



# Steadfast Support for Pediatric Cancer Research

An impact report prepared for the Ted Mullin Fund • Spring 2022



AT THE FOREFRONT OF KIDS' MEDICINE™

**UChicago Medicine**

**Comer Children's**

**For over 16 years, the Ted Mullin Fund has enabled groundbreaking research and inspired the next generation of physicians and scientists.**

Thank you to the Ted Mullin Fund and its donors for their leadership in driving pediatric cancer research, care, and education at the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Hospital. We are proud of your long-standing partnership with us, and honored by your steadfast support.

Additionally, the Ted Mullin Fund has provided hands-on laboratory and clinical experience for the most promising students to pursue careers in medicine and oncology. Your commitment to developing mentorship opportunities for undergraduates is unparalleled to any other UCM program available to novice researchers.

**Your support is vital to our efforts and makes a tremendous difference in the lives of so many. Please accept our sincere gratitude for your partnership and commitment to supporting pediatric cancer patients and their families.**

# Investments in Pediatric Cancer Research

The Ted Mullin Fund has generously supported various research projects and endeavors in the Section of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. We are pleased to share a snapshot of the exciting efforts underway this year.



## **Eric C. Beyer, MD, PhD**

**Professor of Pediatrics, Cell Physiology, Cancer Biology, and Molecular Medicine**

Eric C. Beyer MD, PhD, is an expert in the care and treatment of children with all forms of cancer and blood diseases and heads an internationally recognized molecular and cellular biology laboratory. The financial support from the Ted Mullin Fund has made possible Dr. Beyer's recent research related to the roles of small extracellular vesicles in the pathogenesis of complications of sickle cell disease. The fund provided partial salary support for Joanna Gemel PhD (Research Associate Professor). Previously, former Ted Mullin scholar Yifan Mao demonstrated particularly outstanding work in his lab and is now the co-author on several recent papers related to pediatric sickle cell disease. She is now a medical student at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Dr. Beyer's clinical practice focuses on general pediatric oncology and benign hematology.



## **John M. Cunningham, MD**

**George M. Eisenberg Professor of Pediatrics  
Chair, Department of Pediatrics  
Physician-in-Chief, University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Hospital**

Dr. Cunningham is a physician-scientist focused on the care of children with pediatric cancer and blood diseases. His clinical focus is on the development and implementation of stem cell transplant therapy for leukemia and sickle cell disease. In his laboratory, he is studying the genetic basis of childhood cancers and blood diseases. The Ted Mullin Fund provided crucial personnel support for a research Associate Professor in Dr. Cunningham's lab, Dr. Holly Yang. Dr. Yang is using informatics techniques to identify key genetic networks that are dysregulated in cancer, specifically neuroblastoma and acute myeloid leukemia. She has had a recent paper accepted for this work in *Nucleic Acids Research*, a peer-reviewed scientific journal published by the Oxford University Press.



## United Against Cancer: The Ted Mullin Hour of Power

The 16<sup>th</sup> annual Hour of Power was a tremendous success: from the British West Indies to the American Midwest, over 5,000 athletes **around the world** united in the water in support of the battle against sarcoma.



Mary Henry and Rick Mullin at the 2021 University of Chicago Ted Mullin Hour of Power



Ted Mullin



Grinnell College, Iowa



School for Field Studies on Turks and Caicos,  
British West Indies



Northside Independent School District Aquatics  
San Antonio Texas area



Williams College, Massachusetts



St. Olaf College, Minnesota



Willamette University, Oregon



The American International School of Muscat  
Muscat, Oman



Mark Applebaum, MD, an expert in pediatric cancers and blood diseases at Comer Children's Hospital, speaking to the University of Chicago Swim and Dive team. Dr. Applebaum shared research updates from his lab that were made possible by support from the Ted Mullin Fund.

