The Governor's School
Summer Residential Programs

Summer Residential Governor's School Programs

Governor's Schools give students academic and visual and performing arts opportunities beyond those normally available in the students' home schools. Students are able to focus on a specific area of intellectual or artistic strength and interest to study in a way that best suits the gifted learner's needs.

Students live on a college or university campus for up to five weeks. During this time, students are involved in classroom and laboratory work, field studies, research, individual and group projects and performances, and seminars with noted scholars, visiting artists, and other professionals. In the two mentorships, students are selected to work side-by-side with research scientists, physicians, and a variety of other professionals.

Each Summer Residential Governor's School focuses on one special area of interest.

Academic / Mentoring Programs

Agriculture – Virginia Tech

Participants interact with and learn directly from internationally known teachers, scientists, and researchers from the university. Participants learn of the scientific education and career opportunities available in agricultural and biological systems engineering, agricultural economics, animal science, plant science, and food science. At the conclusion of the Governor's School, a symposium will be held to showcase the student groups' projects. There will be a general poster session, as well as several concurrent sessions featuring the student groups' presentations of their research.

Humanities – Radford University

Participants explore the humanities in the digital age through history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, political science, economics, sociology, psychology, and media. This Governor's School encourages students to explore the ways that modern society encourages and restricts individuals as they seek realization of their creative potential. It creates a college experience that emphasizes free expression, intellectual curiosity, individual responsibility, and respect for others. This program culminates with a showcase that includes artwork, projects, performances, and presentations within each student's discipline.

Mathematics, Science & Technology – University of Lynchburg

This program challenges students to learn about the interdisciplinary nature of science, mathematics, and engineering. Students will have the opportunity to observe the interplay between experimentation, imagination, and logic. It features hands-on laboratory and multi-media instruction in the design of scientific experiments and exploration of the public policy aspects of science and technology.

Medicine & Health Sciences – Virginia Commonwealth University

Participants explore medicine and health science careers through a systems-based, problem-solving approach that utilizes case studies, laboratory investigations, and real-world shadowing experiences.   Participants see connections between the patient, the community, and the health profession. Students obtain medical histories of mock patients, develop differential diagnoses, identify relevant diagnostic tests, interpret medical laboratory results, and examination findings to create a treatment plan. Students gain valuable laboratory and clinical skills through the practice of blood typing, performing DNA electrophoresis, and ELISA testing. In addition, students participate in a series of seminars, led by experts from VCU, VCU Hospital, and the Virginia Department of Health.   This program culminates with a physician shadowing experience. It provides an up close exposure to actual hospital clients, health care providers, and the diagnostic/treatment process.

Engineering (Mentorship) – Christopher Newport University, Jefferson Lab

Participants have authentic experiences in research. Each student is assigned to a research mentor. Students participate in actual research projects and work with professional research scientists and graduate students, either one-on-one or in small teams. At the completion of the 4 weeks, the engineering students make an oral and technology-laden presentation to mentors and available Jefferson Lab researchers and graduate students.

Marine Science (Mentorship) – Christopher Newport University, Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

Participants have authentic experiences in research. Each student is assigned to a research mentor. Students participate in actual research projects, working with professional research scientists and graduate students, either one-on-one or in small teams. At the end of the program, students complete and present a research document - consistent with reports that would be expected should they choose a career in marine science research.

Visual & Performing Arts Programs

All visual and performing arts programs are held at Radford University. Students are grouped in interdisciplinary teams to study the techniques, materials, media, language, and conventions of that form through the exploration of a theme. There is a focus on the symbiotic relationship between art and society, and the societal and individual opportunities of the thinking artist. Students participate in a closing ceremony that features artwork, projects, performances, and presentations within each student's discipline.

Artistic Disciplines
- Dance
- Instrumental Music
- Vocal Music
- Theatre
- Visual Arts

How To Apply

Students applying for Academic programs should contact their school counselor by December. Applications include academic records, test scores, extra-curricular activities, honors, and awards, creativity, original essays, and teacher recommendations.

Students applying for Visual and Performing Arts programs should contact their school counselor by October. Students applying for the Visual and Performing Arts Summer Residential Governor's School will need to participate in a statewide adjudication where they audition or present portfolios for review before a pair of professionals in the specific arts field.

For more information visit Virginia Department of Education's website:

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/governors_school_programs/summer_residential/