

The messages are from recent alumni who wanted to come to the April 20 meeting of the Pre-Health Society to share "Secrets of their Success" but were unable to be there. I hope their wisdom helps you!

Dr. Zanin

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Pres Payne – Dental - [press\\_10\\_2004@yahoo.com](mailto:press_10_2004@yahoo.com)

"There is no secret. You want something, you have to out work everyone else that wants the same something. You work harder and smarter than them, you will get it."

[press\\_10\\_2004@yahoo.com](mailto:press_10_2004@yahoo.com)

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Lance Braye – Medical - [brayel@musc.edu](mailto:brayel@musc.edu)

Hey Blake,

I would love to be able to attend, but unfortunately I have a clinical exam that afternoon during the meeting time. If anyone needs any advice or guidance in regards to the admissions process, feel free to share my contact information with them. [brayel@musc.edu](mailto:brayel@musc.edu)

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Bryan Everitt – Medical - [everittb1@gmail.com](mailto:everittb1@gmail.com)

Mr. Holt,

Unfortunately I have a required lecture that morning. I will be unable to attend your event. Please feel free to share my contact information with anyone interested in Medical school especially in the Columbia area. [everittb1@gmail.com](mailto:everittb1@gmail.com)

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Will Madsen – Physical Therapy - [madsenw1@gmail.com](mailto:madsenw1@gmail.com)

Blake,

I won't be able to make this. I am on clinical rotations. Thanks for the invite. If any one has questions about Physical Therapy please have them email me at [madsenw1@gmail.com](mailto:madsenw1@gmail.com) or call at [803-984-3920](tel:803-984-3920) thanks.

Regards,

Will Madsen, SPT  
MUSC Class of 2015  
Citadel Class of 2011

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George Sourlis – Dental - [gpsourli@gmail.com](mailto:gpsourli@gmail.com)

Hey Blake,

Thank you for inviting me to today's meeting. Unfortunately I am in the middle of finals and have a 1 o'clock test so I won't be able to attend. Please let me know if I can be of help to any students interested in dental school. You have my email and my number is [443-788-1875](tel:443-788-1875) if they want to speak on the phone. Thanks again!

George Sourlis [gpsourli@gmail.com](mailto:gpsourli@gmail.com)

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From alumna Sarah Deptula – Pharmacy - - [deptulas@gmail.com](mailto:deptulas@gmail.com)

Hi Blake,

I'm sorry to say, work has ask me to cover a sick leave today and I won't be able to make it to the Pre-Health Society meeting. If there is anyone interested in pharmacy school or has questions about pharmacy career options, please give them my contact info. For the time being, here is some information you can share about my own preparation for pharmacy school and career experiences.

Pharmacists wore the white coat first! Pharmacy is a great career field for anyone interested in the medical field, who may not like the blood and guts medical doctors deal with, or doesn't want to be the dreaded dentist, who wants to make a six figure salary with a 40 hour work week right out of school, enjoys interacting and communicating about medication needs and safety with the public on a daily basis, and ultimately wants to be a medication reference for all other medical professions.

Some things people often don't know about Pharmacists; you go through a doctorate program and you earn the title of Doctor. You have the opportunity to specialize and do a residency (PGY1 and PGY2). We do not just count pills! Pharmacists spend their day counseling physicians on drug interactions, duplications in therapy, improper or misuse of medications, contraindications in therapy, and the list goes on! Sometimes it's something as simple as eliminating the cost barrier and having a medication changed to something effective, but less expensive so the patient can afford their medication. Other days you may be calling the cops to have someone arrested for a forged or altered controlled substance prescription. I've had two people arrested in the last 6 months! You are the last stop after someone has had all their doctors' appointments for various things...It all funnels down to you! In multiple ways you are policing the medical world! But you are also the first stop for many patients who cannot afford health insurance or to take the time off work for an appointment. Some people are just afraid and will avoid going to a primary care physical at all costs. So instead, they stop by their local pharmacy consultation window to ask for your professional medical advice! The beautiful thing about this is that it is absolutely free for them to get your recommendation!!! It's why I love my job!!!

I attended South University in Columbia, SC. It is a 3-yr accelerated program vs. MUSC being a traditional 4-yr program. At South you attend class through the summer months to finish a year early. It also offered a dual-degree MBA program, which I went through. 4-yr programs also have the MBA option and usually a PhD program track as well.

The prerequisites for each school vary slightly. At The Citadel I took several electives that would have been valid for pharmacy school and med school. To name a few; Human anatomy and physiology, economics (micro/macro), public speaking. Many others were covered in the Biology Curriculum. I used the remainder of my electives for a psychology minor.