# The 2021 Ted Mullin Scholars

## Gary Sun, Amherst College '22



Despite the **Ted Mullin Scholars** program being online this year, they were able to successfully accommodate and find meaningful projects for me that could be done virtually! I worked closely with Melissa Marx on medical abstractions, which consisted of extracting patient data from the hospital's patient portal and compiling it into a folder that summarized patient data for future use in clinical trials. In addition, I was able to learn about Dr. Beyer's research in sickle cell disease and help work on a data dictionary with a current medical student. Unfortunately, there were some complications in the access of the datamart file that got delayed until the program's end date, but it was still fascinating learning about the concepts and usages of data dictionaries. I was also able to learn about some of Dr. Henderson's work in studying the long-term effects of childhood cancer. Along the way, I also attended a faculty lecture series, a seminar that introduced me to cancer researchers and challenged my scientific thinking. My favorite lectures included "Clinical and Experimental Cancer Therapeutics with Wendy Stock, MD" and "Understanding Cancer Health Disparities with Blase Polite, MD".

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this program and I am amazed at how much I learned and accomplished this summer. Despite the complication that came with virtual learning and COVID, the providers and staff at the University of Chicago were still able to create a meaningful experience that will allow me to apply my immunology and clinical trial knowledge in the future.

## Emma Wrigley, Carleton College '22



When I applied for the **Ted Mullin Scholar** opportunity in January 2020, I never expected that I would have the experience I had. This summer the program was online, so I was able to live with one of my friends in Boston while experiencing the program virtually. The main project I worked on this past summer was collecting data for the medical audit of six different clinical trials. I was able to learn how to navigate EPIC and about the different processes that were necessary to have a successful clinical trial. I was able to read many different papers about the various clinical trials that are currently ongoing on the University of Chicago and discuss them with my PI, Tara Henderson as well as the head of the clinical trials office, Melissa Marx. I also had the opportunity to attend many online seminars with people doing interesting research at the University of Chicago.

I am so grateful for this program giving me the opportunity to learn all about how clinical trials are conducted and allowing me to gain the very useful skill of knowing how to navigate EPIC. I hope that later this year I will be able to go to Chicago and shadow some of the doctors there so I can maybe see how some of the treatments I read about this summer are administered. This opportunity has cemented my interest and drive to further my medical education after I graduate in June 2022.

# Continued Investments: Ted Mullin Scholar Alumni



**Alyssa Pioggia, Smith College '19**  
**Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2019**

*"I am very excited to share that I am starting the MS Physician Assistant program at the University of Bridgeport this winter. I will certainly carry all the knowledge and skills I gained throughout the Ted Mullin scholarship experience throughout the program. I know these next couple years will be challenging but equally rewarding. Especially now that the healthcare system is under a lot of stress, I am ready to step in and do my part to help. I want to thank the Ted Mullin family and my extended lab family in Dr. Cohn's lab for taking the time to teach me and encourage me to pursue my goal to attend a PA program."*



**Rachael Loek, Case Western Reserve University '16, DVM The Ohio State University '20**  
**Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2014**

*"I am currently in a dermatology specialty internship and have been accepted into a dermatology residency program in veterinary medicine to begin the summer of 2022. I do have plans to perform clinical research in veterinary dermatology during my internship and residency, which I am very excited to start!"*

# Continued Investments: Ted Mullin Scholar Alumni



**Grace Marshall, Carleton College '20**  
**Ted Mullin Scholar Summer 2018**

*"I am half-way through my second year at the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry. While here I have been doing research in the department of neuroradiology looking at the amount of atherosclerosis in patients with Fibromuscular Dysplasia- a rare connective tissue disease that causes increased risk for vascular complications like stroke. I was hired to be a tutor for the first-year human structure and function class. I am also volunteering in the Emergency Department, volunteering with our student clinic UR Well, and leading our Sports Medicine volunteer group SCORE. I am also the founder and one of the hub coordinators of Sunrise Rochester, a branch of the national Sunrise movement which does grassroots organizing on climate justice. In my free time I spend time walking my dog in the beautiful Highland Park and climbing at the local rock-climbing gym."*



**Lauren Kasoff, Washington and Lee University '14**  
**Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2013**

*"I am a fourth-year medical student at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. When third-year clerkships started on the wards, I quickly realized that I enjoyed aspects of all my clerkships and did not want to pick just one specialty. After I completed my family medicine clerkship at the end of third year, I discovered that a specialty existed that combined all the aspects of medicine that fascinate me. I loved caring for patients in every stage of life and getting to know patients within the sphere of their broader contexts. I have decided to pursue a career in family medicine with an emphasis on primary care, including family medicine-obstetrics, women's health and well-child care. I look forward to the breadth, variety, and diversity of patient interactions I will get to experience as I take the next step in becoming a family medicine resident to better serve the members of my community. Moreover, it is crazy to believe that it started all those years ago as a Ted Mullin Scholar! Pictured on Match Day: Residency at Thomas Jefferson University, Family Medicine."*

# Continued Investments: Ted Mullin Scholar Alumni



Scholar alums **Edan Zitelny** and **Jason Xu** recently got together at the University of Pennsylvania where Jason is enrolled in an MD/PhD program and Edan is now a resident in internal medicine.



