



Unlike many of my peers, I didn't enter college immediately after graduating high school. I knew that I wanted to go into a service industry, but was at first indecisive about which educational path to take or even which vocation to pursue. Should I get a job and practical experience or go to school full time? College or trade school? Having two registered nurses for parents, the thought of entering healthcare was always there in the back of my mind. And with the scope of the medical field ever expanding, there were plenty of available jobs in healthcare. I always loved learning about the human body and the medical sciences have always had an appeal to me, but I needed to see if this was really what I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing. I also didn't want to devote four years of school to getting a degree in a field that I would eventually regret entering. So after graduating from high school, I took a year or two to go on several volunteer disaster relief deployments. I believe that an innate desire for service was awakened within me during these disaster relief missions, particularly the times when you saw entire communities that had lost everything. After these years of volunteer service, I decided to enter the workforce. Still having an interest in healthcare, I applied for an entry-level position

as a Clinical Technician (nursing assistant) in November 2008 with Navicent Health in Macon. This would give me insight into the world of healthcare without requiring an extensive amount of prior training. My job would entail assisting the patient with activities of daily living and performing any ancillary tasks delegated to me by the RN.

Working on the second floor of the Medical Center, Navicent Health in the Medical Observation Unit, I had my first experience working as a member of the healthcare team and my first contact with patients. From the very first set of vital signs, I realized that healthcare held an intrinsic satisfaction for me. As I worked in the Medical Observation Unit that first year, I began to contemplate furthering my education. In Spring of 2010, I enrolled at Gordon State College. I then focused my college courses toward the health sciences in preparation to go further in the medical field, still weighing which exact profession to pursue. Knowing without a doubt that healthcare was for me, I had to find my place within it.

In healthcare, the physician is the member bearing ultimate responsibility for the patient's care. It is also the physician that is the key member of the healthcare team when it comes to policy-making. They are the ones most able to affect change in practice and procedure. I also appreciated the fact that the physician would receive more comprehensive training on the pathophysiology of the very illnesses that we face than other professions. After all, my love for the core classes of biochemistry and anatomy and physiology at Gordon stoked a desire for this deeper knowledge. Thanks to my passionate biology professors, I truly wanted to learn all that I could about the "how and why", and it was the physician whose educational model devoted two entire years to that. Through all of this, I discovered that obtaining my M.D. would be the best way for me to accomplish both my desire for service as well as my thirst for deeper understanding of the miracle that is the human body.

Gordon State College was an integral part of my undergraduate science training and the caring Gordon faculty strongly contributed to the development of my passion for the health sciences. My education at Gordon laid the foundation for what I am now doing. I am currently a 2nd year medical student at Medical University of the Americas and will be taking the United States Medical Licensing Exam Step 1 in less than a year. The strong academics of the rigorous Gordon Biology Program are still paying dividends for me with each medical science class I take. And it proves that to be a competitive medical school applicant one need not attend a high-profile university. Indeed, I credit much of my scholastic success to the faculty and academics of the Gordon Biology Program.

All the best,

Timothy Ralph Griffin