



# NOLAN DAVIS

CLASS OF 2020

## STUDENT PROFILE

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**Hometown:** Mount Olive, NC

**Undergraduate Major:** Biology

**Career Aspiration:** Primary Care Physician in eastern NC

**Professional School:** Brody School of Medicine

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

Throughout the process of medical school interviews, I met many awesome and intriguing fellow applicants from across North Carolina and the nation. I enjoyed hearing their stories and reasons for going into medicine. As a shadowing student, I interacted with many physicians (attending and residents) who offered great advice for a future career in medicine.

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

The medical school application process requires a lot of writing. Writing and revising personal statements, activity descriptions, secondary essays, scholarship essays and various other items is time-consuming and can easily drain you. I recommend setting a schedule and working a little each day on your essays. This makes the process much more manageable. I also encourage all applicants to have their personal statements read by several trusted individuals (professors, advisors, close friends, family members, etc.) Personal statements and essays are ways to allow admissions committees to learn more about you than just your GPA, MCAT score and volunteer hours. Applicants need to convey why they want to pursue a career in medicine. Strong essays advance one to the next stage of interviews.

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

I started shadowing physicians and asking them for advice on applying to medical school. I also maintained relationships with physicians whom I enjoyed shadowing throughout the process. Practicing physicians were once applicants. They have (successfully) been through the process and know what it takes. I met with the PPAC and researched schools and created a list of where I wanted to apply. I started writing my personal statement the semester before I applied.

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

This may sound cliché, but I would advise students to “be themselves.” There is a lot of pressure as a pre-med student to do certain activities. Do not feel pressured to “check off” certain activities. Find those activities (volunteer opportunities, shadowing experiences, elective non-science classes) that you have strong feelings about and do them! If you are not enjoying an experience, I encourage you to find something that you actually enjoy! There is no perfect applicant to medical school. Do things that interest you, because medical schools will love to hear about things that you are truly passionate about. Admissions committees want to know that you are genuine and do not be hesitant and afraid to show them.

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

I highly recommend that all pre-med students utilize the PPAC early in their collegiate career. The Primary Care Shadowing Program, free MCAT practice tests, and Health Professions Committee Letter are huge benefits afforded to ECU students and should be utilized.

## **What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?**

I was an Undergraduate Teaching Assistant in the Department of Biology. I was also a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Phi Eta Sigma.

## **What type of shadowing did you do?**

I shadowed pediatricians, family medicine physicians, an internal medicine-pediatric hospitalist, and a urologist on my own. I also participated in the Primary Care Shadowing Program through the PPAC where I shadowed a general surgeon, an emergency medicine physician, an internist, a pediatrician and a family medicine physician.

## **What type of volunteering did you do?**

I have been a longtime volunteer (since before college) with the Ronald McDonald House of Eastern North Carolina, Kitty Askins Hospice Center, Reach Out and Read, and my church.

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

I was an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Allison Danell's lab where we analyzed the concentrations of sodium benzoate in various beverages and how that influences abnormal weight gain.

## **What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?**

Being an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Allison Danell's lab where I was able to see how basic sciences (biology, chemistry, etc.) can be combined with clinical medicine to improve the health of residents in Eastern North Carolina. Dr. Danell was an excellent research mentor who always inspired me and supported my goal of pursuing medical school.

## **Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?**

It is difficult, but I highly encourage applicants not to compare themselves to fellow applicants. You have your own unique qualities and experiences that will make you a great physician. Focus on building a strong application to demonstrate why medical schools should accept you!