

Editors Column

Notre Dame Leadership Seminar



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On March 12, 2026, I stayed after school to help make posters for my school’s speech team. That afternoon, I received my acceptance letter to the University of Notre Dame’s Leadership Seminars (NDLS) program. Approximately 150 students worldwide are admitted to this summer opportunity with all costs, including tuition, meals, and housing, covered by the university. I was admitted to The Power of Investing seminar, which I was especially excited about since I was not familiar with investing and compound interest, two topic areas that the seminar covered.

This year’s program occurred from July 18 - 29 with six seminars: Business, Global Issues, Inequality in America, RADIANT, The American Experiment, and The Power of Investing. Throughout the experience, students were able to attend classes taught by Notre Dame professors, participate in local service trips, socialize with friends through daily activities, work on group projects, and attend a field trip to nearby cities including Chicago and Indianapolis.

Upon arrival, it was evident



The Golden Dome at the University of Notre Dame at night—Lewis Hall, the girls’ dorm for NDLS, was located right next to this iconic Notre Dame landmark. [Source: Author, Angel Song]

that Notre Dame valued community and cooperation. Students were each assigned to a residence counselor acting as mentors and friends throughout the program. There were numerous bonding opportunities scheduled every day, including the Notre Games, where students were placed into teams and competed in various activities to become the champion at the end of the program.

As a student enrolled in the investing seminar, I was able to learn about practical applications of investing concepts, like through compounding equations, and also theories such as game theory and the benefit of establishing win-win relationships in business. Our field trip to Chicago involved visits to William Blair and Baird, two investment banks where we were able to meet with Notre Dame

alumni and ask questions about what it would be like if we chose to work in finance.

However, my days weren’t just filled with learning. There were plenty of opportunities to socialize with friends. One of the most memorable activities included watercolor painting at St. Joseph’s Lake, where I was able to talk to people I had met and paint with them, all while watching the sun set. There was a great balance between productivity and socialization, which was something I appreciated seeing in a summer program.

Although I had attended similar overnight programs before, NDLS felt very different. I consistently felt a strong sense of community, and it was easy to tell that everyone was rooting for each other no matter where they came from or which seminar they were in. I’m so grateful I got to experience NDLS. I became friends with many brilliant young people from all over the world, and I’ve learned so much from each and every one of them. NDLS pushed me to break out of my comfort zone while learning new concepts about investing, a field I had never thoroughly explored before.

Student Reporter

Beyond Leadership: Lessons from HOBY



Ellie Kim
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Every summer, thousands of incoming high school juniors across the US gather for the Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) Seminar, a program designed to inspire and develop the next generation of leaders and change-makers. Selected to represent their schools, students attend seminars hosted by the Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership Foundation, where they participate in leadership workshops, service projects, team-building activities, and discussions over two days and three nights.

This summer, I attended the Southern California HOBY Seminar. Heading into the weekend, I expected to leave with new leadership strategies or life-changing advice from accomplished HOBY alumni. While I certainly gained those things, they weren’t what stayed with me long after the program ended. Instead, what I took home were the people.

From the moment I arrived at the University of San Diego campus, I found myself surrounded by students from areas close to me. Yet, each person came from a different background, community, and set of experiences despite sharing an interest in growing and making a difference.



A group of HOBY student ambassadors (in navy) gathers together with their counselors (in green) to smile for the picture. [Source: Author, Ellie Kim]

Discussions that began as formal introductions slowly gave way to casual conversations, which led to strong friendships in the span of just days.

The program itself was structured around a mix of group and individual activities, from taking a leadership personality color test to constructing an egg drop in small groups, along with guest speakers, many of whom were successful HOBY alumni. A meal

usually separated these activities. These were eaten with our groups, who were the people we stayed with for the entirety of the program, and were made up of around ten student ambassadors and two counselors, both of whom are HOBY alumni.

One of the most meaningful moments came not from a keynote speech or leadership exercise, but from listening to the HOBY leadership team in charge

of organizing the seminar. These counselors, who were actually HOBY alumni, shared that the friendships they had made at HOBY had endured long after the program had ended. Some still spoke with one another, collaborated on projects, or simply remained lifelong friends despite attending different schools, colleges, and vastly different paths in life.

In the media, throughout history, and even in our popular social culture, leadership is often portrayed as public speaking, decision-making, or guiding a team. HOBY reminded me that this might not always be the case. At the end of the day, the team that a leader is supposed to guide is made up of numerous individuals, all with their own strengths and weaknesses, feelings, and experiences. The ability to build authentic relationships, encourage others, and create communities where people feel valued is just as important as any technical leadership skill. In fact, is it even possible to lead a team successfully without the aforementioned characteristic? Leadership may have been the reason I chose to attend HOBY, but human connection and friendship became the reason I’ll always remember it.

Student Reporter

How Art Brings Young Volunteers and Children Together



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Every Friday afternoon, a classroom at a community welfare center in Sillim-dong becomes a place where creativity takes center stage. Instead of spending the afternoon studying, a group of international students volunteers their time to lead art activities for local children. Through a combination of drawing, painting, and conversation, the program creates a welcoming space where children are encouraged to express themselves freely.

