

## **PRE-MEDICINE**

**QUESTION:** As a pre-med student, what did you do to build up your CV? In addition, add your interest/what you want to specialize in? (eg. orthopedic surgeon, pediatrics, family doctor, emergency medicine, etc...)

**ANSWER:** Building your CV is important in general, but you should not choose activities just to build your CV. Take opportunities that are long term and do them because you believe you will enjoy them. I joined APHP because they actively volunteer in the community and gained leadership roles through the organization. I joined a research lab during my sophomore year where I could actively be engaged in my own research project and presented at the undergraduate research forums. I volunteered at a clinic for the children with autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders. I shadowed a pulmonologist and an internist from for long periods of time to get a strong understand of the best way to interact with patients of different backgrounds. Currently, I am interested in Emergency Medicine or Rheumatology.

**ANSWER:** Like many of my fellow officers I joined APHP as a way to boost my CV, it allows you to gain humanitarian work as well as leadership experience if you decide to become an officer. Joining a research lab is also a good way to improve your application as it allows you to show your ability to work in an environment different than the classroom. I wish I had started volunteering at a hospital sooner, but I plan on joining one over winter break. I'd like to work in a hospital diagnosing mysterious illnesses.

**ANSWER:** Like many of the officers here, I have been a member of APHP for a few years, and I decided to boost my CV by assuming a leadership position as an officer in this organization. As a prospective physician, I expect that I'll be learning and teaching my patients for my entire career, so I decided to focus some of my efforts in this direction. I've been an undergraduate teaching assistant for microbiology labs for a few semesters, and I'm a substitute teacher for CCSD. I think teaching is a unique way of keeping up with material, and I've learned to communicate with many age groups because of my experiences in subbing.

**ANSWER:** I began building my CV during the second half of my undergrad. I have not gotten my feet wet in doing research or volunteering/shadowing at hospitals but it is something that will be done in the near future. The volunteering I have done stems from being in APHP. There are lots of opportunities here for me to help the community. I

also wanted to strive for more of what APHP could offer me and I did that by stepping into the treasurer role. I felt that this would give me the leadership, efficiency, and structure that so many of our hospitals are built upon. As for my taste in our melting pot of specialties, I found myself always fascinated by microbiology, immunology, and bacterial pathogenesis. These three aspects, for the most part, encompass what I want to specialize in, and that is infectious diseases.

**ANSWER:** I did not know how to build up my CV before. I obtained my CNA and Medical Assisting certificates at Southeast Career Technical Academy. From there, I went to College of Southern Nevada (CSN) to obtain my Associates of Science before I came to UNLV and joined APHP during my junior year. Now I am an active officer of APHP as secretary. I am also volunteering at a non-profit organization called Operation H.O.P.E with Dr. Elliot Shin for over a year now. I aspire to become a pediatrician and I currently UTA for a microbiology lab.

**ANSWER:** I joined APHP, which allowed me to become more involved in the community, meet people who are following the same career path as me, and become more educated in different health fields. Since I enjoyed APHP, I decided to take up a leadership position as a secretary. I decided to apply for secretary since I have some experience in a business administration environment doing paper work for a care home that deals with clients with mental disorders. It gave me some insight on how our state approaches mental health, which I believe there should be more awareness and funding. I have also volunteered at a hospital in the pediatrics department and was able to have lots of patient interaction. There's more information about my hospital experience in the upcoming question. As of right now, I'm still exploring what I want to specialize in since I've always been changing my mind.

**ANSWER:** The first thing I did is speak with an advisor to complete the prerequisites on target on time on budget. I also got involved with volunteering at Sunrise Hospital to make sure the career path I have in mind is suitable for me and get a feel for the field of patient care in general. I have also started shadowing doctors to understand what their day-to-day work looks like and gain the experience and knowledge from their long years of experience. I also joined APHP to keep in touch with like minded students and get involved in the community as well as participate in a leadership role. I would want to be a family doctor. Although neurology is my ultimate goal.

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day-to-day work looks like and gain the experience and knowledge from their long years of experience. I also joined APHP to keep in touch with like minded students and get involved in the community as well as participate in a leadership role. I would want to be a family doctor. Although neurology is my ultimate goal.

