

Medicine woman in the making

Litchfield teen spends summer working in a Phoenix hospital

by Brent Whiting
staff writer

For Sheena Galhotra, a Litchfield Park resident and aspiring physician, it was a summer job that put her on a promising track of achieving her career goal.

Galhotra, 19, who is starting her sophomore year at the University of Arizona, won an internship in a research laboratory at a Phoenix hospital.

"It has been a wonderful opportunity to put my classroom learning to good use," Galhotra said when contacted at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center.

"I'm really glad that I got this chance," she added. "I have been able to experience how things are actually done."

Galhotra, a 2009 graduate of Xavier College Preparatory in Phoenix, is the daughter of Dr. Ravi B. Galhotra, an internist who practices in Avondale.

She wants to follow in her father's footsteps in a medical career and has embarked upon a 14-year education regimen of becoming a cardiologist.

Sheena Galhotra credits Jennifer Weiland, a biology teacher at Xavier, for really sparking her career interest.

"She was an amazing teacher," Galhotra said. "I've always liked the sciences, but that was a turning point."

Now, Galhotra is majoring in molecular and cellular biology at the UofA and minoring in chemistry.

She said she is among about 500 students who competed for some 50 paid summer internships made available through the Undergraduate Biology Research Program at the Tucson school.

Carol Bender, a program director, described Galhotra as a "rising" student among her university classmates.

At the Phoenix hospital, Galhotra was assigned to work in the FeverLab, a program directed by Dr. Andrej Romanovsky that studies body temperatures and how to regulate them.

She said she has helped to conduct experiments and to do basic research.

"Basically, we study fevers and colds, like hypothermia," Galhotra said. "We study how bodies regulate temperature and how to handle situations in which people are too hot or too cold."



View photo Brent Whiting

SHEENA GALHOTRA, 19, a Litchfield Park resident and aspiring physician who is attending the University of Arizona, works in a lab at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix this summer.

The goal is to determine how bodies respond to physical stress and to assist pharmaceutical companies in producing drugs that can change body temperature.

When she is not studying or doing research, Galhotra likes to spend time with friends and to go to movies, she said.

While at college, she also participates with the Bhangra team, a group that performs dances from India.

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