

As an undergraduate student at Old Dominion University, I have had incredible opportunities in exploring career paths, planning my future career with advisors, and participating in interactive learning experiences that have shaped me into the person I am today. From these experiences, I strongly believe that giving back to the community is the best way for me to show my gratitude. With my knowledge in the sciences, communication skills, and empathy towards others, I believe I can make the greatest impact as a physician. When I graduate from ODU, complete medical school, and finish my residency, I would like to spend time in the Eastern Shore of Virginia as a family physician and serve the migrant worker population that resides there.

I decided I wanted to be a physician when I completed my first shadowing experience at the Jordan-Young Institute, an orthopedic specialist practice. From seeing doctor-patient interactions to observing procedures in the OR, I learned the importance of teamwork and in the workplace. A patient's health not only relies on the physician, but nurses, medical assistants, and physician assistants all contribute to the patient's well-being. From this experience, I know that my ability to communicate well with others and contribute as a team player will help me in any kind of medical setting.

Also, when I saw the importance of healthcare in underserved communities, I was inspired to pursue a career in family medicine. In the spring of 2020, I volunteered at two health fairs through my "Spanish for Health Professions" class. Organized by EVMS students, these health fairs gave me and my classmates the opportunity to interact with patients and their families. Volunteering with EVMS gave me a new perspective on the disparities within the healthcare system. After interacting with a few medical students at the fairs, I learned that rural areas have limited access to quality healthcare, and for some of these patients, the health fairs are their only chance to receive free healthcare once a year. From these conversations, I realized that healthcare is a fundamental human right. Every patient regardless of race, background, or socioeconomic status has the right to be seen and treated with respect. Therefore, after understanding the challenges that rural communities face with access to healthcare, I decided that I want to pursue a career in rural medicine as a family physician.

As a biology major, I am confident that my foundation in the sciences will prepare me for the rigors of medical school. In addition, I decided to pursue a minor in Spanish. Ever since I began learning the language in high school, I developed a greater appreciation for the impact of Latin American cultures in the United States. By mastering the language and understanding the social, political, and cultural issues at stake, my goal is to assist native Spanish speakers in a clinical setting and provide the best healthcare experience to people from all backgrounds. Therefore, I firmly believe that learning Spanish will help me develop a broad range of interpersonal skills and treat a variety of patients.

With these past experiences, I believe that I will excel as a family physician and be able to serve the local community.