**Yifan Mao, University of Chicago '20  
Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2017**

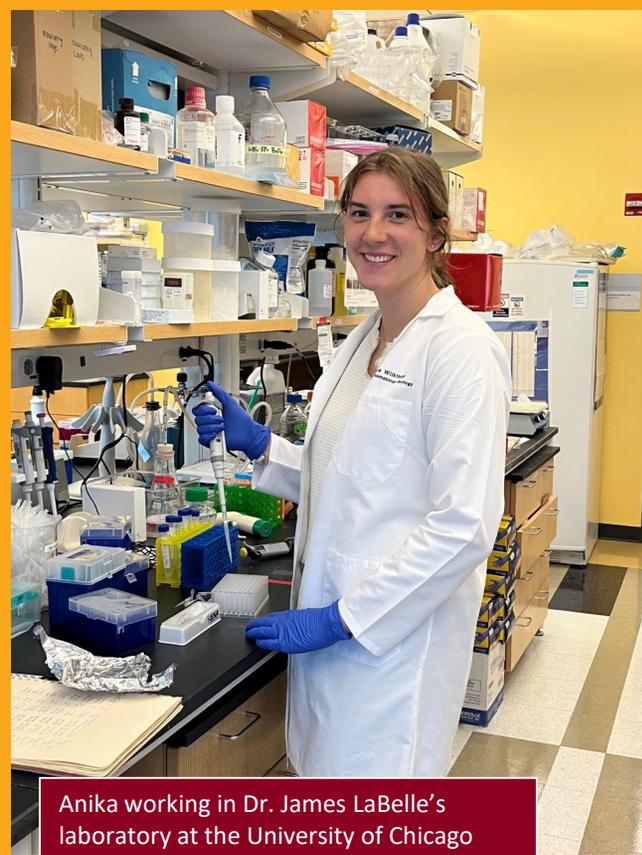
*"I recently started my first year at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA on the Leaders of Tomorrow Scholarship! At school, I am on the student council Well-Being Committee, the APAMSA community health committee, and participate in admissions interview days. I am in the Global Health Equity Pathway and am hoping to identify a mentor and get involved with a global surgery research project soon. I've recently come out of retirement from swimming and joined the UCLA Swim Club to blow off some steam during med school."*



**Edan Zitelny, Brandeis University '17, MD Wake Forest School of Medicine '21  
Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2014**

*"Since Fall 2021, I have completed the Residency Match process and graduated from Wake Forest School of Medicine. In July, I started my Internal Medicine residency at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania! I have loved my time here in Philadelphia thus far and continue to use the skills I've learned from my Ted Mullin experience to refine and explore future research pursuits."*

## Alumni Scholar Spotlight: Anika Thomas-Toth, Carleton College '20 *Ted Mullin Fund Scholar Summer 2019*



Anika working in Dr. James LaBelle's laboratory at the University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital in 2021.

### James LaBelle, MD, PhD

Associate Professor of Pediatrics  
Director, Hematopoietic Stem Cell  
Transplantation Program at UChicago  
Medicine Comer Children's Hospital



Dr. LaBelle provides care for children of all ages with cancer and blood diseases, including leukemia and lymphoma. In particular, Dr. LaBelle specializes in stem cell transplantation, replacing a patient's diseased bone marrow and immune system with healthy cells.

2019

•“I worked in Dr. James LaBelle’s lab studying immunotherapies as a potential treatment for various cancers. I also got to shadow Dr. LaBelle in the hospital which exposed me to the true day-to-day work of a pediatric oncologist and showed me the direct impact that research has on patients.”

