



KASSIDY JOHNSON

CLASS OF 2024

STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Raleigh, NC

Undergraduate Major: Biology, minor in International Studies

Career Aspirations: Neonatal Pharmacist

Professional School: UNC Chapel Hill Eshelman School of Pharmacy

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

I had a list of people who already agreed to write a recommendation letter for me about a year in advance. That took away the stress of finding professors to write my letters. I also began writing my personal statement before the application had opened, so that could further alleviate any stress I had about writing that essay. My mentor was also a huge help during this process.

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

ECU offers students so many amazing opportunities so make sure to keep your eyes open for these opportunities and get involved! If you do not know where to look for these opportunities, then reach out to the PPAC and they will point you in the right direction. Do not be afraid to reach out to professors and ask if they would be willing to become your mentor or help you with this process, the worst they can say is no!

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

Gamma Psi Sigma is a honor society for pre-health (dental, medical, pharmacy, nursing, etc) minorities. It is a great organization because they invite health professionals to come and share their experiences and any advice they have. The PPAC (Pre-Professional Advising Center) has many email subscription lists for pre-dental students, pre-medical students, pharmacy students, etc and they will send you an email every week with opportunities and important dates to keep in mind based on your program. Reach out to professionals in your field of interest in order to network and gain insight from them as well. Volunteering at ECU Health's hospital offers many different volunteering and shadow opportunities, so they are a great resource as well!

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

The hardest part was gathering all of my classwork information, clinical hours, and volunteering hours from the past four years. I highly recommend keeping an Excel sheet where you can record all of your hours, dates, and supervisors!

What organizations were you involved in as an undergraduate student?

I was involved in Gamma Psi Sigma, FreshStart Health Coaching, ECU Birthing Companions, Pre-Pharmacy Club, and through ECU's Campus Living I was a resident advisor for freshmen.

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

Being able to reflect on my journey at ECU (the organizations, research, jobs, and volunteering) that got me to the point where I am today.

What type of shadowing did you do?

N/A

What type of volunteering did you do?

I was a volunteer doula through ECU Birthing Companions at ECU Health's hospital (this was definitely my favorite volunteering experience because I obtained a lot of clinical work through this program). I also volunteered in different departments at ECU Health throughout my entire college experience. Additionally, I was an English teacher for a college-aged students in India through Jignasa.

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

Yes, I started my research during my freshman year. The topic was how burnout impacted medical residents who had multiple intersecting historically underrepresented identities. I was able to work on two different research articles, present to multiple residency program directors, and even present my research at the Collaborative Family Healthcare Association's annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona during my senior year. I definitely recommend getting into research as soon as possible, if that is something you are interested in!

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

My research was my most rewarding experience at ECU. Being able to conduct my own research, become published, and present at a conference as an undergraduate student was amazing. I also was able to form multiple friendships throughout my research process. My entire research experience has been incredibly fulfilling.

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

There are so many opportunities that ECU offers its students, so be proactive and take advantage of those opportunities. These opportunities will not only help with your application process, but it helps you form meaningful relationships, step outside of your comfort zone, and give back to the community!