



JOSHUA MEJIA

CLASS OF 2022

STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Roselle Park, NJ

Undergraduate Major: Biology

Career Aspirations: Dentist

Professional School: Still Deciding

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

As a first-generation student, I had no idea how the application process worked. Luckily, I developed a passion for dentistry early and began shadowing dentists which gave me a head start. During my undergrad I was told about the Pre-Professional Advising ECU offered. I set up a video call meeting and they told me all the requirements, application timeline, and even helped with my interviews. I am so glad that I did because they helped me in every step of the process.

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

Plan and have all required application materials ready to apply early. Don't rush and do your application last minute as it is a big application with a lot of parts. Make sure to review your application over and over again before submitting it to make sure there are no mistakes.

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

The pre-dental honor society is a great way to learn more about dental school, the application process, and it is a great way to get involved to give back to the community. It is also a great way to make some pre-dental friends to help each other during the process.

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

Studying for the DAT was the toughest challenge I faced when preparing to apply. I didn't expect so much material to be thrown at me at once. In the beginning it felt like I was never going to finish, and the days felt longer and longer. Once I found a routine for studying it got easier and I started seeing progress! I would suggest taking plenty of breaks and do things that you enjoy on your days off!

What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?

I was involved in the Alpha Sigma Phi Fraternity and Pre-Dental Honor Society.

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

My favorite part of my journey into dental school was meeting the amazing people along the way from Dentists, Professors, Pre-Dental students, and even patients while shadowing.

What type of shadowing did you do?

The majority of my shadowing was with a General Dentist in Elizabeth, NJ. While in the Pre-Dental honor society they presented us with an opportunity to do a virtual shadowing session with UNC.

What type of volunteering did you do?

I volunteered at the Sonrie Clinic held by ECU School of Dental Medicine as a translator, youth wrestling coach in NJ, and at a local food bank on the weekends.

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

I did research under my biochemistry professor Dr. Patrick Horn. The topic of research was protein-protein interactions.

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

Being able to have all the resources that ECU offered from tutors, professional advisors, extracurriculars, and research. With all of these resources I felt confident and prepared to apply for dental school.

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

It is a long journey, there will be some ups and downs along the way. The most important thing is to keep your head up and trust the process!