



# XAILYN BATISTA

CLASS OF 2022

## STUDENT PROFILE

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**Hometown: Raleigh, NC**

**Undergraduate Major: Biology; Minor in Public Health**

**Career Aspirations: General Dentist**

**Professional School: East Carolina's School of Dental Medicine**

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

I joined pre-dental organizations on campus like USNDA and the Pre-dental Honor Society. These organizations helped me create a timeline and informed me about all the steps required to apply to dental school. I also always tried to attend any pre-dental events offered by the Dental School. Lastly, it was important to me to have a strong support system that consisted of my friends, family, and pre-dental peers.

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

Get involved as soon as possible with extracurriculars, volunteering, shadowing, etc. Do not be afraid to reach out to people or ask for help. Make sure to also connect with your professors and the Pre-Professional Advising Committee. I also wish I started shadowing earlier to have more exposure to the different specialties in the dental field.

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

I recommend the Undergraduate Student National Dental Association and the Pre-Dental Honor Society. These organizations taught me everything I needed to know about the process of applying to dental school. The PPAC was also a huge help, and I highly recommend getting on their email list to be informed on incoming opportunities.

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

A big challenge I faced was timing. I thought I had more time to acquire volunteer and shadowing hours. Unfortunately, COVID-19 put a pause on shadowing due to the restrictions in dental offices. I struggled with procrastination and found myself rushing to get tasks accomplished before the deadlines. What helped me get over this was writing a checklist and listing all the reasons why I am passionate about becoming a dentist.

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

I was involved in the Undergraduate Student National Dental Association, Pre-Dental Honor Society, Latino Student Union, Pirate After School Scholars, and Pirate P.A.L.S (Peers Advocating for Learning and Success).

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

My favorite part has been being able to connect with others who have the same goals as me. I have met some amazing people in the pre-dental field who continue to inspire me today.

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

I obtained 180+ hours of shadowing at two general dentist offices. I shadowed at New Roc Dental in New York under Dr. Wynter. This was a small and personable office where I connected with Dr. Wynter, the assistants, hygienists, and patients. I also shadowed at Alvis Family Dentistry in Raleigh, NC, where Dr. Alvis focused on general and cosmetic dentistry.

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

- Wake Smiles Clinic: whose purpose is to serve the thousands of uninsured adults in Wake County who have little to no access to quality dental care.
- Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina: Greenville Branch.
- Operation Sunshine: provides an after-school and summer program focused on keeping young ladies out of trouble and exposing them to new and innovative educational programs that would put them on the road to success.
- Pirate After School Scholars: an after-school program dedicated to tutoring local youth from grades 3-8. I connected with elementary and middle school students to help them succeed academically.

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

N/A

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

My most rewarding experience at ECU was graduating with honors as a first-generation student.

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

It is a marathon, not a race! Everyone is on their timeline, so try not to compare yourself too much to others. If you are passionate about your intended career, keep working hard. Even though it may seem hard, it will pass, and receiving your acceptance letter will make all your sweat and tears worth it. If you ever feel discouraged or unmotivated, write out a list of reasons why you want to pursue this career and refer to it whenever you need the extra push.