



## Special Edition Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 16-1  
Summer 2019

# Summer Bridge 2019

### Eagle STEM Summer Bridge Program Highlights

by Amanda Cavin

#### Special points of interest:

- Students comments about Summer Bridge

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Summer Bridge Experiences	
Mentor's Comments	1
Faculty Comments	2
Students Comments	3
Lab Experiences	5
Rope Course	6
Social Activities	7

**M**y name is Amanda Cavin and I am honored to be serving as the Director of the Eagle STEM Scholars Program. I am a Winthrop alumna, earning a BS in 2015 and two Meds in 2017. I am excited to use my skills to strengthen an already solid program. That being said, I know I have a lot to learn and look forward to working with many of you to move this program forward. Faculty, staff, students, and friends, please come by the office and introduce yourselves. I look forward to meeting all of you!

The fifth Winthrop Eagle STEM Scholars Summer Bridge Program to transition high school students to college began June 17 and ended July 26. Eighteen students participated in academic and team building activities for approximately six weeks. All graduated from high schools or home schools in South Carolina except for three who

graduated from high schools in Georgia, Minnesota, and Michigan. There are eight each of Biology and Chemistry, and two Computer Science majors.

We had four peer mentors this summer: Kenny Butler, a sophomore chemistry major; Sam Fant, a junior biology major; Brandon Jackson, a junior business major; and Douglas Johnson, a former Eagle Stem Scholar who is beginning medical school at USF. The comprehensive program included chemistry and math classes (6 credit hours to be applied to the 14 hours of math and science credits required for the state scholarship enhancement), laboratory safety and techniques training, shadowing in SURE labs, workshops, speakers, and peer instruction. Student progress meetings to discuss grades, con-

See **HIGHLIGHTS** page 10

### What did the Mentors Think About Summer Bridge?

**S**amariya 'Sam' Fant - "I think that the Summer Bridge Program is an awesome opportunity for incoming freshman to obtain experience and get a head start for college. I enjoyed mentoring students this summer, helping them become more prepared for college life and forming relationships with each individual scholar. Scholars had

the opportunity to gain lab experience, build friendships and learn more about campus life. The highlight of this program for me



See **MENTORS** page 5

## Faculty's Comments on the Summer Bridge Program



Harris

Doctor Cliff Harris - "This past summer, we had yet another successful summer bridge program! 18 students from all different regions and walks of life came together as a cohort for 6 challenging weeks. Despite the intensity of the program, the students showed remarkable resolve and maturity, and responded well to the challenges set before them. As the professor for the introductory chemistry course, I was very impressed with the academic and professional growth that I witnessed in such a short span of time, and the ability of the students to adapt to the rigor of a collegiate STEM course. I could sense a general excitement about learning from this group, and an even greater level excitement for what the future holds. Through some of the extracurricular cohort-building activities like the Mint museum tour and the "escape room", as well as the various community service projects, the students were able build strong rapport. I was very impressed by the incredible level of admiration, respect and togetherness amongst this cohort; I can honestly say that they are the most cohesive group we've had. It also appears that the research talks and rotations had a profound impact. Many of our scholars are already interested in undergraduate research opportunities, and are looking to begin building their resumes for graduate and professional school, even at this early stage of their academic careers. I'm looking very forward to helping these scholars reach the next level." ■

Doctor Thomas Polaski - "I had the privilege of teaching a section of MATH 101H (Algebra and Trigonometry for Calculus) in the 2019 summer bridge program. I had never worked in the program before and was happy to have this opportunity. Our class reviewed algebra and lots of trigonometry. The mathematical goal of this class was to better prepare students for calculus and other STEM courses. An equally important goal was to expose students to the internal discipline needed to succeed as a college student while providing plenty of help as they begin this adjustment. The daily practice in MATH 101H included online homework assignments and in-class quizzes. The students were a joy to teach - very inquisitive, friendly, and willing to work. An instructor can't ask for more than that. All of the students in this excellent cohort successfully completed the class and showed potential to become successful Winthrop students. I look forward to monitoring their progress at Winthrop and beyond." ■



Polaski

## 2019 Eagle STEM Summer Bridge Participants



## What did the Students Think About Summer Bridge?

**Kimora Bailey** - "Summer Bridge was an eye opener for me in a good way. I was able to make mistakes and learn how to fix them in six short weeks. Summer



