

Interns experience “thrill of discovery”

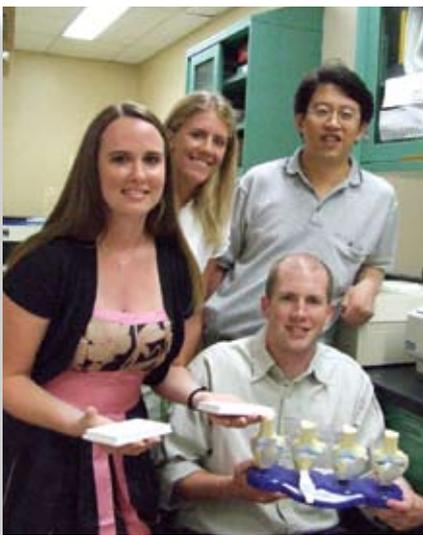
Danielle Helton, a junior at Baylor University, and Erica Turse, a senior at the University of Florida, were chosen from 64 applicants for the first Kappa Delta Orthopaedic Research Internship launched this summer by the UT-Campbell Clinic Department of Orthopaedic Surgery.

The coeds spent eight weeks engaged in research under the direction of Dr. Karen Hasty, Dr. Jinsong Huang, and Dr. Richard Smith. Both students are members of Kappa Delta, a national social sorority.

“Women are under-represented in orthopaedics,” Dr. Hasty said, “and Kappa Delta has sponsored a significant national award for orthopaedic research for more than 50 years. It seemed appropriate to offer this opportunity to Kappa Delta members. And the response was terrific.”

Erica, who plans to become an orthopaedic surgeon, worked on projects related to the early detection of osteoarthritis. Danielle, who plans a career in orthopaedic research, worked on research involving longevity issues related to artificial knee implants.

“We’ve both spent many hours in classroom labs, but the work we did this summer was more like real-world research,” Danielle said. “We experienced the thrill of discovery that real scientists experience. It was a great learning opportunity.”



DANIELLE HELTON, FRONT LEFT, AND ERICA TURSE, BACK LEFT, WINNERS OF UT-CAMPBELL CLINIC’S FIRST KAPPA DELTA ORTHOPAEDIC RESEARCH INTERNSHIP, ARE PICTURED WITH (FRONT RIGHT) UT-MEMPHIS MEDICAL STUDENT SCOTT CASTLE, RECIPIENT OF AN NIH RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP, AND DR. JINSONG HUANG, INSTRUCTOR, UT-CAMPBELL CLINIC.

THE SURGICAL TEAM USED TWO STAINLESS STEEL PLATES AND 26 SCREWS TO ALIGN AND IMMOBILIZE THE FEMUR.



Dr. Perez’s surgical skills help restore bear’s unusual patient



DR. EDWARD PEREZ

Campbell Clinic surgeon Dr. Edward Perez has set hundreds of femur fractures, but he’s never had a patient like Cranbear, a 600-pound female polar bear he helped treat last spring.

A star attraction at the Memphis Zoo, Cranbear broke the femur in her left hind leg in two places in February, the result of a 14-foot fall. When the veterinarian leading Cranbear’s medical team contacted Smith & Nephew about using a plate designed for humans to repair the break in Cranbear’s leg, Smith & Nephew recommended Dr. Perez because of his expertise and experience.

“I was very familiar with Cranbear when I received the call,” said Dr. Perez. “She and the other polar bears are my children’s favorite animals at the zoo.”

There were no complications during the surgery, Dr. Perez said, but Cranbear’s girth made it difficult to take detailed X-rays before the operation. The surgical team used two stainless steel

plates and 26 screws to align and immobilize the femur.

After recuperating in the zoo’s hospital for 10 weeks, Cranbear returned to the polar bear exhibit on June 1. During her recovery, the beloved bear received more than 300 cards and 650 e-mails wishing her a speedy recovery.

“I was happy to participate in the surgery for such a marvelous animal,” Dr. Perez said. “After Cranbear was back in her pool, the zoo held a private party for her medical team, and my children were able to attend also. They were proud of my role in Cranbear’s recovery. It was really a great experience.”

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— Dr. Edward Perez