**ANSWER:** In order to build my CV, I did join AMSA my first semester in college. I didn't join APHP until my 2nd year. I found that it fit my interests more because it provided several community service opportunities for me. I loved it so much that it pushed me to apply as a humanitarian chair. This position has allowed me to gain a leadership role and gain my leadership experience. I also got accepted into the UMC Emergency Medicine Research Program this semester. Just the interview itself was a great experience because it was a Multiple Mini Interview (MMI), which is a common form of interview format this is used for Med School interviews. I'm still fairly new to this program, but so far I love it. Besides getting research experience I am also getting clinical experience because I am constantly being exposed to physicians and patients. I am currently interested in going into Family Medicine and still plan to shadow a family doctor in the future.

**ANSWER:** To build up my CV I joined APHP during my second semester in college and have been an active member ever since. For me, I'm really grateful I joined APHP because it not only provided information about various health fields but it also helped me open up and become more social because I used to have pretty bad social anxiety that used to really hold me back from pursuing and trying out new things. After joining APHP I realized that I really love volunteering and humanitarian work, so I decided to pursue a leadership position as a humanitarian officer in APHP which involves coordinating the various volunteer work that we provide members. This sort of work really helped to fine tune communication, planning and scheduling, as well as time management skills. I have also been volunteering at St. Rose for about a year and half, twice a week, and I absolutely love it. I've made a lot of great friends through volunteering, both with APHP and at the hospital, and volunteering is something I truly enjoy and encourage others to develop a passion for. Currently, I'm looking at going to pediatrics, but this could change in the future as you sometimes don't really know what you want to do until you see it hands on. Over winter break I'm planning on shadowing a General Practitioner at an Urgent Care clinic.

**ANSWER:** In order to build my CV, I needed to join a health organization. I decided to join APHP and become an officer. Since I joined APHP, I gained more community service hours and gained connections to hospitals to build my CV. I enjoy being apart of APHP

because of the opportunity it offers. I am pursuing medical to become a plastic surgeon. I find interest in it because it involves more hand to hand activities.

**ANSWER:** I joined APHP to add community service to my CV. I also began volunteering in hospitals in order to gain hospital experience. To gain leadership experience I became an APHP officer. I am interested in family medicine and wish to become a ringside physician for boxing and the UFC on the side.

**ANSWER:** In order to build my CV, I began by joining APHP in order to participate in community service which is needed in order to be a competitive applicant. Within APHP I became an officer in order to gain the leadership experience I needed to continue branching my pre-med roles. Shadowing is a huge CV builder and I began shadowing a OB/GYN and Plastic Surgeon in order to learn what it really means to be a doctor. After that I started volunteering at Sunrise hospital to get more experience in the medical field and boost my application. Working at Sunrise I met an ER doctor that allowed me to shadow him along with an Orthopedic Surgeon, which I am currently shadowing. This semester I joined a research lab to gain even more experience in my field and have hopes to have my own project next semester.

**QUESTION:** If you have done research, which lab did you join and how far into your undergrad career did you join? What research did you do? How long? Did you enjoy your time and would you recommend it to other students?

**ANSWER:** I joined the UMC Emergency Medicine Research team this semester. I'm currently a junior, but would highly recommend students to join a research lab as early as they can. One of the studies I am doing is regarding ultrasound guided intrajugular vein IVs. There are always other studies on going and I am part of the team constantly collecting data throughout the emergency department at UMC. I've enjoyed it so far and would recommend it to other students.

**ANSWER:** I joined Dr. Schiller's research lab halfway through my sophomore year. My research focused on the new field of personalized medicine with Henry Santos (cool dude), and we developed a nutrigenetic database. Nutrigenetics is the study of how the food we eat can interact with our genes to increase/decrease our risk of disease. This is an ongoing bioinformatics project. I also joined Dr. Schiller's wet lab during the summer of my junior year where I worked with another student on the motifs within the C-terminome of proteins. These motifs play crucial roles in interacting with other

proteins via phosphorylation, acetylation, etc. and they could play a large role in creating new drug treatments.

**ANSWER:** I joined Dr. Jaeger's research lab this semester, fall of my senior year (this is pretty late to do though).

**ANSWER:** I joined Dr. Schiller's research lab halfway through my junior year. My research focused on the new field of personalized medicine with Pascal Nilsson (cool dude), and we developed a nutrigenetic database. Nutrigenetics is the study of how the food we eat can interact with our genes to increase/decrease our risk of disease. This is an ongoing bioinformatics project.