Bailey

Bridge, although stressful at times, allowed me to experience very rigorous courses, which challenged me to get out of my comfort zone. Without this experience, I feel I would definitely have a hard time adjusting, come my freshman year. Certainly, being one, out of the few, in the cohort to live out of state, it was very hard at times getting comfortable with my new setting. I grew to adjust and I really enjoyed my cohort, the professors, and the people at Winthrop. I want to thank the Board members and the program administrators for selecting and accepting me into the STEM program. This has truly been a one-of-a-kind experience." ■

**Ashley Bryan** - "Summer Bridge was a whole different experience for me. I've never really stayed away from home without family so I got to experience what living on my own would be like. On top of that, I was exposed to what college classes would be like so now I feel even more prepared for when classes start in the fall. I've been able to make good connections with different faculty and so I feel like I'm in good standing for help with school work if need be." ■



Bryan

**Laine Ciaramitaro** - "The summer bridge program has given me a glimpse at what college is really like with late night study sessions and early morning Starbucks trips. It not only prepared me for the transition, but gave me an opportunity to meet like-minded people and helped me build connections that will go far in my college career. I feel that I am better prepared for my classes this fall and my future academic success at Winthrop." ■



Ciaramitaro

**Jackson Barrett** - "I feel that the STEM program has allowed me to become better prepared for college because it allowed me to get ahead in my classes and has helped me to learn my way around campus. I would say that while it was a very stressful ride I believe that is was worth it because I have become a stronger person through the challenges I have faced and met I also have found community and support in the cohort who I've grown with throughout the entire program. I will admit at some points in time I found it hard to get along with others, but overall I think that the positive experiences have outweighed the negative. I strongly recommend that anyone who's willing to do work to apply for this program, because the benefits strongly outweigh the disadvantages." ■



Barrett

**Emily Camp** - "This past summer was a once in a lifetime opportunity. I feel I have an advantage over other first-year students since I am already familiar with the campus and my peers. This program not only allowed me a firsthand look at college classes, but it offered me relationships with professors. My cohort and I were able to shadow in research labs, where I gained experience and future opportunities. While the rapid pace of the classes was challenging, our peer mentors were there to guide us through. I am so glad I was offered this opportunity and recommend those that can to apply." ■



Camp

**Mackenzie "Mack" Dupuy** - "The summer bridge program was a real eye opener for me. It showed me what a real college class was like and made me strive for success. This program was a great experience to make friends before getting into the school year. We had a firsthand experience of what it's like to work in research labs, which helped me figure out what I'd like to pursue in college." ■



Dupuy

**Thomas Gonzalez** - "The summer bridge program was a great opportunity to start college ahead of everyone else and learn more about the University and all it has to offer. Learning from the profes-



Gonzalez

sors and peer mentors was excellent, not only did I get to learn about science and math, I also got to learn how to prepare for school after Winthrop and how to tailor my time here to be the most efficient in preparing for my future. The accelerated program does get stressful but having the peer mentors as a support system was excellent and having activities on the weekend to get away from campus was a great way to relax and not always worry about class. The lab shadowing was great as you get to make first impressions of professors as well as gain interest in their research. This program may not be suited for everyone but it was an excellent experience for me and I would recommend it to anyone." ■

**Brooklyn Clive** - "When I applied for the Eagle STEM Scholars Program, I didn't really know what it meant or how it would work. But over the past 6 weeks, I have made life-long connections with people I had never met before. I absolutely loved almost every second of the STEM Scholars Summer Bridge. The program has taught me how to be successful at Winthrop University by allowing me to take two classes this summer and live on campus. The summer may have been stressful at certain points but I would do it all again in a heartbeat. This program took 18 entering freshmen and 3 current WU students and created a family. The Eagle STEM Scholars Program has allowed me to become a better person and I look forward to keeping these connections and improvements with me as I dive into life at Winthrop University." ■



Clive

**Alexandra 'Ally' Gebbia** - "Most students would be apprehensive about spending 6 weeks of their summer taking classes, but the STEM Summer Bridge



Gebbia

Program was so much more than just classes. This opportunity provided me and my peers with a "trial run" of college, a community of like-minded people I now call close friends, and a supportive group of mentors who I know I will be able to rely on as the school year starts. I've also been able to

develop better learning habits as well as explore the resources on campus to utilize during the school year in order to be successful in the classroom." ■

