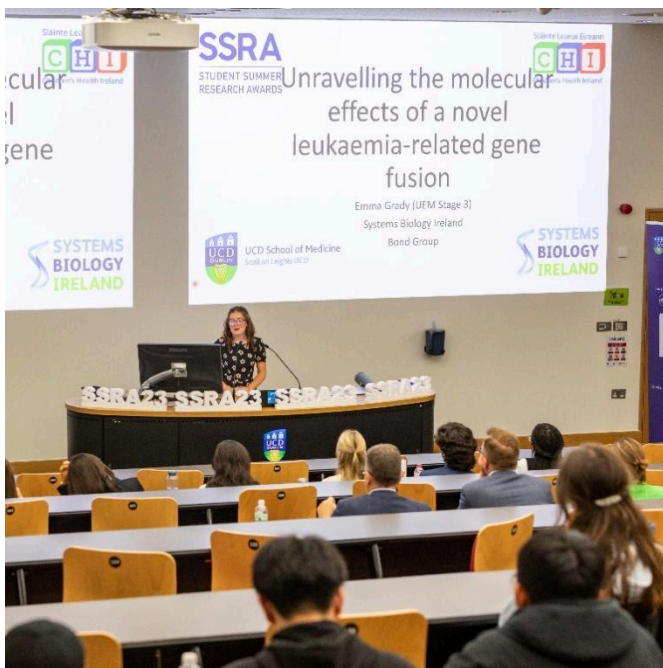
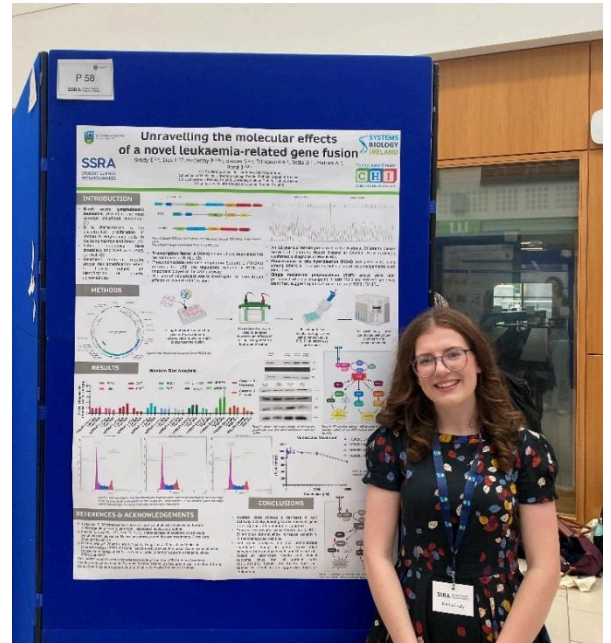


## Emma Grady – Stage 3 Medicine – Academic Bursary Statement

This summer, thanks to the support of the Ad Astra Academic Bursary, I completed a research project as part of the Student Summer Research Awards (SSRA) programme organised by the UCD School of Medicine. My project was titled “Unravelling the molecular effects of a novel leukaemia-related gene fusion” supervised by Professor Jonathan Bond, Dr. Sharmila Biswas and Tânia Dias. I was based primarily in labs of Systems Biology Ireland, as well as collaborating with the clinical team in Children’s Health Ireland at Crumlin. I received no other stipend or financial support during this period, so the financial support of the bursary was greatly appreciated in easing the financial burden of living away from home.

My research was clinically focused, investigating the effects of a novel gene fusion, with the aim of identifying therapeutic targets and risk stratifying this fusion for any future patients who may present with the same. The collaborative approach with the clinical team in Crumlin was invaluable, and demonstrated the ideal model of translational research. The laboratory work was intense, with long hours of cell culture, Western Blotting and drug screening. It taught me determination, resilience, tenacity and diligence. The results of our laboratory work, combined with the clinical outcome of our patient were extremely promising.



These promising results have been recognised by the Haematology Association of Ireland who invited me to present my findings at their annual conference, an incredible opportunity for a Stage 3 medicine student. Engaging with consultant haematologists and oncologists and discussing my research with them has only further developed my desire to pursue a career in research in the future.

I was also honoured to have been selected as the Silver Medalist for Research Excellence in the SSRA 2023 final out of over 140 projects completed this summer in the UCD School of Medicine.

cannot express my gratitude to the Ad Astra Academy enough for their support over the last three years. The success of my project would not have been possible without the development of presentation, communication and teamwork skills from the workshops delivered by the Academy. They prepared me for this incredible opportunity, allowing me to excel, not only in the university itself, but in the working world, preparing me for my future career as a doctor.

