

Lexi Nguyen

– 2024 | Biology –

Public Health Pathway

Why I Joined the Public Health Pathway

I joined the Public Health Pathway because I intend to pursue a career in dentistry through the CWRU 3-4 Dental Program. Dentistry is a field that generally limits undergraduate opportunities to shadowing of dental professionals. While I enjoyed shadowing, it was an activity that I completed several times both during my time at Wooster and in high school. I joined this Pathway to explore a greater variety of health-related opportunities outside of shadowing and develop skills important to dentistry such as bedside manner and communication. Through this Pathway, I also hoped to form more connections within the healthcare community and learn from my peers in the Pathway. The presence of advisors who could offer pre-health specific advice further motivated me to join this program.

My Experiential Learning Opportunities & What I Gained

Volunteer Dental Assistant, Viola Startzman Clinic, 5 hrs/week for 5 months

- Developed bedside manner/communication skills
- Learned to perform basic dental assisting
- Observed and discussed the practice of community dentistry with dental professionals
- Prepared outreach materials

Co-President, College of Wooster Pre-Dental Society, 2023-24

- Planned and prepared materials for club events and meetings
- Worked with executive board to apply for budget, plan future club activities
- Ensure that the club provides a mentoring and supportive atmosphere for members



My Pathway Courses & How They've Impacted My Public Health Journey

PHIL-21500: Biomedical Ethics

Biomedical Ethics opened my perspective towards medicine to consider the moral implications when making a medical decision.

HIST-10184: Intro to Chinese Medicine

Intro to Chinese Medicine helped me look past my preconceived notions regarding traditional medicine and the idea of "modern" medicine to learn about how we could use both traditional and Eastern medicine to provide more effective treatments to patients.

BIOL-10009: The Biology of Nutrition

Biology of Nutrition gave me a wider and more connected view of the human anatomy and how the food we ingest provides nutrients to help various parts of the body function.

CHEM-21100: Organic Chemistry I

Organic Chemistry I provided me with context for the way that molecules interact with one another to produce reactions in the medicines and products used to treat dental patients.



Final Thoughts:

How My Pathway Has Shaped My Career Path

Now that I have completed my Pathway, I am even more excited to continue pursuing dentistry. Being able to become more involved in dentistry by participating firsthand in tasks at the Viola Startzman Clinic allowed me to gain a greater understanding and passion towards the dental work I will be performing in the future. Seeing a community clinic in action and the environment it provided for its patients motivated me further to continue working towards my goal of making dental care more accessible to all through the practice of pro bono care. Leading as Co-President of the Pre-Dental Society taught me to plan events, manage a team, delegate tasks, and review feedback to continually improve the club's ability to support its members. Along with my EL opportunities, I was able to expand my understanding of medicine and health through the Pathway curriculum classes, whose concepts I can bring with me to dental school.

THANK YOU

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