



MARC GRANADOS

CLASS OF 2022

STUDENT PROFILE

Hometown: Norwood, NC

Undergraduate Major: BS in Public Health: Pre-Health

Career Aspiration: General Dentist

Professional School: High Point University Workman School of Dental Medicine

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

By far, my favorite part of the journey to dental school has been the opportunity to meet with individuals from different backgrounds. Specifically, the opportunity to meet with like-minded students working towards the same goal, dental students, and dentists who are willing to provide assistance and guidance for the journey. Finally, having the privilege of meeting and interacting with numerous patients and the surrounding communities along my path to dental school.

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

In preparation for the application cycle, I created a Google form that I filled out after I completed any volunteer work, or shadowing. When it was time to complete applications, I was able to download all of the responses from the form over the years into a spreadsheet for easy transfer of all the experiences. I also ensured that I networked as much as possible with current dental students, practicing dentists, pre-dents, and admissions teams! Therefore, it is imperative to stay extremely organized throughout this entire process to better help with submitting applications early, and to have the ability to bring all experiences to the table when showcasing your candidacy!

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

Preparing to apply to dental school, or any professional school can be an overwhelming process. The most difficult challenge that I was presented with while preparing for the application cycle, was balancing academics, involvement within student organizations, community involvement, employment, and social life. With an extensive amount of discipline and consistency, I feel that remaining confident and passionate helped significantly with the ability to balance all challenges presented during the journey.

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

ECU PPAC was hands down one of the best resources to utilize as a pre-dent! Mrs. McAllister was there every step of the way, and ensured I was aware of all things needed. ECU PASC, and Career Services were also very helpful throughout the pre-dental journey! Additionally, being an active member in student organizations such as Smile Squad Honor Society with a mission to put others at the center of everything you do! Being exposed to an environment where you are first-hand helping an individual within your community, will indeed prepare you for the daily duties as a future clinician and serving your patients' needs.

What type of shadowing did you do?

I completed nearly 200 hours shadowing within a general dentistry practice, as well as about 100 hours within the pediatric, and orthodontics specialties. Majority of my clinical knowledge was obtained through work as Dental Assistant in a general dentistry office starting second year of undergrad.

What type of volunteering did you do?

I volunteered throughout multiple avenues, mostly those offered through student organizations such as ECU Ambassadors, ECU Rotaract, and Smile Squad Honor Society. I also completed volunteering with NC MOM clinics, and private tutoring local middle schoolers. NC MOM clinics, and events with JOY soup kitchen were very eye-opening opportunities as I was given the opportunity to build connections all while bridging a gap on access to dental care, and those in need of a meal.

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

I served as a Public Health Research Assistant alongside Dr. Wanda Wright, with the ECU School of Dental Medicine. Our focus was on implementing and expanding School-Based Oral Health Prevention Programs within Bertie County, NC. Duties included assisting with grant processing, data collection/analysis, clinical assistance, as well as recruitment of patients within the schools.

What organizations were you involved with as an undergraduate student?

- Smile Squad Honor Society (Founder, President)
- Pre-Dental Honor Society (Member, Vice President)
- ECU Undergraduate Student National Dental Association (Member, Volunteer Coordinator, Vice President)
- ECU Ambassadors (Member)
- Gamma Psi Sigma (Member, Treasurer)
- ECU AMERICAN (Member)
- ECU Rotaract (Member)

What was your most rewarding experience at ECU?

My most rewarding experience at ECU was graduating early and as a first-generation college student. Also, the opportunity to make amazing friends and build strong relationships with faculty and professors along the way!

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

Don't be afraid to go after your dream! There will be times you are scared, worried, or stressed about this process, but never give up. The journey is difficult in many aspects, but as long as you remember through each challenge your ultimate goal and where you want to see yourself in 10+ years, you will get there. Specifically, DO NOT procrastinate! Four years may seem like an ample amount of time to get everything lined up, but life happens. Start early, and stay on top of everything!

Any other advice, recommendations, suggestions, or comments?

I highly recommend getting certified as a dental assistant over the summer, or working as a sterilization/lab tech throughout your journey! Traditional shadowing definitely gives you the opportunity to learn more about the field. Advancing your knowledge with clinical terminology, how to interpret the basics from an x-ray, and most importantly how to communicate with patients will allow you to feel more confident walking into dental school! Furthermore, my biggest piece of advice for anyone pursuing a career in health professions is to NEVER compare yourself. There will be others around you working towards the same goal, but those are the people you truly need to make as your support system and not your enemies. Your journey is unique to you! Remain authentic, and never try to follow the same path others choose. The future of healthcare is constantly evolving, and having a well-rounded background of knowledge and experiences will best prepare you for the rapid changes occurring in healthcare.