

Tyler Rector's Personal Statement

Last year I saw someone's life saved by the same education I was undergoing. I have studied many different things in my college career initially intending to pursue a career in Economics. However it is difficult to quantify the impact one's life has on their community through that path. Medicine is different, your patient is the impact, whether you can aid them or not. That's what drew me to this educational path. The ability to see your impact. That's why, when in the back of an ambulance, seeing a life come back from the brink brought me so much gratification. As if all the work that I put in may have this impact.

I graduated High School when Covid had thrown a wrench in the lives and systems of the United States. Joining Americorp provided me an alternative during this time to build myself up and become ready for university when the pandemic would wane. Working in a conservation corp gave me the opportunity to travel across America, become self-sufficient, and gain an appreciation for the science inherent to conservation. I came back to school with the vigor that many students lack going into their freshmen year. Covid had conversely opened a lot of doors for me. Many clubs needed leadership, which I took advantage of to learn the ropes of how to run an organization. I got the opportunities through Student Government to advocate for Students in Richmond and build connections with Norfolk city officials to change infrastructure around campus. And now I manage the staffing and organization for a Model United Nations conference for over 700 High Schoolers. Now I am beginning my intern training to become an Emergency Medical Technician Attending in Charge and using those same skills in leadership, management, and public speaking.

Balancing these opportunities with school has been tough at times but it has brought a unique insight into deciding on my path. Taking oceanography as a gen ed requirement for economics made me fall in love with the sciences. Seeing insights into the natural world around me and my coastal community made me realize that I should explore different opportunities. Seeing how my mother was helped by a team of doctors and nurses in my young age made medicine always something on the back of my mind. My interest in the natural world unlocked that image of becoming a medical professional to make an impact. But in pursuing that image I never really let go of the exploration of the natural world. I found a unique enjoyment in the history of how medications were discovered and how that intersected with my scientific coursework. I found that very same enjoyment when joining a lab to explore the effects of mechanical forces on cellular function.

Now I find myself steeped in both science and medicine and not wanting to let go of either. So I am trying to build myself a new path; similar to when I chose Americorp. I am diving head first into pursuing a career in Physician Science. In pursuing that image, I hope to make that same impact I saw in the back of that ambulance. Using that training and knowledge to try to bridge the gap between the lab and the clinic. I believe that bridging that gap and using those skills will be the greatest impact I can hope to make.