

Glaxo summer researchers busy during break

BY MARGARET YIM

At most schools, once the final bell has struck, students and staff alike pile out of the school and try as hard as they can to erase the horrors of the school year from their mind and replace it with hours in front of the TV and sunbathing at the beach. But then again, NCSSM is not like most schools – we do not have bells. Even though some members of our community do become couch potatoes or go to the beach, one can always be found hard at work on their college apps, community service, or even school work.

More interesting, though, are the eerily empty halls and dark classrooms during the summer months. The campus is still functional during summer break – some SLIs still live here, the administration and other staff still come in for work – and this amalgam of busy students, dedicated staff, and an open campus led to opportunities for summer research such as the Glaxo program.

Through personal interest in biology, students apply and are selected to carry out a self-proposed scientific project in two weeks of extensive research while residing right here at NCSSM. Similar programs are available through the Research in Chemistry and Research in Physics programs for those disciplines, and they run for an additional week after Glaxo has ended. Students are given a stipend for food during their stay, and at the end of the two or three weeks, each project is presented in a PowerPoint symposium that is attended by fellow

researchers, teachers, parents, and administrators.

This summer, a normal day of a summer research program started at 8:30 in the morning, and individual research occurred until 5:00 with an hour lunch break at 12:00. Student researchers either stayed on campus and worked with the directors of these programs, who are teachers here at NCSSM, or ventured off to a lab at a nearby university, such as UNC or Duke. Project topics varied from single bubble sonoluminescence, to induced resistance to heparin sulfate, to ultrasound arrays, to butterfly mimicry, and the quality of work exhibited by all of the participants showed the effort and time devoted to the projects during those weeks at school.

Although the actual research was the significant aspect of the summer programs, perhaps more memorable were the extracurricular activities that the group engaged in. With the stress of having a huge project to do, the researchers tried to find time to let themselves relax and enjoy what is rightfully a part of their summer. Ultimate Frisbee games were held on the IM field each night from 7-9 with the participation of a majority of the researchers and even some SLIs. Since the PFM was no longer free to the students, everyone either ate what they brought to NCSSM or ate out, considering that no one wanted to pay to eat PFM food. This led to exploration of the many eateries on Ninth Street with friends and fellow researchers, and to satisfy that sweet tooth, some SLIs even drove a loop out on Ninth Street for



Margaret Yim works on her Glaxo project in summer

Francesca's at night just for the students. Nights were also filled with activities from watching the NBA Playoffs, to viewing Napoleon Dynamite, to midnight bowling. All of this made for a wonderful atmosphere in which students could share scientific insights as well as make friends and socialize.

This is not to say that summer research should be attempted just for the fun of it – the summer research programs are highly competitive and require a great deal of time and effort to come up with an idea as well as

to execute it. If juniors are interested in research at NCSSM, they should consider taking one of the Research courses or doing mentorship, and perhaps a summer continuation of a project from those courses would be feasible for the outcome of the scientific work. But one should not apply for and go into summer research and expect it to be all fun and games – it will be a wonderful experience, but remember – there is always a greater amount of work than play.

Tuition continued from page 1

uating classes could also benefit from this decision, which comes after many debates about the state budget and many calls from Science and Math family members to their legislative representatives. Nevertheless, the tuition grant has the potential to be revised every year as the state budget is approved.

The Class of 2004 was the first to be eligible for the tuition grant. The legislation came after NCSSM and other specialized schools in the nation were experiencing declining numbers of applications because of the growing emphasis on accountability for public schools. Since the tuition grant was offered, though, applications have once again soared.

However, not everyone thinks that the tuition grant is a good idea. The John William Pope Center for Higher Education Policy released a report in January that called the program unfair. Some Science and Math students even point out the disadvantages. "I personally think S&M is better without the grant," said Alex Solomon. "It's hard to hate free money, but if you look at S&M a few years ago, and then you look at it now, you can see the changes. Granted, all of them are not due to the grant, but some of the people are. The grant draws more people than just those with that insatiable thirst for learning. Parents started forcing their children to apply, [and] you got applicants who really didn't want to be here. These students, [who] you will see walking the sidewalks of our campus, took the place of someone who wanted to come to a school like S&M solely because of their passion for learning and advancing their knowledge."

