The WISEST Summer Research Program is much more than a summer job! It’s a chance to learn about diverse fields of study; to experience research hands-on in a University lab; and to develop the skills needed to succeed in a less-traditional role. The Program is designed to give students experience in all these areas and we expected students to take advantage of every opportunity provided.

**The WISEST Summer Research Program aims to:**

- provide hands-on experience with cutting-edge research, building students’ self-confidence in their abilities to contribute to an area that is considered less-traditional for their gender.
- provide opportunities to meet and be inspired by successful researchers and career professionals in the fields of science, engineering and technology.
- provide learning opportunities about the techniques and types of research being conducted in different fields of study.
- broaden awareness about fields of study and career options in science, engineering, and technology.
- provide an introduction to academic and university life at the University of Alberta.
- provide opportunities to meet other young people with similar interests in science, engineering, and technology, developing a peer support network.
- assist in the development of key professional skills.

**Hands-on Experience in the Research Lab plus Professional Development:**

- The WISEST Grade 11 students spend six weeks working as paid members of research teams at the University of Alberta.
- Students acquire practical lab skills, learn about interdisciplinary research and gain insights into the careers and lives of professionals in science, engineering and technology.
- The program also provides regular career and peer support sessions for the student researchers. They are brought together weekly to talk with people in less-traditional careers, tour other laboratories on campus, tour industrial facilities such as Syncrude Research Centre, Dow Chemical Canada, Gilead Alberta ULC, and Afexa Life Sciences. The students develop research-based and personal skills including scientific writing, networking, creating scientific reports, posters and giving presentations.
- The summer ends with “Teachers Appreciation Day” and “Celebration of Research” which highlights the successes of the Student Researchers. They present their high-calibre research posters to teachers, family, friends, University and government officials, Program Partners and Contributors.

**Based on the WISEST “3 R” Formula -- Remarkable Role-Models & Researchers:**

- The WISEST programs are all about strong inspiration and solid coaching.
- We rely on dozens of role-models -- women and men working in applied sciences, technology industries and in all fields of engineering -- to share in person their experiences and the challenges of pursuing professional careers and corporate excellence while still managing to live balanced, complete lives.
- Complementing the inspiration we draw from our role-models is the dedicated coaching we gain from researchers, some ranking among the world’s finest, who serve as volunteer summer supervisors for the WISEST students.

**The Results:**

- Surveys indicate that the 2011 Summer Research Program positively affected the high-school students’ interest levels and their desire to study or pursue a career in science, engineering and/or technology. 90% of the 60 students report the program increased their interest in science, engineering and technology. 91.5% of the students had a high or extremely high enthusiasm to explore a career in a less-traditional field. 98.3% of the 60 students reported a broadened awareness of different fields of study in science, engineering and technology.
- Our research shows that a student’s hands-on experience in the lab is one of the key factors in developing and increasing their interest in a particular field.
- 85% of program alumni pursue studies in the Faculties of Science and Engineering.
- More than 1500 young women and men have participated in the WISEST Summer Research Program, thanks to far-sighted sponsors and committed research supervisors.