

**Pritzker program hopes to spark interest in medicine among high school students**

**SNEAK PREVIEW**

**H**oping to spark interest in medical careers, the University of Chicago next month will open the doors of its Pritzker School of Medicine to allow up to 200 local high school students to explore and discover the world of medicine and research.

Known as Mini-Medical School and Biomedical Research Day, the program will offer students a window into the world of medical school and careers in science through interactive anatomy exploration, mentoring sessions with Pritzker faculty, students and staff as well as lectures presented by nationally renowned faculty members.

Rosita Ragin, Pritzker's assistant dean for multicultural and student affairs, says the event, scheduled for Feb. 21, will feature a series of workshops focusing on the cardiovascular system, including interactive lessons on listening to heart sounds, taking and reading blood pressure numbers and examining cardiology images such as EKG and CT scans.

Students also will have an opportunity to dissect a sheep heart and learn about the necessary steps to succeed on a path to medical school.

"We'll be able to give a great deal of support and a broad perspective in this one-day overview," Ragin said. "We hope we might ignite the science interest in some of them, maybe to the point of considering becoming a scientist or physician-scientist."

The program is part of Science Chicago, a collaborative, year-long initiative that brings together more

than 80 of the area's leading academic, scientific, corporate and non-profit institutions to host programs that provide hands-on learning in science and math.

Efforts like this are essential to fill a growing need for American physicians. By 2020, there will be a projected shortage of 55,000 to 191,000 physicians, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"We believe that through programs like this we will engage a larger number of students to at least look at the medical profession and get a window into what the day of a physician is like," Ragin says. "It's very important because many high school students aren't thinking about it."

While the program is designed to be fun and interactive, it will also offer students firsthand insight from current Pritzker medical scholars about the often-unforgiving demands of medical school.

By providing students a hands-on, in-depth look at careers in medicine and research, the university hopes to ignite a passion for science that may have otherwise gone unrealized.

"If you can get a young person to connect with their skills, they're going to pick a career that is not going to be just work for them, but something that they truly enjoy," she said.

— Jason Lee, Tribune Media Services



For more information or to register, call (773) 702-8946 or visit [pritzker.bsd.uchicago.edu](http://pritzker.bsd.uchicago.edu).

**U of C Research Day**

**What:** Mini-Medical School and Biomedical Research Day

**Where:** University of Chicago, School of Medicine

**When:** 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 21

**Highlights**

- Free admission
- Hands-on exploration with University of Chicago scientists, doctors and medical students
- Small group sessions highlighting skills required for completing high school, undergraduate work and strategies for succeeding as a medical student and physician-scientist
- Social and mentoring opportunities with Pritzker faculty, students and staff

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