**QUESTION:** Have you volunteered in a hospital? If so, where and how was your experience like?

**PASCAL:** No but I have been a patient in a hospital before. It was not fun.

**ANSWER:** Yes I have volunteered in a hospital. I volunteered at St. Rose Hospital for about 6 months. I enjoyed it a lot, mostly because you realize how important every position is in a hospital in order to function efficiently. Also I think it's a good opportunity to have real face to face interactions with patients. It's the only time wear I ever felt actually part of the entire process of helping a patient, compared to just shadowing a doctor.

**ANSWER:** I haven't volunteered at a hospital, but I have been volunteering at Volunteers in Medicine of Southern Nevada (VMSN) since last year. The clinic is run by volunteers, and even the doctors themselves are volunteers. It's been a wonderful experience because you get to see what it's like from different perspectives in a clinic, starting from the front desk, to the back desk of the clinic, to shadowing and scribing for the doctors. Front desk experience at VMSN gives you receptionist and organizational experience, and you become familiarized with HIPAA disclosure forms. With back desk experience, you recognize forms and codes that doctors use regularly. Shadowing and scribing here allows you see how the doctors interact with their patients, and you get familiar medical terminology.

**ANSWER:** I volunteered at Sunrise Children's Hospital for about a year catering to the needs of patients and just making their stay at the hospital a bit manageable. I was able

to work with the child life specialists and assist the nurses in making sure the patients are comfortable and not bored. It definitely was an engaging experience because I got to interact with the patients and their families. As a volunteer, I was able to become close to some of the families and patients and was able to learn their stories. Through these experiences, you learn how to become more compassionate and caring of others. Sometimes, patients and their families are a bit intimidated by the doctors or nurses, so they feel comforted when a volunteer is there. At the end of the shifts, I always feel rewarded for being able to serve others.

**ANSWER:** I have been volunteering at Sunrise Hospital since October 2015 and it has been such an amazing experience meeting so many patients from different walks of life. I have connected with many at a even spiritual level. Volunteering at the hospital made me realize that caring for the sick is what I am meant to do with my life. I plan to continue volunteering my time now and in the future.

**ANSWER:** Yes, I'm currently a volunteer at one of the campuses of the St. Rose Dominican Hospitals. I've been volunteering there for about a year and a half, about a year ago I picked up an additional shift; so I volunteer there twice a week. I really enjoy volunteering there! Like I said before, volunteering has really helped me overcome a lot (but not all) of my social anxieties, and for me personally, I'm really proud of how far I've come since I started out. For others they might seem like small or insignificant accomplishments, but for someone who used to have literal panic attacks at just the mention of having to do a presentation to being able to talk in front of everyone at the meeting (albeit pretty awkwardly); it's a major improvement. Volunteering is not only great for your CV, but it's also a great way to understand how the internal processes within the hospital work; therefore, understanding how the hospital functions as a whole. You also have to opportunity to interact with the patients, which helps with your social skills, but it also gives you the chance to help make their day a little better by providing cheerful conversation or encouragement. I would encourage others to start volunteering at a hospital if they have the time for it because it really gives you a deeper understanding of the roles of every individual in the hospital, and gives you the experience to see what actually happens in a hospital rather than just an idea of what you think happens there.

**ANSWER:** I am currently volunteering at Spring Valley hospital. I am stationed in the ER and I love it. I experience some cool stuff but most of the time I end up restocking equipment.

**ANSWER:** I volunteer at Spring Valley Hospital. I work mainly in the ER and IMC, most of the time I restock gloves and other equipment.

**ANSWER:** Yes at Sunrise hospital. My experience was amazing, I volunteered in the ER and also the NICU. In the ER I pushed around a cart full of random goodies that I would take to each room and ask the patient if they needed anything. This was a lot of fun because I got to interact with a lot of patients and listen to what they wish were different and what they enjoyed about their stay. However, the NICU is my all time favorite place to volunteer because I was able to hold, feed and change the diapers of the babies. In the NICU you have more contact with the staff because many of the babies families do not come to see them.

**QUESTION:** What would you do differently if given the opportunity?

**ANSWER:** I would start by getting clinical experience starting as a sophomore. I don't mean clinical experience where you are standing around in a hospital or even re-stocking rooms. I would get clinical experience that has actual patient interactions. I would realize earlier on that the people who get amazing grades are not "smarter" than me, they are just people who study harder and longer. In a sense, studying longer is a smart thing to do though. I would have chosen one of the many non-profit organizations in Las Vegas and dedicated myself to them for a long period of time (1-2 years). I would try to worry about myself rather than about what everybody else was doing.

