

# Summer Research Institute

July 6, 2015

Creighton  
UNIVERSITY

Undergraduate Student of the Week  
**CHRISTIAN KENT**  
Mentor: Dr. Yapping Tu



## CENTER FOR PROMOTING HEALTH AND HEALTH EQUALITY

### What are your strengths?

I consider myself a team player when working in a work group. I'm able to communicate, not only on a professional level, but also as a team leader if the role of the leader is not doing their job or the position has yet to be filled.

### What do you do to relax?

Going to the gym to work out allows me to de-stress from my day and ease into my nightly routine.

### What is your favorite school subject and why?

I like immunology because of the complexity and the overall newness of the subject. While learning many of the concepts of the immune system, I found out that some are still not a hundred percent fully understood on how they work and their purpose.

### What are the four more important things in life you cannot survive without?

Family, La Juanita's in Sioux City, IA (in top 10 for best burrito in the nation), car, and Wi-Fi

### Ten years from now you will be....

I am planning to be a doctor and doing research.

### What motto/advice do you live by?

"I've failed over and over again in my life and that is why I succeed." Michael Jordan

### What is something that amazes you?

The human body.

### What is your favorite place to dine-out?

Some place with seafood that has fine dining

### How and where do you prefer to study?

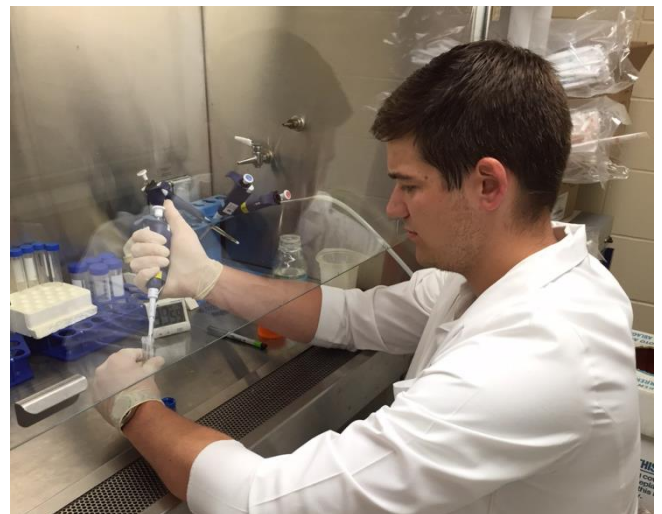
I prefer to study in the library where there is peace and quiet.

### What is your all-time favorite town or city? Why?

Okoboji, Iowa. That is where my family has a lake home on the beautiful lake of Okoboji.

### What motivated you to participate in the program?

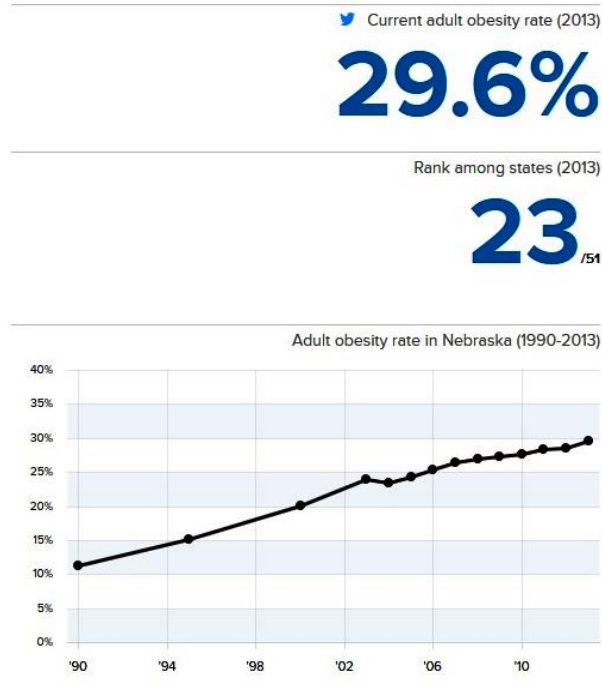
I was seeking an opportunity to gain experience in a large setting for biomedical research to help myself decide the career path I want to take after I graduate from my College.



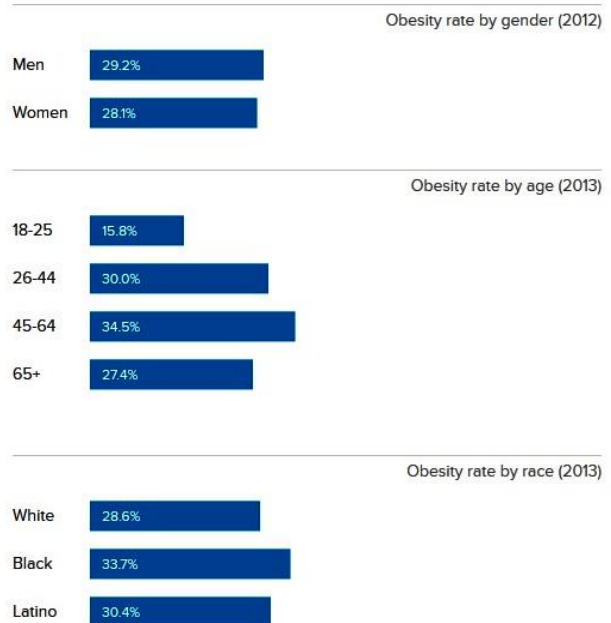
Christian Kent is a senior student at Morningside College in Sioux City Iowa. He is doing research with **Dr. Yapping Tu**.

