

Hi! I'm Claire Yang, a rising junior at Ward Melville High School. I've always had an interest in STEM, but going into high school I was unsure about which particular area I wanted to pursue. Working at the LTC this summer gave me the opportunity to explore physics, and more specifically, optics! Because I had little knowledge of optics, I started off by simply making a *camera obscura* out of my room. Essentially a large pinhole camera that projects the image outside my window onto my wall, making the camera obscura allowed me to start to step into geometrical optics. From there, I was able to start playing around with light and a variety of lenses, combining diverse areas of science to learn as much as I could about light, and recording data that corresponds to the thin lens equation.

Currently, I'm working with lasers to begin my research in Gaussian beams. I joined the LTC to gain experience into how real-life research settings operate, and to try my hand at working hands-on in a lab! I look forward to exploring more in the world of optics and hope to learn as much as I can!