**Janae Massey** - "The summer bridge experience was a great eye opener to the college life. Being immersed in such a great program allowed me to step out of my comfort zone. Being a student-athlete, my schedule will be very similar to that of the summer bridge. I will always be busy and have a tight schedule, and the summer bridge program aided me in getting used to that. At first, I was annoyed about missing out on my summer, but I loved the friendly community that surrounded me from the friends I made to my mentors. The summer bridge allowed me to embrace the college experience and sharpen my skills." ■



**Mina Heidari** - "The Summer Bridge Program exposed me to a lot of experiences other STEM students won't encounter until later in their college careers. I really enjoyed the lab rotations; working



Heidari

individually with professors and their research students gave me a good insight as to what research is offered at Winthrop. As a student on the Pre-Med degree track, I really enjoyed Dr. Kohl's lab and working around genetics. The STEM Summer Bridge program opens the door for a lot of

opportunities between the students and the faculty and the students as a cohort. I'd do it every summer if I could." ■

**Lily Gray** - "The Eagle STEM Program allowed me to create friendships with others that have similar interests as mine. The program helped with the transition from high school to college. Thanks to the Eagle STEM Program I am more comfortable with college level work and have a better understanding of expectations. Being in the Eagle Stem Program gave me resources and a WU family to rely on. I feel that the Eagle STEM Program has prepared me for my freshman year." ■



Gray

Students continued from page 4

**Mason Mattison** - "What I enjoyed most about Summer Bridge is meeting all the professors and creating connections with them. The different trips we took were fun as well but, more often than not, the late nights in the residents halls spent studying or talking made this program great. My favorite memory was when Eric, Laine, and I were trying to solve a problem on the first homework Dr. Harris assigned. We need a whiteboard but the ones we had were not large enough. So, after seeing people write on the fume hoods in labs, I thought we could just use Eric and my room's window. Five minutes later, Eric's classical music filled the room while he was scribbling on the window with a dry erase marker. I know for a fact that if not for this program, I would not have that memory." ■



Mattison

people write on the fume hoods in labs, I thought we could just use Eric and my room's window. Five minutes later, Eric's classical music filled the room while he was scribbling on the window with a dry erase marker. I know for a fact that if not for this program, I would not have that memory." ■

**Lauren Patterson** - "The STEM Summer Bridge helped me be better prepared for starting college classes in the fall. It made me understand the level of work and effort that would be expected of me from my professors. I was out of my comfort zone at first, but overall I enjoyed participating in the program. I was able to meet a lot of new people and make great friends. Being introduced to professors with similar interests as mine was also a great benefit of this program." ■



Patterson

**Molly Quetel** - "I am glad I got the chance to see the campus, meet staff, friends, and peers before going into the fall semester. It was overall a great and unique experience. I definitely feel prepared for the fall semester. Taking classes before the fall has definitely given me a good idea of what college classes are like. I like how time was set aside to do activities and little trips because it gave us the time to relax and have fun. I am thankful I got the opportunity to come to campus early because it makes me feel a lot more prepared for the fall. I think this summer bridge program has taught us that we can take on any challenge that comes our way." ■



Quetel

because it gave us the time to relax and have fun. I am thankful I got the opportunity to come to campus early because it makes me feel a lot more prepared for the fall. I think this summer bridge program has taught us that we can take on any challenge that comes our way." ■

**Jordan Rucker** - "I think Summer Bridge was a program that all students who are willing to take on rigorous courses in college that are applicable should apply to. It is something that not only prepared me for classes in college and scheduling, but it also taught me how to handle the stress of college and how to handle situations that I'm not entirely used to. The mentors were all very helpful and so were all of the staff, and it is also amazing to know that I have a group of family at Winthrop now. I thank this program and the people for everything!" ■



Rucker

Mentors continued from front

was being able to spend time with the scholars and getting to know them on a personal level. I really am really grateful for this opportunity." ■

**Kendarius Butler (Kenny)** - "As a peer mentor, I think that the summer bridge program is a necessary part to the intake experience for STEM students. This is because of the fact that I was someone that could be an immediate help to the students that needed help. For example, whenever anyone needed help, I was the first line of defense for the program. This made me ready for my jobs that I am going to be working in the fall. As a FYE Peer Mentor, I am ready to use the lessons that I learned from the program. Being in the program, is something that can prepare anyone for the future." ■