## Adult Obesity

Nebraska now has the 23rd highest adult obesity rate in the nation, according to *The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America*. Nebraska's adult obesity rate is 29.6 percent, up from 23.4 percent in 2004 and from 11.3 percent in 1990. Rates increased in six states in the past year — Alaska, Delaware, Idaho, New Jersey, Tennessee and Wyoming.



Twenty states now have adult obesity rates at or above 30 percent, 43 states have rates of at least 25 percent, and every state is above 20 percent. In 1980, no state was above 15 percent; in 1991, no state was above 20 percent; in 2000, no state was above 25 percent; and, in 2007, only Mississippi was above 30 percent.



Source: Trust for America's Health and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. *The State of Obesity 2014* [PDF]. Washington, D.C.: 2014.

### WHAT IS A CHRONIC DISEASE?

Based on the Center for Managing Chronic Disease website, a Chronic Disease is a long-lasting condition that can be controlled, but not cured. Chronic illness affects the population worldwide. The Center for Disease Control states that chronic disease is the leading cause of death and disability in the United States. It counts for 70 percent of all deaths in

### OBESITY AS A DISEASE

The American Medical Association has officially recognized obesity as a disease, a move that could induce physicians to pay more attention to the condition and spur more insurers to pay "Recognizing obesity as a disease will help change the way the medical community tackles this complex issue that affects approximately one in three Americans," Dr. Patrice Harris, a member of the Association's board, said in a statement. She suggested the new definition would help in the fight against Type 2 diabetes and heart disease, which are linked to obesity. Some people with a B.M.I. above the level that usually defines obesity are perfectly healthy, while others below it can have dangerous levels of body fat and metabolic problems associated with obesity. "Given the existing limitations of B.M.I to diagnose obesity in clinical practice, it is unclear that recognizing obesity as a disease, as opposed to a 'condition' or 'disorder,' will result in improved health outcomes."

the U.S., which is 1.7 million each year. Data from the World Health Organization show that chronic disease is also the major cause of premature death around the world, even in places where infectious diseases are rampant. Although chronic diseases are among the most common and costly health problems, they are also among the most preventable and most can be effectively controlled.

for treatment. In making a decision, delegates at the Association's annual meeting in Chicago overrode a recommendation against doing so by a committee that studied the matter.

The council summarized the arguments for and against calling obesity a disease. One reason in favor, it said, was that it would reduce the stigma of obesity that stems from the widespread perception that is simply the result of eating too much or exercising too little. Some doctors say that people do not have full control over their weight.

"The suggestion that obesity is not a disease, but rather a consequence of a chosen lifestyle exemplified by overeating and/or inactivity is equivalent to suggesting that lung cancer is not a disease because it was brought about by individual choice to smoke cigarettes", the resolution said.

References: Center for Managing Chronic Disease  
Center for Disease Control; NY Times



### HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OF THE WEEK

**CARLOS VERA** is a junior student from Omaha South High. He is doing health disparities community research in the community with the Intercultural Senior Center.

#### What are your strengths? And how have they helped you in your life?

I am patient, I am tenacious, I am very outgoing, I am creative, and I think before I speak. One of the biggest dangers that we face as teenagers has to deal with our emotions and our habit of thinking ahead in life in the short-term. This strength has allowed me to make the right decisions in critical moments and to take advantage of many opportunities. For example, this summer program; many students would love to just stay home, lay back and relax for the summer after all of those excruciating academics. I, as the other participants, preferred to trade in some of that time to develop skills for our resumes that will be thoroughly examined in the years to come.

#### What do you do to relax?

I usually relax doing activities that would be considered as stress-inducers. I love to dance, specially hip-hop and modern. I have had brief experiences with ballet and that has also proven to help me release stress. I enjoy swimming and Jacuzzis, as well as exercising in the gym.

#### What is your favorite school subject and why?

This would be between the sciences such as Anatomy and Physiology and the performing arts such as Dance. As I began to experience more and more insight into the human biology in high school, I began to admire its complexity. Anatomy and Physiology are courses that will definitely impact you in one way or another, and Dance has just been a route by which I have been able to develop a much deeper appreciation and connection with my body.

#### What are the four more important things in life you cannot survive without?

I am a very social and extroverted individual; therefore, a lot of the joys in my life revolve around interacting with other people or meeting new people, so I could not live without people. Technology is another thing.

#### Ten years from now you will be...

A decade from now I envision myself working on my dual degree of Medical Doctorate and my PhD in a highly-accredited medical institution. If medical school proves to not be my passion, I could also see myself pursuing my PhD in synthetic biology.

