2026 SPARCS Program Participants & Research Topics



Brayden E. King
University of South Carolina

Addressing the Social Barriers of Hospitalized Stroke/TIA Patients through Community Health Workforce Support

Summer Research Mentor: Eseosa Ighodaro, MD, Neurology



Aditi Kumar
Hamilton College

Revisiting the Immigrant Health Paradox: Hypertension among Mexican Immigrants and Migrant Farmworkers

Summer Research Mentor: Joanne Sandberg, PhD, Family & Community Medicine



Jaleah Y. Leak
North Carolina State University

Effects of Cardiac Rehabilitation and Weight Loss on Cardiac Structure and Function

Summer Research Mentor: Tina Brinkley, PhD, Gerontology & Geriatrics



Caitlin S. Pron
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Dihydrolipoic Acid-Catalyzed Reductive Nitrosylation of Ferric Myoglobin

Summer Research Mentor: Daniel Kim-Shapiro, PhD, Physics



Makayla V. Shiek
St. Olaf College

Effects of Interleukin (IL)-6 Trans-signaling on Cardiac Fibrosis

Summer Research Mentor: Giselle Melendez, MD, Cardiology



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