



HALEY HILDRETH

CLASS OF 2020

STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Sylva, NC

Undergraduate Major: BS Biology Minor Chemistry, MS Biology, Non-Thesis

Career Aspiration: General Dentist, Professor at ECU SoDM

Professional School: ECU School of Dental Medicine

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

I think that the pre-dental community was my favorite part of this whole process. I really enjoyed getting to know more and more people through volunteering, campus clubs, and ultimately growing with these individuals. I am proud that I will be starting this fall with some of my fellow pre-dents!

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

The most difficult part of the application process came long before it even began. It was the planning stages of when I was going to get my letters of recommendations or when I needed to have my personal statement completed. When I planned those steps out and gave myself deadlines, it made the application process easier, because I was able to give myself the dedicated time to each part of my application!

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

"You don't plan to fail, you fail to plan!" I made sure that I had a specific time goal for each aspect of my application. Everyone is different, but for me, I knew I had to work full time, go to school full time, and so I needed to devote more time to studying for the DAT verses cramming 3 months before hand. So I studied as much as I could in a 1.5 year span! I also planned it so I would apply as EARLY as I could. Having 4 transcripts to send wasn't going to make that easy. My best advise is to know yourself and your limits and PLAN!

Where are you going to school?

I will be at ECU School of Dental Medicine Class of 2024!

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

If I could have gone back to when I first started volunteering and shadowing, I would have started recording what I did. I think its important to document those moments you have with the community, especially when you are reflecting back for your personal statements. You will remember feelings and that is what drives an excellent personal statement!

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

As many as you know you can handle! Or as few, but with more responsibility! I highly recommend becoming an officer in at least one of your organizations. You will experience people and peers in a whole new light that will allow you to grow and ultimately prepare you to be an excellent dental service provider!

What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?

At WCU, I didn't have any extracurriculars. But then I was class president at Dental Assisting school at ABTech. And when I started graduate school at ECU, I found organizations I enjoyed: Biology Graduate Student Association, and Pre-Dental Honors Society. I also used platforms that ECU has to offer to add more volunteering hours that worked with my crazy schedule!

What type of shadowing did you do?

I completed about 40 hours of shadowing before dental assisting school. As a requirement of DA school, we had to shadow for 300+ hours of mostly general dentistry but also many specialties before we were able to assist. My least favorite was pedo/ortho, but my first job as an assistant was at a pedo/ortho clinic!! And I loved it! Definitely look outside your comfort zone, you may surprise yourself.

What type of volunteering did you do?

I think is was my favorite part of my application. I have hours dedicated to the elderly, to animals, to the dental needs of my community, to children with special needs, and so much more. I think showing schools that you understand what it takes to be human, then you have a good chance! Show the love to as many people as you can!

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

No, just capstone projects. I was hoping to, but there were complications with the IRB.

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

Being part of the community has been the most rewarding experience. Getting to know ECU, Greenville, and the people that serve it is just so much fun.

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

Get out there! Find yourself and embrace YOU. Don't stress about everything, especially when you take the time to plan. Know yourself, be confident, and good things will follow!