Students continued from page 4

**Laela Walker** - "This summer has taught me what it truly means to be beyond my own expectations. Being in the program helped me to believe more in my academic abilities because if I want to succeed at something, I will do whatever it takes to accomplish it. When the fall semester starts, I will be more prepared for the workload that I will face because it matches the amount of studying and coursework that I



Walker

had to complete each day for the summer semester. I now know what it means to ask for help when I am confused on a topic and will continue to do so for the rest of my college career. Having experiences in the Summer Bridge Program has shaped me into a prepared, willful student that will work hard and smart to do the best I can throughout college. Being an Eagles STEM scholar means that I will make connections with professors and involve myself in many internships in order to build the best foundation for what I want in my future career." ■

**Eric Walters** - "It was daunting at first because I was willingly signing away six weeks of my summer for school. However, the decision to come here is one I don't regret. The classes were presented in a way that would challenge us. Especially in Chemistry, I've learned more in six weeks than I did during my entire high school career. The learning went beyond the subject matter and taught me to think critically and analyze problems. It was not impossible and we had the guidance of our peer mentors every step of the way. Additionally, the summer bridge has helped me decide on a career path and presented me with the information to effectively follow that path. If you are unsure about the summer bridge program, I would recommend that you apply for the program." ■



Walters

Mentors - continued from front

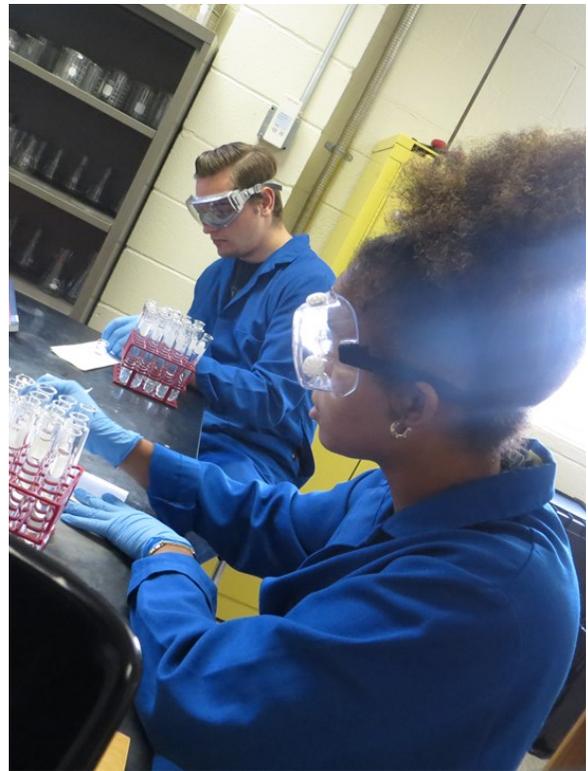
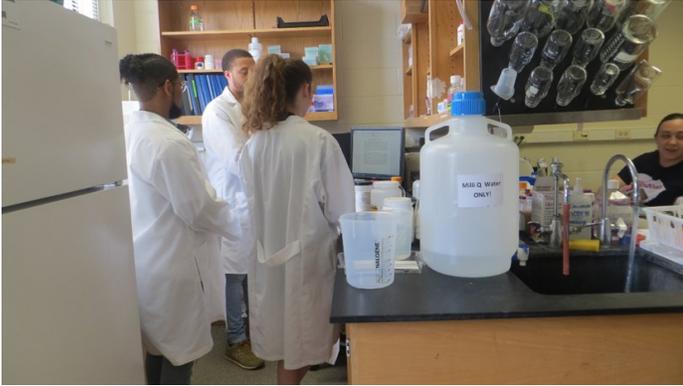
**B**randon Jackson - "This summer I had the opportunity to not only serve as a Peer Mentor to the Eagle STEM students, but the opportunity to serve as a source of guidance, knowledge, and inspiration. However, it is not what the STEM students learned from me - it is what I learned from them. Following the diverse nature of our university, this diverse group of individuals allowed me to learn about their subjective experiences as well as share mine with them. Throughout these six weeks, the STEM students and I lived together, learned together, and grew together. This program was not only a new experience, it was a new beginning. The beginning of new friendships, a new environment, and overall the beginning for a new chapter in our lives. As their paths may begin to diverge due to varying schedule demands, I know that they will take all lessons learned this summer to make their experience at Winthrop University the best that it can be. The lessons we learn from each other can often be more eye-opening and educational than any material learned from a textbook. I wish them all the best, and I hope that they know they always have a mentor, a confidant - a friend, as long as I'm around." ■