Each week features a different activity, but every project shares the same goal—helping children explore their creativity while building confidence. During the first session, children designed personalized name tags using colors, patterns, and drawings that reflected their personalities. In another session, they took on a challenge called "This Is Not a Spoon," transforming an ordinary spoon into imaginative objects ranging from rockets to flowers. The activity encouraged them to think beyond the obvious and reminded everyone that there is more than one way to see the world.



Students participate in the "This Is Not a Spoon" activity during the volunteer session, exploring creativity by transforming an ordinary spoon into something entirely new through their own ideas. [Source: Author, Olivia Seok]

One of the most memorable projects invited each child to decorate a full-face mask slit into two halves. While one side represented their own face, the other illustrated details that described their identities. Some children drew soccer balls, books, and musical notes. Others chose flowers, pets, stars, or their families. Although everyone received the same blank

mask, every finished piece looked completely different, reflecting each child’s unique interests, experiences, and imagination.

As the children eagerly shared the stories behind their artwork, the classroom quickly became more than just a place for making crafts. Conversations naturally grew from questions about

favorite hobbies, dreams for the future, and the inspiration behind each drawing. The activities offered children an opportunity to express themselves without worrying about finding the "right" answer.

For the volunteers, the experiences have been just as meaningful. Coming from different schools and backgrounds, the international students work together to prepare activities and encourage every child to participate. Though the goal is to support the local community, the program has also become a reminder that meaningful connections can be built through simple moments of creativity and encouragement.

Community service is often measured by the time people offer to others or commitments, but these Friday afternoons suggest something more. A drawing, a painted mask, or a simple conversation can help people understand one another in ways that words sometimes cannot. Through art, both the children and the volunteers continue to discover that creativity has the power to bring people together.

Editors Column

Experiences in the UCLA Pre-Med Summer Scholar Program



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Starting summer vacation, students and parents alike may wonder about utilizing the time to not only take a well-earned rest, but also to take summer courses or programs in order for students to pick up a new skill or prepare for the incoming school year. Having learned the former from the UCLA Pre-Med Summer Scholar Program, I recommend this course for the short yet packed-to-the-brim one-week experience of exploring the numerous specializations and complexities of the medical field.

Offered for all high school students to attend, attendees, primarily from all throughout California, and sometimes from out of state, came to UCLA for this course. Throughout the program, students are given a UCLA-brand uniform to wear and gathered into groups with counselors who are primarily UCLA undergraduates with pre-med majors and interests. Within those groups, students received hands-on training in various medical practices such as suturing and utilized UCLA resources like laparoscopy machines to explore the branching career choices that medicine has. For each of these activities, counselors and UCLA staff alike



In the UCLA Pre-Med Summer Scholar Program, students practice CPR techniques as part of the course. [Source: The UCLA Pre-Med Program Counselors]

attended to teach the students about such activities. Through this opportunity, the students could also converse with them as professionals regarding the work-life and environment that is to be expected with UCLA or the average hospital setting. The program also organized these activities into specific schedules to ensure that despite there being around a hundred students participating, each group of students would receive assistance from the staff to empower their learning experi-

ences. Being able to talk to professionals while handling equipment and technology typical of each specialization of medicine helped in providing a meaningful experience in understanding the myriad of medical specializations and work fields present in this field.

Beyond hands-on activities, seminars and presentations from field experts in the UCLA medical department and hospital also provided insight into not just the skills aspect of medicine, but also

accustomed students to the everyday life of medical professionals. Even outside of class times and schedules, such as throughout lunchtime, students could experience hospital food thanks to the program's close proximity to the UCLA hospitals.

Just before the end of each day, every student from a given group would also collaborate to research and prepare a presentation on a medical disease or condition. This final activity of collaboration trained students in cooperation and research skills, preparing them not for the experience of being a medical professional, but the researching, educational, and cooperative sides of being a medical student. This combination of hands-on experiences, personal advice from medical professionals, and group activity helped provide an unforgettable summer experience in just a week.

Overall, the UCLA Pre-Med Summer Scholar Program helped provide an insightful venture into the field of medicine in just a short period of time, and attending such programs can help complement one's academic journey through summer breaks and vacations.

Student Reporter

The Power of Curation at the National Museum of Korea



Elizabeth Kim
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Stepping into the National Museum of Korea, I expected to see vast arrays of ancient artifacts and art. I walked in, ready to learn more about Korea's history and its past culture, but did not expect creative displays that promoted accessibility and understanding.