**ANSWER:** I would start managing my time better earlier. I realized during my junior year that school is much easier if you make just make time for what's important and have a plan of attack. It's not about doing less, but rather just doing everything efficiently. Also just really making time for the stuff you care about. We all have a dream, but don't let life pass you by while chasing it.

**ANSWER:** The beginning of your college career is when the A's come easy. Don't squander them! Attend class religiously and focus on your grades early on. Also become more involved, the sooner the better with things like organizations and research labs. Put aside time to volunteer in a hospital setting to try and get an appreciation for what is actually done.

**ANSWER:** If I could, I would have jumped at research opportunities earlier in my undergrad career. If you can find an opportunity to get involved in research when you're a freshman or sophomore, don't shy away from it! What I didn't know about research

was that many labs require you to participate for at least one year with 10 hours per week.

Another thing is that I switched my majors a few times to find out what was right for me, and I don't regret it at all. If I could do something differently, though, I would tell myself that it is ok to make mistakes, but you have to grow and improve from them. I had this misconception that you had to be perfect with perfect grades to be a doctor--which isn't true. Because of this, I thought I wasn't good enough to chase after something like this for the longest time.

**ANSWER:** I wish I could have joined APHP about a year or two earlier, be more organized in my study habits and time management. I also realized that having a morning routine, breakfast and an agenda is just as crucial as sleeping early the night before an exam. I would tell my younger self that preparation is key and that the tools for success have been my back pockets the entire time. It was not apparent to me and other freshman at the time of how different college life really is. I've always wondered how different college life would have been for me if I had an older sibling to give me guidance. I am an optimist, so when the time comes around for my younger sisters to go to college, I'll be there to give them any and everything they need to succeed.

**ANSWER:** I would have looked for research opportunities sooner. I did not know when I should start my research experience and I wished that someone told me where I could start and I had to ask around. You have to make sure that you can handle being in a research lab because it requires a lot of time and that you have to be committed for about a year or two.

**ANSWER:** If I could do something differently, I would have joined APHP earlier because I've gathered so much information that could have been useful when I started this pre-med journey. I've missed some great opportunities because I didn't feel that I was confident enough or didn't feel that it was beneficial at the time. When I joined APHP, I was able to gain that confidence in myself after meeting so many great people. I actually started off with a different major, so when I changed to Biology, I did not get all the helpful information to help steer me in the right direction right away. That's why it's so important to research what you need to do as soon as you can so you will have an idea of what you should try to do before getting into professional school. I don't have any regrets because I did learn a lot from my previous major, which can be useful in the health care.

**ANSWER:** My big advice to anyone is just do what is best for yourself and stay focused. Don't compare yourself to others, and don't listen to those who try to put you down. Just surround yourself with positive people who motivate you.

**ANSWER:** I would have gone for this career path earlier in my life although the opportunity did not present itself ten years ago. No regrets though, working in the field of technology has provided me with an invaluable sense of responsibility, work ethics, organization and team work.

**ANSWER:** I would have done everything I'm doing now earlier! Your junior and senior years in college get tough because your upper division biology classes are all being taken at the same time and your schedule gets really hectic. I would have chosen to start volunteering from the start. I also wish I had a mentor very very early on that told you information regarding professors, classes- pretty much everything no one else will tell you about.

**ANSWER:** I already joined APHP pretty early on in my college years, but I definitely wish I pursued a leadership position a lot sooner. After undertaking the role of an officer I've noticed my communication skills have improved a lot and I'm definitely a lot more comfortable putting myself in social situations that used to make me super anxious. I also wished I figured out my study strategies and worked on my time management a lot earlier on, because there was a period of time where I really struggled to keep up with everything and so my grades suffered quite a bit. However, if I figured those skills out sooner, then I would be in a much better position than I am in now. It's really important to reach out to someone if you're struggling, whether it be an advisor, mentor, close friend, or family member, it's really important to speak up about where and how you're struggling in your studies because your stress will keep building on itself; and it's not healthy for you, and it's something I personally wished I did a lot sooner. It's completely okay to have a hard time, but it's really hard to admit it to yourself and to others, so my advice would be just go at your own pace and to not constantly compare yourself to your peers because that just creates an environment where you put yourself down. So just do what you feel is better for yourself, not what everyone else is doing, if the pace is too fast or if the course load is too much, it's okay to take it easy. Stay focused on your goals and your aspirations, and you'll do just fine. Make friends who are true friends, who support you and motivate you, not put you down when you have a hard time.

