



ERIC KRISTENSEN

CLASS OF 2018

STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Ann Arbor, Michigan

Undergraduate Major: Public Health: Community Health

Career Aspiration: Dentist / Oral Surgeon

Professional School: UNLV - University of Nevada Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine

What's been your favorite part of the journey to apply to professional schools?

My favorite part of the journey is definitely the overwhelming feeling of being accepted and knowing that all the hard work I had put in is finally paying off. Applying to professional schools can be a long process with little to no communication/feedback on your application.

What were some of the challenges you came across when preparing to apply to schools (what was tougher than you expected)?

As I mentioned before the little to no communication factor is tough on you mentally. When looking for community service hours just find something you are passionate about. The field does not need to be in the one you are pursuing. Find somewhere you feel you can make a difference and focus on serving at a few locations versus a few hours in many different locations.

How did you prepare yourself for the process of applying to schools?

There is no such thing as being over-prepared. Getting in a few extra community service hours or researching schools never hurts. As far as interviews go, you have to be an expert on yourself. The interviewers can ask any question so knowing your application in and out is very important. Above else just be yourself, if you are fortunate enough to receive an interview all they want is to see if you are the same person as they read about.

What services or organizations would you recommend pre-professional students utilize?

The Pre-Professional Advising Center was very helpful in preparing for interviews and also getting involved in the Greenville community. I also utilized the writing center to help prepare any written pieces I needed.

Looking back, what advice would you give to students who are interested in professional schools? What do you wish you had known earlier?

The biggest advice is to start early. Research the schools you want to apply to and follow any forums such as the student doctor network (SDN). SDN was very helpful in terms of timelines of when to hear back from schools, and even hearing some common interview questions each school likes to ask. (Editor's note: be care with online forums -- they can create unnecessary angst if you begin to compare yourself to other applicants and believe everything stated there).

What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?

I was a kicker on the football team while attending ECU and Virginia Tech. I also was involved in the pre-dental organization as well as Greek life.

What type of shadowing did you do?

I shadowed my dentist in Michigan observing many different procedures but also shadowed a local Greenville dentist as well as in a hospital setting at Vidant. Looking back I thought this was important to see different settings in healthcare as I am still undecided where I would like to practice upon graduation.

What type of volunteering did you do?

I volunteered mainly at Vidant and the Humane Society of Eastern North Carolina. I have always been passionate about animals so this was a great option for me as well as give back to a great program who is always in need of volunteers.

Where are you going to school?

University of Nevada Las Vegas School of Dental Medicine

Did you do research? If so what was the topic?

There was a research assignment incorporated into one of our classes during my undergrad which was a great experience. We focused on how drivers alter their driving habits when a motorcycle is present versus a car.

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

I would say my most rewarding experience would be volunteering at the Humane Society of Eastern North Carolina. They are very understaffed and volunteers seem to come and go but the animals are still there. They are very flexible on scheduling time to volunteer and there are many different ways you can help out.

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

Have a timeline of everything during the cycle you're applying and start your application as early as possible. Stay up to date on forums such as Student Doctor Network for possible updates and many questions you may have or haven't thought of can be answered