

Promoting learning and careers in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

📞 Call Us : (858) 534-0804 | E-mail : srs@ucsd.edu

**UC San Diego** (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/>)  
**SALLY RIDE SCIENCE**

# Teen space enthusiast helps keep Sally Ride's legacy alive at summer Junior Academy



(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/McCue2.jpg>)

July 11, 2018 (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/teen-space-enthusiast-helps-keep-sally-rides-legacy-alive-at-summer-junior-academy/>) by Sally Ride Science (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/author/mking/>) · Posted in " News Releases (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/category/news-releases/>) " · Tags " NASA (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/tag/nasa/>), Sally Ride (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/tag/sally-ride/>), Sally Ride Science (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/tag/sally-ride-science/>), STEAM (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/tag/steam/>), STEM (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/tag/stem/>) " ·

Elle McCue remembers when she was little and her dad would push her in a swing. With each push he would chant, “Blast off to Mercury . . . Blast off to Venus . . .”

“Before I could even say the alphabet, I could recite the order of the planets,” McCue said. It was the first glimmer of a fascination with space science that has endured and blossomed for the Carmel Valley teenager.

Last summer, McCue attended the “Space Out!” workshop at [Sally Ride Science Junior Academy](https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/junior-academy/) (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/junior-academy/>), where students designed, built and launched mini rockets.

This summer, McCue, 16, has stepped up her involvement, volunteering as a Junior Academy intern. Sally Ride, America’s first woman in space, cofounded Sally Ride Science in 2001, and the Junior Academy carries on her legacy by offering four weeks of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) workshops under the direction of [UC San Diego Extension](https://extension.ucsd.edu) (<https://extension.ucsd.edu>).

“My idol has always been Dr. Ride, since third grade when I dressed up as her for a wax museum,” McCue explained. “I just wanted to contribute to her legacy and follow in her footsteps as much as possible. And I thought I could help out by being an intern.”

McCue grew up in Carmel Valley. Her dad is a hydrogeologist, and her mom is a veterinarian. She will be in 11<sup>th</sup> grade in the coming school year at Canyon Crest Academy. In addition to space science, she is involved in dance, especially ballet.

At the Junior Academy, which runs through July 20 at Mission Bay High School, McCue works behind the scenes each day helping students, parents and instructors with paperwork and other tasks.

Megan Lancaster, program manager for Extension’s [Pre-College and Career Preparation Programs](https://extension.ucsd.edu/courses-and-programs/pre-college) (<https://extension.ucsd.edu/courses-and-programs/pre-college>), said McCue has been a key addition to the Junior Academy staff. “She has been an invaluable asset, with responsibilities ranging from monitoring student participation and communicating with parents to providing guidance and feedback to instructors and serving as a role model to our students,” Lancaster said. “She encompasses all of the traits of a Sally Ride Science steward. We are lucky to have her on our team this year and look forward to her return for years to come!”

The internship has been a learning experience for McCue. “I’ve really enjoyed learning to communicate effectively with the parents and students alike,” she said. And, she added, “I have been able to talk to instructors about their work, which has been super interesting.”



Elle McCue has her sights set on a career at NASA.


Volunteering at the Junior Academy isn't McCue's only science-centric activity. Last summer she took part in the Advanced Space Academy, part of Space Camp at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Ala. There she received the camp's highest student honor, the Right Stuff Award. McCue will head back to the space academy later this summer.


She has also channeled her love of space science into a project to earn her Gold Award in Girl Scouts. Last summer, she taught astronomy classes and held stargazing events for elementary students at the La Jolla and Carmel Valley libraries. Her Gold Award project includes working to raise money to purchase a telescope in Ride's honor for local students to use.

McCue is pondering the path she wants to pursue in college. "I'm still deciding between the application and the theoretical part of space science," she said.

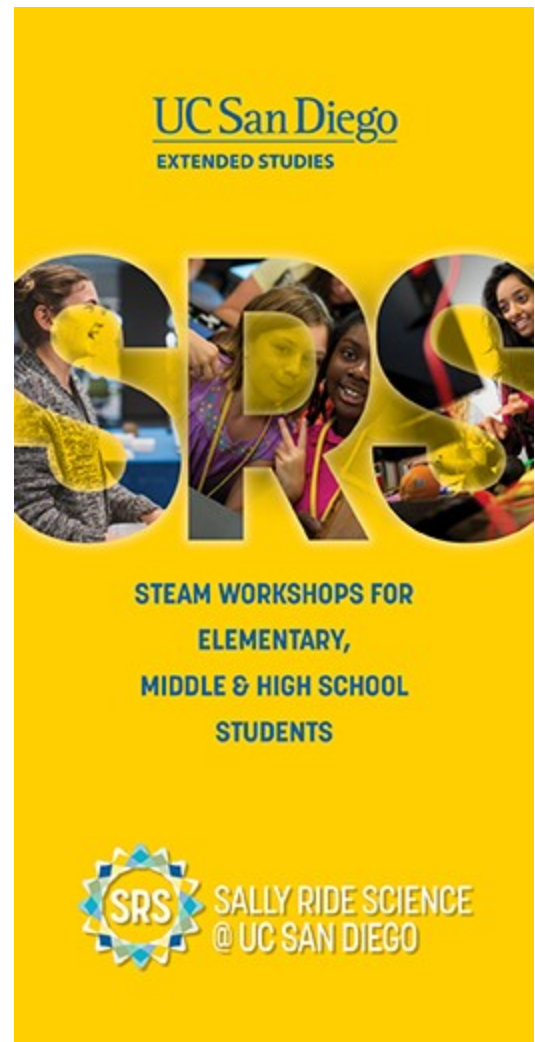
But she's certain about where she wants to end up: "My dream and my goal is to work at NASA in some respect and to contribute as much as possible."

 print

 WATCH: Congressman Scott Peters welcomes students to Sally Ride Science summer academy (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/watch-congressman-scott-peters-welcomes-students-to-sally-ride-science-summer-academy/>)

Mayor helps get out the word about expansion of free STEAM classes in San Diego libraries (<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/mayor-helps-get-out-the-word-about-expansion-of-free-steam-classes-in-san-diego-libraries/>) 

## Spotlight



(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/academy/>)

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/feed/>) **Recent Posts**  
(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/>)

Forbes on SALLY documentary: Why Sally Ride's Legacy Still Challenges the Culture Of STEM

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/forbes-on-sally-documentary-why-sally-rides-legacy-still-challenges-the->

## Explore

Home

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/>)About

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/about/>)Books

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/books/>)K12

Students

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/junior-academy/>)K12 Teachers


(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/teachers/>)Press

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/about/contact/>)UCTV


(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/uctv/>)

## Stay Connected

 (<https://www.facebook.com/sallyridescience>)

 (<https://www.instagram.com/sallyridescience>)  (<http://twitter.com/SallyRideSci>)

 (<http://www.youtube.com/user/SallyRideScience>)

 (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/99955794@N05/>)

 (<https://plus.google.com/100164746000334313811/posts>)

 (<http://www.pinterest.com/SallyRideSci/>)

 ([http://www.linkedin.com/company/sally-ride-science?trk=top\\_nav\\_home](http://www.linkedin.com/company/sally-ride-science?trk=top_nav_home))

## Spotlight

(<https://sallyridescience.ucsd.edu/academy/>)