Summer Program Virtually Connects Future Scientists

As soon as high schooler Bernice Owusu completed the ACS Project SEED program last summer, she could hardly wait to apply again for 2020. “Unforgettable and life changing,” is how she described that experience, which involved studying the morphology and optics of soot particles in the lab of Alexei Khalizov, New Jersey Institute of Technology associate professor of chemistry and environmental science.

She was initially disappointed when she discovered that it would be impossible for her to return to the lab this past summer due to COVID-19. But when she learned that ACS had found a way to continue to offer the program in the face of the pandemic, she eagerly applied.

In lieu of the traditional program—which provides paid, laboratory research experiences and mentoring to economically disadvantaged high school students—ACS hosted a four-week virtual summer camp. The program aimed to help students understand and communicate chemistry research while building critical lab safety, professional development and college-readiness skills. Participants received a small stipend and a
Ready to start planning your future? Return the enclosed reply card to request *Your Personal Planning Road Map*. This helpful resource walks you through the process and shows you the people you’ll need on your team.

*Through Project SEED, Owusu (right) conducted research with New Jersey Institute of Technology scientists in 2019 and participated in this summer’s virtual program (left).*

Your support ensures we can continue to provide programs like these. Contact Mary Bet Dobson at (202) 872-4094 or m_dobson@acs.org to learn how you can make an impact for budding scientists like Bernice.
Chromebook to engage in webinars, virtual panels and writing and research assignments—all led by paid graduate and undergraduate student mentors as well as ACS volunteers.

The virtual program yielded its own powerful benefits. “Students were exposed to many different scientific fields through inspiring presentations delivered by a diverse group of scientists who looked like them, came from similar socioeconomic backgrounds and overcame challenges to establish successful careers,” says Natalia Miller, a Princeton University chemical and biological engineering undergrad who served as Bernice’s “cabin leader” and mentor.

“These presentations gave me a clearer vision of my future and solidified my decision to pursue a career in science,” says Bernice, who aspires to earn a PhD in biochemistry.

In the wake of school closures and social distancing measures, Bernice and other SEED participants cherished their virtual interactions with the 300 scientifically curious students from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico who took part in the summer program. For many, these connections will provide the foundation for building professional networks.

“My second summer in the Project SEED program—like my first—is an experience that I will always treasure,” Bernice says. “Coming from a low-income family and having this big dream of becoming a scientist is kind of scary sometimes. But Project SEED helps you to see that it’s possible. Interacting with other scientists—whether virtually or in person—gives you that assurance that you can do it. Project SEED helps you to uncover your hidden potential and develop skills that are not just essential for a career in science, but for everything you face for your entire life.”
Writing Your Will: Easier Than You Think

Have you put off creating your will because it seems too overwhelming? It may be easier and less time-consuming than you think.

First, contact an estate planning attorney. These legal specialists are experts in will planning. They understand how your decisions affect your estate and can guide you toward a path that will best meet your goals.

• What Are Your Goals?
In the beginning, expect to answer a lot of questions regarding your goals for your estate. For example: How do you want to provide for minor children? Do you want to give back to your community?

• Assets and Liabilities
Discussing your assets and liabilities, as well as how they are titled, will help your attorney determine whether your current situation aligns with your estate goals.

• Additional Considerations
You’ll discuss guardianship for minor children, an executor for your estate, medical considerations and other important issues.

• Next Steps
Assuming the meeting goes as planned, at this point your attorney should have a good feel for your estate and be ready to draft your will. Once a draft is complete and agreed upon, you’ll meet again to execute the will.*

*More complex estates or living trusts may require additional meetings and documentation.