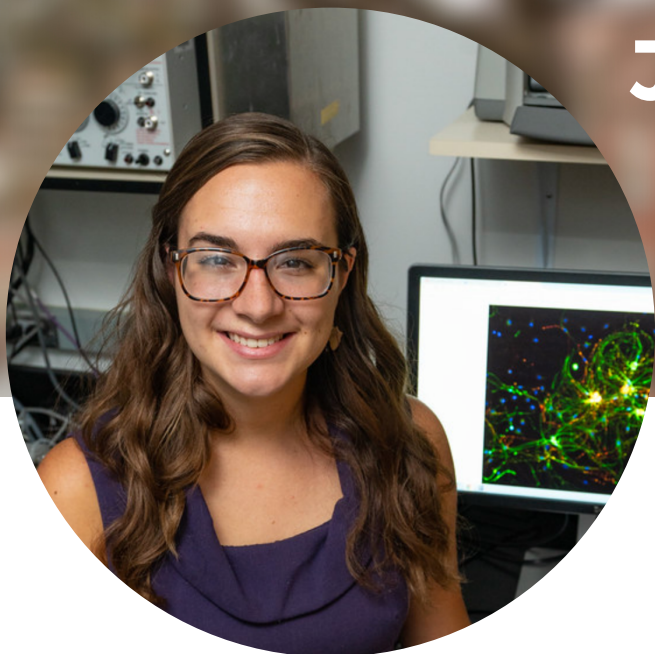


JENNIFER MCMAINS

CLASS OF 2020



STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

Undergraduate Major: Public Health Studies

Career Aspiration: Emergency Medicine Physician

Professional School: Medical School

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

Shadowing and learning what different health care providers do on a daily basis has been both the most fun and the most insightful.

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

As the first person in my family to pursue a medical degree, I did not know there was so much writing in the secondary applications, I learned that meaningful essays are difficult to write but you just need to sit down and start. Additionally, I never knew the challenge that is waiting to hear back from medical schools. It was certainly stressful waiting to hear about interviews and acceptances.

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

I prepared myself by finding doctors who would mentor and advise me in all steps. Including extracurriculars, shadowing, research, letters of recommendation, essays, and interviews.

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

I wish I would have taken my MCAT earlier so that I could have submitted my applications earlier. Another thing I wish I knew is that medical schools look for a lot of things that goes beyond just hard work.

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

I met with Ms. McAllister at PPAC essentially as soon as I got to ECU. Getting her insight was very helpful. I also would recommend that students do the Primary Care Physician Shadowing program as that helped confirm my interest in emergency medicine. Also, going to events and networking with current medical students was also helpful!

What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?

I am President of Pirates Promoting Community Wellness, a student organization dedicated to promoting wellness locally and global through service and leadership opportunities. I joined PPCW as a freshmen and then served as philanthropy chair, vice president, and now president.

What type of shadowing did you do?

I shadowed extensively in the emergency department. I also did the Primary Care Physician Shadowing Program through PPAC. Additionally, I shadowed a neurosurgeon, general surgeon, and two trauma surgeons. Shadowing allowed me to understand what is important in a doctor.

What type of volunteering did you do?

I did a lot of volunteering through PPCW. We serve breakfast at the local homeless shelter as well as partnering with Vidant Child Life and other Greenville organizations. I also organized and attended medical clinics in rural Honduras through PPCW for three years. Lastly, I served for the past 5 years in South Africa and Zambia with a children's charity.

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

I have worked in three research groups. The first I began as a freshman working in Dr. Johanna Hannan's lab at Brody School of Medicine. My current project is entitled Neuritogenesis following radiation and castration. I have also worked for three years at Duke University School of Medicine Department of Surgery with Dr. Gayathri Devi. My research there including looking at translational science education as well as inflammatory breast cancer research. Lastly, I created my own research project for my senior honors thesis entitled "A multi-year mixed methods public health needs assessment of rural Honduras" in collaboration with Dr. Stephanie Pitts at BSOM.

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

My most rewarding experience at ECU has been in leadership of PPCW. Through PPCW I have been able to connect ECU students with service experiences they would never have known about. I am passionate about service and I believe that college is the perfect time to find your love of service. The idea that something I have done has influenced other students to serve deeper in their communities is incredibly rewarding to me.

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

In all things remember to exude grit. Grit as defined by Angela Duckworth "is passion and sustained persistence applied toward long-term achievement".