Summer Ventures prepares for NCSSM life

BY KATHLEEN HEBERT

Not everyone is lucky enough to get accepted to the North Carolina School of Science and Math. For those unfortunates, there is an opportunity for them to experience NCSSM life for a month. Summer Ventures in Science and Math, a four week long summer camp, gives 550 North Carolina students a taste of NCSSM life every summer.

There are six North Carolina Universities where this program is held: the Universities of North Carolina in Charlotte and Wilmington, Appalachian State, Western Carolina, Eastern Carolina, and North Carolina Central University. Each campus receives 70 to 80 students showing an interest in the various subjects available. Examples of some of the classes are Optical Engineering, Field Biology, Statistics, and Archeology.

Some of the universities ask students to write a paper on a subject within their course of study, which are then entered into a competition called the Catalyst Award. The two winners are given the opportunity to present their project to the state's Science and Math Teacher Conferences. I was

placed into the Summer Ventures program in the University of Charlotte in the Quantitative Methods in Rocks and Minerals class. We stayed on the road, traveling from West Virginia to Wilmington for two weeks, looking at rock formations. Nicknamed the Rockhounds, my class became extremely close and I made many new friends. Summer Ven-

enough to be a semifinalist in the Catalyst Award for my paper on North Carolina sand and sandstone grain sizes.

My father has worked for the Summer Ventures program in Appalachia every summer for the past 15 years. I went to visit him after my camp had ended and luckily, got to meet a few other NCSSM students. We met at a local restaurant to get together and ask a million questions of two rising seniors who were nice enough to come. I also asked a few questions of my own to some of the students about their Summer Ventures experience. "Summer Ventures helped me prepare for having a roommate and independently working on class work," said Matthew Gildner. Several others also enjoyed the chance to meet teenagers from all across North Carolina that shared their academic and social interests.

Summer Ventures is just one of the many programs North Carolina offers their students, but it is one of the best. The chances attendees have, such as the people they meet and experiences they gain, give them lifelong memories. I and my fellow Summer Ventures students are well prepared and looking forward to Science and Math because of Summer Ventures.



Students at ASU Summer Ventures study geology

tures was very beneficial to me during the summer before my first year of Science and Math; it gave my mind a month of exercise that it wouldn't have gotten sitting around at home. Additionally, I was fortunate

Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince: the other summer reading book

BY VICTOR LIEU

On July 16th, Harry Potter's journey through the magical world continued as the young wizard began his sixth year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, the latest book in author J.K. Rowling's popular series, hit the shelves amidst thousands of people dressed in wizardly garb crowding the aisles of notable booksellers. In the week before the book's release, a Real Canadian Superstore in British Columbia, Canada accidentally sold 15 books. Raincoast Publishers, the Canadian publisher for Harry Potter, quickly took steps to keep information from leaking. Opening day saw 6.9 million copies being sold in the US alone, making *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* the fastest selling book in history.

As *The Half-Blood Prince* begins, Lord Voldemort has declared war on the Wizarding community once again, spreading fear and death. Soon after



returning to Privet Drive after his fifth year at Hogwarts, Harry jumps back into the Wizarding world accompanied by none other than Albus Dumbledore. The staff adds a new member, Horace Slughorn, as Potions master, and Snape is finally given the Defense Against the Dark Arts position. Harry becomes Quidditch captain, and must find and train a new Gryffindor team.

While the sixth book perhaps does not deliver as much action as previous books, it explores the world around Harry. The beauty of the book lies in how despite a war raging around them, the pressure of classes, and life in the castle itself, life goes on for the students at Hogwarts. It is during this year that Harry grows up. He begins to understand that he has to rely on himself and his friends as Lord Voldemort grows in power. Harry questions the loyalty of Severus Snape and tries to see into Draco Malfoy's plots.

Harry begins private lessons with Dumbledore, and learns about his foe. At the end of *The Half-Blood Prince*, Harry realizes that he can no longer rely on those older, wiser, and stronger than himself, that he can no longer be a child. Named as the only one who can destroy Lord Voldemort, Harry finally embraces his destiny. Book seven will be the final chapter in Harry's struggle. The question is, will he survive?