**ANSWER:** If I had the chance to change anything it would have to be changing my time management skills. It took me a while to develop it but I wish I pushed myself harder.

**ANSWER:** Make as many friends as possible, sometimes you can score old exams for classes through networking.

**ANSWER:** I would have joined a research lab in my sophomore year rather than now. I would have buckled down and studied harder from the beginning because my first year I was too involved with everything but school.

**QUESTION:** What classes were/are the most beneficial?

**ANSWER:** I believe the most beneficial classes are the ones that cover a large variety of topics and they connect the topics well. These classes are Cell Phy, Biochem I & II, PSY 303, PSY 424, Mamm Phys, and Immunology. I believe that these classes were very useful to take before the MCAT (but I took Biochem II and Immuno afterwards). Cell Physiology teaches you the complex inner workings of the cell and has a fun interactive professor. BC I explains enzyme reactions, glycolysis, TCA cycle and II teaches you about lipids, nucleotides, pentose phosphate pathway and more. I found that PSY 303 (Foundations) was very useful in learning about the brain, neurons, and diseases. PSY 424 (Neuro) was helpful in understanding research experiments and what these experiments tell us about learning and memory in humans. Mammalian physiology is a great class to learn all about the systems of the body and how they interact together. Immunology is useful because it teaches you about the complexities of the inflammatory processes, antibodies and other useful information that no other class will cover.

**ANSWER:** For the MCAT: Immunology, Mammalian Physiology, CELL PHYS!!!, Biochem obviously, Evolution, Principles of Genetics, CELL PHYS!!!, Anatomy.

**ANSWER:** The classes that helped me the most were microbiology, virology, immunology, bacterial pathogenesis, biochemistry, and organic chemistry.

**ANSWER:** Some courses I thought were helpful were general chemistry and biology courses, cell physiology, mammalian physiology, immunology, biochemistry, and some psychology courses if you declare a psychology minor.

**ANSWER:** All the science classes I have taken are so fascinating and eye opening about the world of being. Those that provide information that can be applied to life directly have proven to be especially beneficial immediately such as Nutrition.

**ANSWER:** Some classes that I felt were really helpful were microbiology, cell physiology, immunology, biochemistry, and the general biology and chemistry courses. I also feel that some of the upper division psychology classes because I felt like it ties some of the information you learn in biology classes into a real life context, as in you can see it and apply it to real life examples.

**ANSWER:** I enjoyed taking ochem. It challenged me intellectually as a student and pushed me to succeed.

**QUESTION:** What MCAT tips do you have?

**ANSWER:** The MCAT is more about applying your concepts than studying. Seriously! Study a lot, but use practice problems to test your knowledge very frequently. Utilize (both) friends who are studying for the MCAT. Take it seriously and study consistently i.e. not once a week. Talk to people who have already taken the exam. Lots of practice exams, practice questions, and don't get burned out! Rest days are important.

**ANSWER:** The biggest thing I can say is have a plan and stick to it. Half the battle with the MCAT is just the endurance and persistence. That's very vague, but everyone will learn what works for them as you study for it. Also find people you can study and discuss topics with!

**ANSWER:** One tip I have for anyone who needs to take an admissions exam is to know ahead of time which subjects will be on your exam. By "ahead of time," I'm talking about the moment you start taking any biology or science courses related to the exam, which might seem extreme if you just decided to become a bio major. If you can get your hands on a set of prep books, even if they are a little bit older, you can see what kind of topics you will be tested on before you even take those classes. The prep books will broadly cover those topics in the exams, and while you're taking those related courses, you're bound to cover these MCAT topics. As you take each class, you can annotate these prep books, and it'll be easier to revisit material when it's time to start studying for the MCAT.

**QUESTION:** What interview tips do you have?

**ANSWER:** More cliches! Practice makes perfect. I practiced answering several questions for a week straight with a bunch of different people to gain feedback. Also just stay informed. Be a decent human being and be informed.

**ANSWER:** Be prepared. Shadowing, volunteering, and community work should help be prepared for it as well. Be yourself and you will do well.