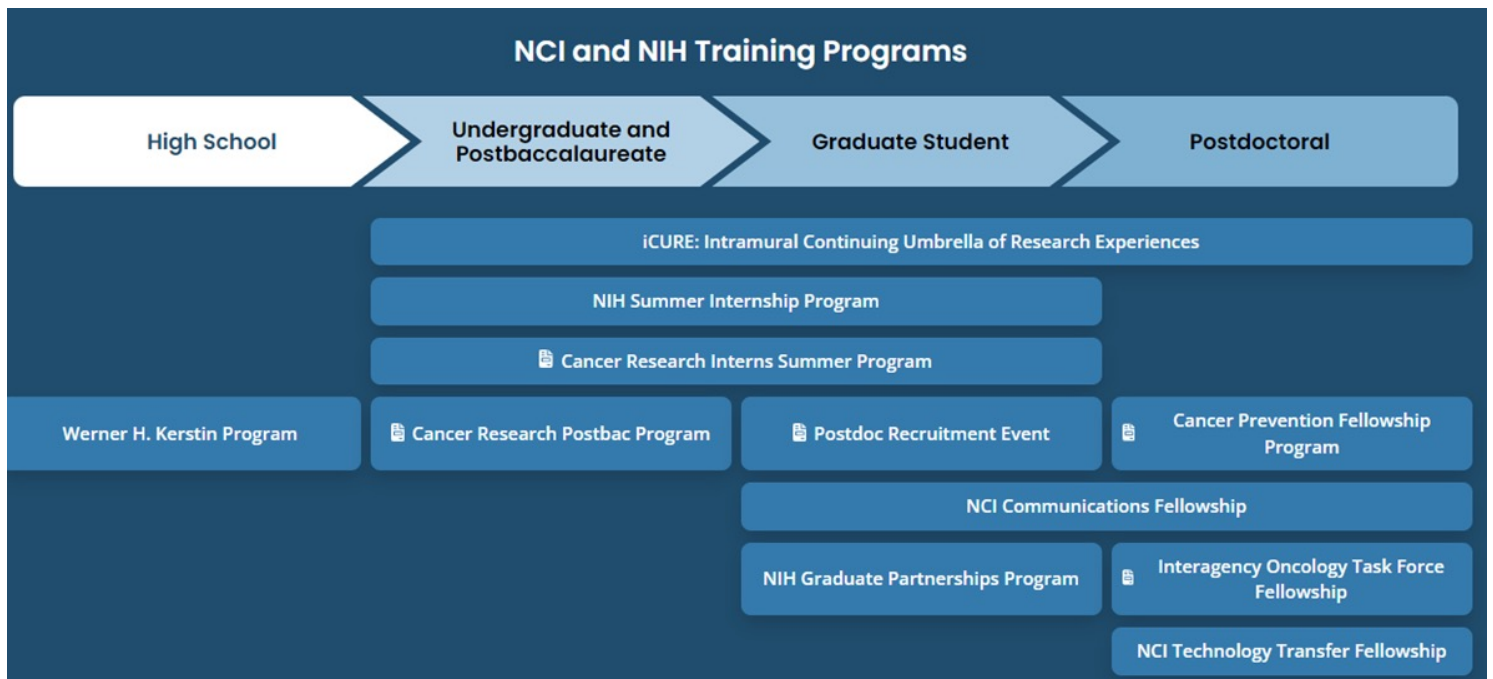


This program offers hands-on cancer research experience in labs. All SURP

students work with a graduate student mentor, a faculty mentor and a staff mentor to support them. Cancer Research graduate students host a weekly cancer biology basics workshop for undergraduate students. Eppley SURP scholars receive a stipend, and additional support is available for qualified students. Learn more at:

<https://www.unmc.edu/eppley/education/undergraduate-research.html>

# Opportunities at the National Cancer Institute (NCI) & Other Areas in the National Institutes of Health (NIH)



## Cancer Research Interns Summer Program (CRI SP)

Summer internships at the NIH provide an opportunity to spend up to 12 weeks working in a place devoted exclusively to biomedical research. Selected interns typically begin at the end of May and stay through the end of August. Interns receive a monthly stipend that is based on education level and experience.

The CRI SP serves to provide a research opportunity to those with limited or no previous research experience. CRI SP will also provide travel support for students who meet the financial eligibility criteria.