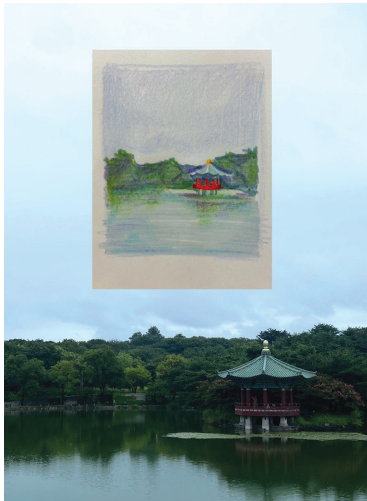
The first exhibition hall detailed all sorts of things Koreans used in the past. Rows of stone tools, old pottery vessels, and ways of life filled the space. However, I also noticed a very modern addition to the exhibition. Multiple interactive videos and tablets accompanied the area. This allowed the audience to visualize how the items would have been used in people's daily lives. I especially noticed a lot of younger visitors having fun with these. There were also projections laid out over scenes of the objects. Illustrated people were living their lives with the objects, giving all of the visitors a glimpse into how life actually functioned in the past. Groups of people stood in the front, watching the scene as if it were a movie. These additions to the exhibition made history accessible for everyone to learn; people from all around the world and of



The paired display of the ritual dish and a painted version of it taught me that art and culture live through generations. [Source: Author, Elizabeth Kim]

all ages were engaged in every corner of the hall.

Going up the floors of the museum, there were also interesting displays of ceramics, complementing the beauty of the wares, one being celadon. Originating from China, celadon pottery was a highly valued art form with a jade-like blue-green shade. Ko-



Inspired by the paired curations at the museum and the beautiful pavilion outside, I drew my own version of the scene. [Source: Author, Elizabeth Kim]

rea's celadon became very popular after artisans added their own style. Walls of the celadon section adorned phrases that would describe celadon's beautiful color with metaphors to nature. Fittingly, these words were written in a translucent blue-green, and together they read like a poem that explained the allure of the hue. The design choices of the de-

scriptions and the artistic way of writing added to my appreciation.

Another notable display of pottery was a paired curation of a ceramic work with another modern piece inspired by it. One example I saw was an ancient ritual dish that was coupled with a still life painting of the same ritual dish. The form was captured accurately in the painting, but there was also the artist's spin with a bold blue background. The exhibition showed that artisans are continuously inspired by works of the past and interpret them in their own ways. Even hundreds of years apart, art and culture live on rather than being just a display from the past.

Inspired by that paired curation, I also sought to create my own artwork inspired by what I had seen at the museum. In the outdoor section of the gallery sits a beautiful, traditional Korean pavilion on a lake. I took a picture of the serene scene and matched it with my own drawn version. My visit to the museum not only taught me how displays can create accessible understanding but also how inspiring they can be.

Student Reporter

A World in Miniature: Nowon Train Village



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Recently, I visited Nowon Train Village in Korea with my family. Nowon Train Village is a village with a train theme, and the main building of the village displays two different countries in miniature: the first country is Switzerland and the second is Italy. As stated in the name, there are many different trains on display. To better understand the miniature world, there is a guidebook that provides photos and explanations of the two pavilions in detail, both in Korean and English.

After paying for the ticket and entering the Nowon Train Village, there is the Switzerland Pavilion. Being mainly based on the mountains of the Alps, some of the main sights of the Switzerland Pavilion include Matterhorn, Jungfrau, Zurich Main Station, and Chapel Bridge in Lucerne.

At the end of the Switzerland Pavilion, the entrance for the Italy Pavilion appears. The Italy Pavilion mostly shows Italy's history, with its fancy cultural heritage, and is about twice as big as the Switzerland Pavilion. This big space is filled with numerous Italian landmarks and sights, including the Colosseum, Trevi



Caption A: Nowon Train Village in Korea displays realistic miniature mountains, trains, and villages. [Source: Author, Jisu Wi]

Fountain, the Mouth of Truth, St. Peter's Basilica, Duomo di Milano, and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. All are well-detailed recreations done in the form of miniatures.

There were many interactive exhibits available in both pavilions. Many sections of miniatures would move if I pushed the button in accordance with the section, and this button could be pressed by everyone. One of my favorite interactive exhibits was the horse riding

game, which could be played by a maximum of three people. It is a game where you press the button as many times as you can, and the horse moves based on that speed. This interactive is good to play with friends or family, as it creates a good memory and interactivity.

Near the train village, there is a famous cafe called Cafe With Trains, and corresponding with the name, the interior of the cafe is decorated with numerous

trains and their tracks. A unique thing about this cafe is that the orders are delivered directly by a miniature model train straight to the table. This train delivery is only available on the first floor, but the second floor is also good as it provides a more peaceful vibe. The cafe also has a rocket launch show in which the model rocket launches every 20 minutes for visitors to see. With smoke and light effects, the rocket takes off and travels across the ceiling tracks.

Overall, it was an incredible experience to visit the Nowon Train Village. Not only could you see a beautiful view of each Pavilion through miniatures, but it also provided time to learn more about the landmarks of Switzerland and Italy. Moreover, the interactives there make the visit more enjoyable. I personally preferred looking through the Switzerland Pavilion because it has a wonderful view, especially of the natural background. Additionally, the Italy Pavilion was also nice as there are more interactive activities that are more interesting there. Therefore, I highly recommend visiting the Nowon Train Village if there is a chance!