For your grad school application, it is important for you to be a well-rounded applicant while excelling in your academics. This means being involved in extracurricular activities and performing research. While at The Citadel I worked briefly with Doctor Zardus after returning from Maymester in Belize and I lived with Doctor Darden for a summer while doing research under her in the MUSC Summer Undergrad Research Program. Highly recommend this program to all! You apply during the fall for the following summer. During the program you attend seminar series each morning, do research with your mentor, write a paper and present at the end of the program - you also receive a stipend for this program. If you can get published during your undergrad research that's even a bigger plus!!! I also held cadet rank sophomore through senior year, as well as positions as class Vice President for 3yrs, Bio-Cid President my senior year, was on year book publication staff 3yrs, and helped cadet activities with the cadet talent show production each year.

The Pharmacy school application process requires you to take the PCAT and apply to school through PharmCAS. The PCAT is the pharmacy college application test. Here's is a link to better describe its components ([pcatweb.info](http://pcatweb.info)). PharmCAS is the pharmacy college application service, which is a centralized system. You upload all of your required documents, transcripts, letters of recommendation, resume, letter of intent, etc. and apply to any pharmacy school from this one system. To quickly mention GPA, many schools prefer at least a 3.0 science GPA.

Upon graduating, I worked full time as a research lab technician in the Department of Neurosciences narcotics addiction research center. I had more of an interest in knowing about medicine and how it works, than in practicing medicine as a physician. I considered a PhD in pharmacology/toxicology for a while, until I started working part time as a pharmacy technician at Target and volunteering at the out-patient pharmacy at MUSC. If you want to experience what it would be like to work in a pharmacy, I highly recommend paying the \$45 application fee and getting registered with the state board. While there are many limitations to what you're allowed to do with only having a registered technician license, but it's just that easy to get started!!! My experiences as a pharmacy technician not only solidified my decision to go to pharmacy school, but it was great experience to add to my application! And I had made friends with some great contacts for letters of recommendation!

Here is a link to the 3 year program curriculum I attended (<https://www.southuniversity.edu/savannah/Areas-Of-Study/Pharmacy/Pharmacy-Doctor-of-Pharmacy-PharmD/CurriculumPH>). Your first year is mostly an introduction and a good bit of review for biology and chemistry majors. Once you're past your introductory courses, this pharmacy program is a disease state based curriculum.

I have been working for Walgreens since I graduated in June 2013. While there are many options other than retail pharmacy, it is what was best for me. As a pharmacist there are hospital inpatient/outpatient opportunities, compounding pharmacy, specialized opportunities (oncology, pediatrics, infectious diseases, if there's a specialization you want to go into there is a pharmacist there!), academics, long term care, infusion pharmacy, mail order pharmacy, consultant pharmacist for insurance company, compounding pharmacy, pharmacy director of a hospital, or you could even open your own pharmacy!!!

In my own experience, if you're in retail, you typically float (fill-in shifts) for your first 1-2 years before you settle into your own store. You have to be adaptive and able to work and get along with all

different types of personalities. Last summer I worked everywhere from North Myrtle Beach to Hilton Head and all the way out to Dillon, SC. After a little over a year I have a position covering a maternity leave in Beaufort, SC, as a interim position to having moved to Savannah and waiting permanent placement there. I recently moved to Savannah, GA and am in the process of reciprocity my license there. One of the best things about this job is how easy it is to travel or relocate! The laws are different in each state, so to transfer your license you literally just fill out the paperwork with the state board of pharmacy, study and take the state MPJE law exam and relocate. A few states have two exams to take, like GA, so the process takes a little longer.

Each state also has its own continuing education requirements. In South Carolina you are required to do 15 hours, which half of those hours have to be drug therapy or patient management related, and 1 hour is required to be immunization related. Pharmacists do give vaccinations (Flu, MMR, Shingles, TDaP, Chicken Pox, Hep A, Hep B, and other travel vaccinations). You are required to get your immunization certification and maintain your Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers certification. In the state of GA you are required to do 30 hours of continuing education in anything.

In South Carolina you renew your license annually. It's a \$70 fee and my liability insurance as a pharmacist only costs \$130/year. Relatively inexpensive compared to what other medical professionals pay. Most of your continuing education courses can be found for free online.

I could go on and on about why pharmacy is a great profession, but I'll leave you with this. The rigors of The Citadel in having to balance cadet duties with academics and physical standards, along with any other military, extracurricular, or research obligations you are committed to have more than prepared you for a successful academic career in any of the programs that were mentioned at your meetings today. You all have the ability to achieve anything you put your mind to!!!

If you have any questions about time management, student research, or pharmacy as a career, please feel free to reach out to me at any time!

Sarah Deptula - [deptulas@gmail.com](mailto:deptulas@gmail.com)