More information can be found on:

<https://trainatnci.cancer.gov/programs/cri-sp/>

# For Students Who Will Be Finishing Their Undergraduate Degrees This Year, NCI Has Postbaccalaureate Opportunities



## AT A GLANCE

### Submission Period

Fall 2024

### Expectation

Conduct research at the National Cancer Institute

### Eligibility

Postbaccalaureate (including post-master's) individuals, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows

### Diversity

iCURE encourages applications from individuals from diverse backgrounds.

## WHAT IS THE ICURE PROGRAM?

iCURE recruits cohorts of students and scientists from diverse backgrounds into the multidisciplinary environment of NCI and supports their mentored research experiences.

iCURE aims to enhance the diversity of the NCI intramural research workforce and is particularly interested in encouraging applications from individuals who are from diverse backgrounds, including those who are from groups underrepresented in the cancer research workforce, for example those from the groups noted in the Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity ([NOT-OD-20-031](#)).

iCURE is an extension of the NCI Center to Reduce Cancer Health Disparities' (CRCHD's) highly successful extramural Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE) training program. CURE supports the career progress of its scholars toward research independence and fosters diversity in the biomedical research pipeline.

## WHAT DOES ICURE OFFER?

The iCURE program provides:

- » **Two-year awards** for postbaccalaureate (including post-master's) individuals
- » **Two-year awards** for graduate students
- » **Three-year awards** for postdoctoral fellows

iCURE scholars will also enjoy professional and career support, such as:

- » Opportunities to work closely with world-class researchers at NCI
- » Support from NCI program staff as well as resources on intramural and extramural funding opportunities
- » Professional and career development activities
- » Connections to an extensive mentoring network



## WHERE DO I LEARN MORE?

For more information about iCURE, eligibility, and how to apply, please visit

<https://www.cancer.gov/about-nci/organization/crchd/diversity-training/icure>



# NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE

# Training Navigator Scholar Spotlight



Valerie (Val) Fousek-Schuller is a Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center (FPBCC) Training Navigator Scholar whose work is centered on replication protein A (RPA), which is the most abundant single-stranded DNA binding protein in eukaryotes. Valerie shares that “RPA is very important to complete homologous recombination (HR), also known as DNA repair, especially in cells that are BRCA deficient.” It is known that “RPA completes a single-stranded DNA (ssDNA) handoff when hyperphosphorylated, but there is little research to structurally or biophysically understand phosphorylation of RPA.” Valerie’s research focuses on phosphomimetic mutants of RPA to determine where ssDNA interacts with various domains of RPA, how RPA interacts with RAD52, which is another protein involved in HR, and determining secondary structure of RPA and the mutants.”

In her time doing this research, Valerie has found the Training Navigator program to be especially helpful in finding and funding workshops that have aided her in her data analysis and presentation skills including a bioinformatics workshop. She told us that these “really opened her eyes to help understand different methods to analyze and present her data.” Valerie is currently keeping her career options open, but she thinks her next steps likely involve a postdoctoral position and starting a company doing research or project management. In the end, Valerie’s goal is to become a scientific editor for a journal. We’re excited to see Valerie use her talents, knowledge, and interests to move forward into a career that’s great for her.



**Fred and Pamela Buffett  
Cancer Center**



**Contact Information:**

**Misty Pocwierz-Gaines**  
Lead Training Navigator  
402-559-4092

[misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu](mailto:misty.pocwierz@unmc.edu)

**Erin Higgins**  
Assistant Training  
Navigator 402-559-7812  
[erihiggins@unmc.edu](mailto:erihiggins@unmc.edu)

**Joyce Solheim**  
Project Leader  
402-559-4539  
[jsolheim@unmc.edu](mailto:jsolheim@unmc.edu)

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# Training Navigator Scholar Spotlight



Dylan Jochum, an FPBCC Training Navigator Scholar, conducts research in which he strives to understand the mechanistic landscape of lymphomagenesis for a subtype of peripheral T-cell lymphoma known as PTCL-GATA3. This multi-pronged approach is uncovering

pathways and interactions contributing to the development and progression of this lymphoma subtype with hope for potential therapeutic targets.

Dylan shares that his experiences with the Training Navigator Program have unlocked new career possibilities and given him a well-rounded perspective that will be invaluable in the future. As he moves forward, Dylan sees himself continuing to contribute to cancer research within academia or industry. He is committed to the advancement of our understanding of cancer and aiding in the development of new therapies that could make a real difference. We're excited for Dylan to achieve his goals as he progresses in his career.