#### What motto/advice do you live by?

A lot of people could agree that I am a patient, but tenacious individual. One phrase that has helped me develop these two qualities is "Patience is Key." In addition to my patience and tenacity, people consider me to be very optimistic. This other phrase that helps me resist developing negative feelings is "Hope for the Best, but Expect the Worst."

#### What is something that amazes you?

What amazes me is synthetic biology and astrobiology. In one hand its dealing with molecular bases and genetic material in the possibility to create

organisms from scratch. In the other hand, astrobiology is my all-time fascination with finding life on other planets and the differences or similarities that we may share as biological organisms.

#### What is your favorite place to dine out?

I would have to say *Sakura-Ban*; it is a Japanese-cuisine style restaurant whose specialty is *sushi*. Sushi is perhaps my favorite thing that I can consume other than Nutella. It is right in front of Cross-Roads Mall Shopping Center.

#### How and where do you prefer to study?

I do not really have a designated place to study. At home, I cannot stay in the same place for too long or else I get really bored and distracted. Since it is home, it feels too comfortable, therefore I get sleepy. I would say that I study better out of my house at a designated study location such as my school's library or Creighton's study rooms.

#### What is your all-time favorite town or city? Why?

NEW YORK CITY ALL THE WAY! I believe that path to true happiness involves experience in as many things as you can. The world has countless things to see, taste, hear, feel and smell. New York is one the few places that has been able to overwhelm all of my senses and energy. I love how you will never see the same thing twice and every experience will be different.

#### What motivated you to participate in the program?

I wanted to experience something new that would challenge my ability to adapt quickly and conduct research by actually going out and retrieving the data myself, rather than just searching through libraries and online databases.

### TIMELINE ACTIVITIES FOR SRI

#### Monday July 6

Abstracts and research project proposal

#### Friday, July 24

Draft of Final Poster

#### Friday, July 31

Final Posters for presentation

#### Thursday, August 6

Mock Presentations

#### Friday August 7

SRI Colloquium Harper Center, Rm 3023



**UPDATES ON HS-MACA ACTIVITIES FOR JULY 2015****Monday June 1 to Friday July 24**

Post Bac Summer Diagnostic Session

**Tuesday May 26 to Friday July 17**

Pre-Matric Summer Session

**COMMUNITY PARTNER OF THE WEEK  
INTERCULTURAL SENIOR CENTER**

The Intercultural Senior Center is a non-profit organization that strives to improve the dignity, quality of life, and physical well-being of seniors from around the world through advocacy, education, access to social services, and cultural enrichment activities that benefit the entire community. Intercultural Senior Center envisions an Omaha that values the wisdom and experience of our diverse elders and creates opportunities for them to embrace and enhance their community.

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. and serves any senior over 50 years of age regardless of



income, language, or ethnicity. There is absolutely NO cost to be part of the Intercultural Senior Center programs and services such as physical activities, health maintenance, and cooking and nutrition classes. There are opportunities to learn Basic English, computer skills, crafts, sewing, art, and to develop lasting friendship through social and recreational activities.

**SURVEY PROJECT**

The purpose of the survey project is to obtain information from the seniors about quality of services received as well as obtaining information about their living situation, area where they live, and barriers they have experienced that may prevent them from coming to the Intercultural Senior Center (ISC). One of the goals of this survey project is to be able to compare different variables from the information obtained to present it to the ISC Board. Part of our mission is to improve the well-being of seniors who are living in isolation, depression, low-income, and experiencing different health problems. The information gathered from the surveys will be utilized to assess how seniors' participation at ISC is playing a positive impact on the overall health of seniors. In order to be able to gather this information, a pre-test and a post-test will be developed.

For more information contact

**Carolina Padilla**

**Executive Director**

(402) 444-6529

[interculturalseniorcenter@gmail.com](mailto:interculturalseniorcenter@gmail.com)

**WORD PUZZLE**

alexander  
anthony  
biomedical  
christian  
community  
cphhe  
creighton  
disease  
disparities  
edwin  
health  
high  
hypothesis

institute  
jontaya  
kylie  
mentors  
method  
minority  
organizations  
orientation  
partnerships  
research  
stipend  
undergraduate

```

i p t c e d d e n w o s s d g
s m a i h n i o h r j n i i n
e i l r e r t s i h o r n s b
a y s p t h i e e i p r s p y
k y i e g n n s t a e c t a t
y t a i h t e a t s s q i r i
s n e t a t z r e i i e t i n
n r o t n i o a s h a y u t u
c i i h n o r p s h e n t i m
i o w a t c j x y r i a e e m
n t g d h n h i g h o p l s o
l r a l e x a n d e r t s t c
o l a c i d e m o i b s n i h
y t i r o n i m u d o h t e m
u n d e r g r a d u a t e n m

```

HS-MACA

<https://healthsciences.creighton.edu/hsmaca>

402.280.2124

Center for Promoting Health and Health Equality

<https://www.creighton.edu/health/cphhe/us/>

402.280.2389 / 402.280.2907

Director SRI Program: Dr. Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, MD, MSPH, MBA

Coordinator SRI Program: Juan J. Montoya, MBA

Supervisor SRI Program: Errik Ejike, MPH