

Looking Ahead

Although there is still some time before I graduate, there are many things that I envision myself doing after that time. I'm currently on the pre-dental track, studying medical laboratory science. By the time I graduate, I will have applied to dental school, which has always been my most ambitious goal. If my application is as strong as I hope it will be, that fall would be the largest step towards my dream career.

From the many panels and events that I've attended in the past, I can only imagine the rigor of what being a dental student would entail. Endless hours of studying, networking, and work outside of class are some things that I can see taking up most of daily life. The years ahead are daunting for sure, but the fact that I'll be working towards one day being able to give back to my community through my education is one of the things that keeps me motivated.

What comes after is even more exciting to think about. Once I have a dental license, I want to be able to practice right away, either by creating my own business or by working for a corporation for a few years. One organization that has had my attention is Smiles without Borders, for example. Being involved would allow me to practice in areas where populations don't have as much access to the dental care that they need and it would introduce me to a wider variety of patients and cultures that I may not have been exposed to previously.

However, I can see myself continuing to be involved with the arts and developing each of my hobbies as I pursue my academic goals as well. Drawing would help me visualize the dental anatomy that I'd be learning and the muscle memory involved with playing an instrument would be extremely useful when trying to learn different manual techniques.

My undergraduate life has taught me many things which I will continue to use going forward. I've learned the consequences of taking on more than I can handle and how to work with my limits to accomplish more. This will be extremely important in the field, considering that dentistry requires not only being good at the technique itself but knowing how to run a business simultaneously. Knowing how to manage my time correctly will help to keep me from getting overwhelmed, and it'll also help me get more done both in dental school and in the field.

My experience as an honors college student has also taught me the importance of listening to different perspectives, and this is something that will be essential to working with the rest of the dental healthcare team, including the patient. If I have any inherent biases or views, doing the research necessary to expand those views and come to a greater understanding of a topic will help me to be of better service to my patients as well as a better dentist overall.