2020

•“I returned to the LaBelle lab at the University of Chicago (where I completed my Ted Mullin internship last summer) to work as a research assistant while I explore future schooling and career paths. “

2021

•“I am still living in Chicago and working in the Department of Pediatrics with the LaBelle Lab (where I completed my Ted Mullin Scholar summer internship in 2019). I am currently working on two projects: one focused on improving anti-tumor drug delivery through packaged nanoparticles and another assessing phenotypic changes of immune cells in patients following combination chemotherapy treatment.”

*“The Ted Mullin Fund provided me the invaluable opportunity to experience a future career in medicine and biomedical research.”*

### What's next:

*“I am excited to apply for medical school this spring and look forward to pursuing medicine and more biomedical research!”*

# Ted Mullin Fund Investment by the Numbers

**\$1,562,106.03**

fundraised since 2006 by the Ted Mullin Fund to support the pediatric cancer research and scholar program at the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Section of Hematology/Oncology.

This success is built on the generosity of the donors and participants of the **Ted Mullin Fund Hour of Power Fundraisers** held across the country. This total is the result of over **2,649 individual donations**, from **45 different states** and the District of Columbia.

The University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Hospital has selected

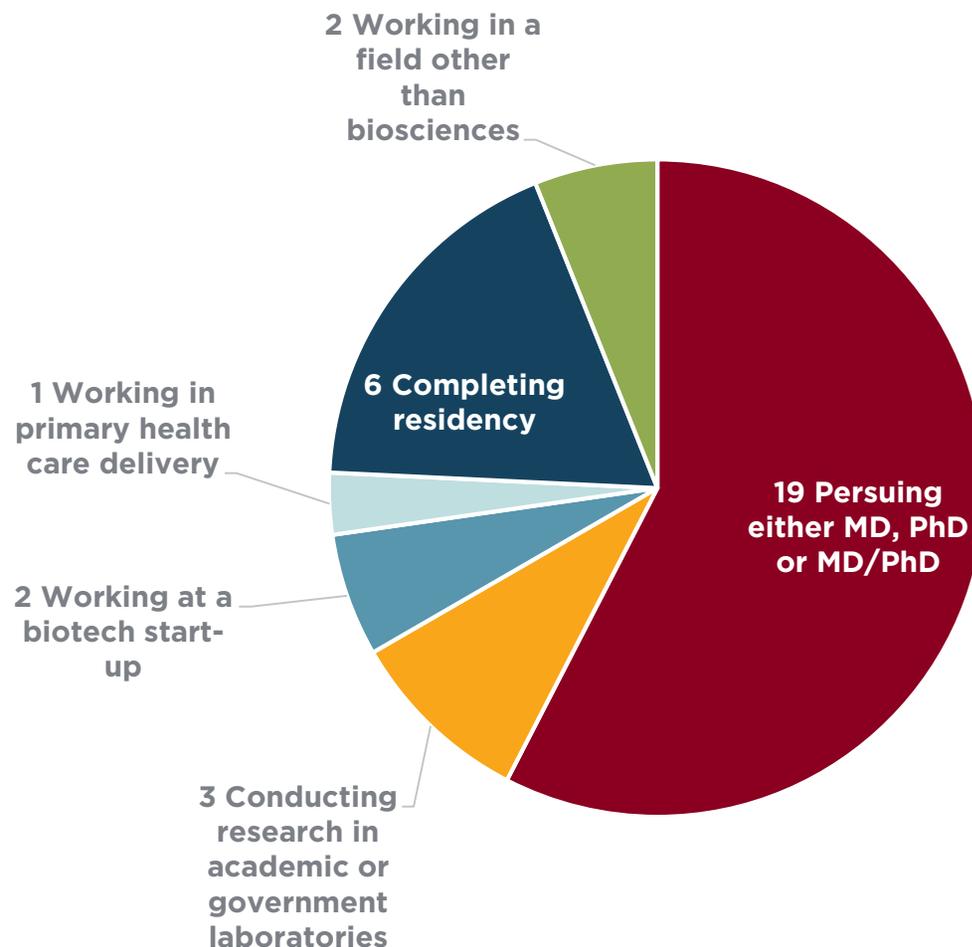
**39 undergraduate student-athletes**

as Ted Mullin Scholars from across the country.

Scholars hail from **17 different universities** across **7 different states** and Washington D.C.

**"Your vision, commitment, and hard work have changed the lives of young scholars, supported our mission, and facilitated discovery."**

– John Cunningham, MD



Mapping  
Mullin Scholars





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