**D**ouglas Johnson - "The Eagle STEM Summer Bridge Program is a great program, allowing incoming students to obtain the experience of taking classes and socializing before starting in the fall. Being a peer mentor was an inspiring experience by providing advice based on personal experience that would have been helpful to me as an incoming freshman looking at professional programs. Providing networking opportunities, valuable lab experiences, and beneficial workshops proves this program to be an exceptional resource for students as they take their first steps at the collegiate level." ■



## Summer Bridge Lab Experiences



## Team Building / Ropes Course



## Trips to Carowinds & the Riverbanks Zoo and Garden



**HIGHLIGHTS** continued from front

cerns, and issues were held with program staff at regular intervals. Team building and social activities were held weekly. Two community service activities were also completed at the Reaching Our Community facility and the Wetlands at Winthrop Lake. Student comments indicated that their preparation in this program has helped them feel more prepared to begin college.

The team selecting program participants and planning for the summer bridge program included Dr. Pat Owens, Dr. Takita Sumter, Dr. Kathie Snyder, Dr. Kristi Westover, Dr. Cliff Harris, Dr. Michael Whitney, Dr. David Meeler, Dr. Julian Smith, Jordan Winter, and Rachel Law. Admissions, Financial Aid, Finance, Residence Life and other Winthrop administrative services played key roles in making the program a success. **Thanks to all who contributed to the summer experience! Our program would not be successful if you didn't share your talents and expertise!**

- Chem 104 Honors - Dr. Cliff Harris
- Math 101 Honors - Dr. Thomas Polaski
- Laboratory Techniques – Dr. Kathie Snyder, Ms. Willie Ruth Aiken
- SURE Lab Rotations – Dr. Jay Hanna, Dr. Eric Birgbauer, Dr. Nick Grossoehme, Dr. Cliff Harris, Dr. Jason Hurlbert, Dr. Julian Smith, Dr. Matthew Stern, Dr. Takita Sumter, Dr. Robin Lammi, Dr. Maria Gelabert, Dr. Fatima Amir, Dr. Michael Whitney, Dr. Aaron Hamm, Dr. Cynthia Tant, and Dr. Katherine Kohl

**Workshops and Speakers**

- Summer Program Advice—Jordan Winter
- Study Skills and Time Management—Jasmine Howze
- Note Taking and Internalizing Information— John Robinson
- Multiculturalism and Diversity—Dean Kinyata Adams-Brown
- Health and Counseling Services—Dr. Gretchen Baldwin
- Writing Skills— John Robinson
- Study Abroad Program—Chelsi Colleton
- STEM Issues: Dr. Christian Grattan, Dr. Kristen Abernathy, Dr. Scott Werts, Dr. Julian Smith, Dr. Cliff Harris and Jordan Winter – Four Year Plans and Pre-Professional Requirements

**Social Activities**

- Team Building— Codescape Room
- Mint Museum
- Carowinds
- Riverbanks Zoo
- Ropes Course/Team Building - Mr. Geoff Morrow, Director, Winthrop Outdoor Education Center

**Eagle STEM Scholars Program**

113A Sims Science Building  
Rock Hill, SC 29733

Phone: 803/323-4932  
Fax: 803/323-2246  
E-mail: eaglestem@winthrop.edu

The Eagle STEM Scholars Program was formed as a result of the INBRE II diversity initiative to effectively matriculate more students from diverse groups into biomedical science Ph.D. programs. Winthrop, because of its diverse population of students, is uniquely poised to increase the number of under-represented minority, low income and first generation undergraduates in South Carolina who matriculate into Ph.D. biomedical science, bioengineering, biochemistry, biology and chemistry programs. It is taking steps to move over the next two decades towards national leadership in this area.

We're on the Web  
[www.winthrop.edu/eaglestem](http://www.winthrop.edu/eaglestem)