



January 2022

MSMP

Medical Student Mentorship Program



MSMP NEWSLETTER



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INTRODUCTION



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Aloha mentees! On behalf of the MSMP Executive Board, I would like to welcome you to the Medical Student Mentorship Program for the 2021-2022 academic year. We hope you are all doing well and staying safe during this holiday season.



OUR NEWSLETTER

In this newsletter, we will introduce our executive board members, take a look back at our past events this semester, update you on future events, and close out with some words of wisdom from our executive board members. Thank you so much for your participation in our events and staying in touch with your mentors! We hope your experience with MSMP aids you in this arduous journey that comes with being a pre-medical student.



**MSMP EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEMBERS**

MEET THE BOARD!



Pictured Left to Right:

Back row: Anna, Shirley, Sam, Kellie, Erica, Peggy

Front row: Ed, ZoeAnn, Carley, Kylie, AJ, Ben, Luke



Dr. Ivy Nip Asano
Faculty Advisor

First Years

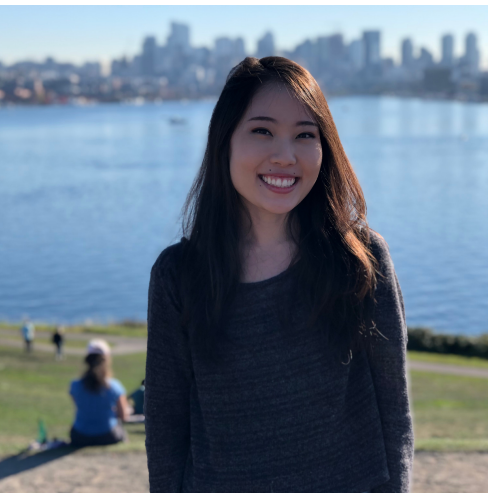


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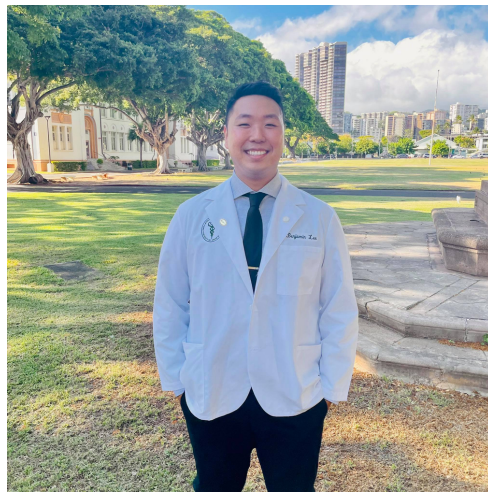
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PAST EVENTS: FALL 2021



ANNUAL (VIRTUAL) MIXER



Our first event of the school year started with our annual mentor mentee mixer, which was held virtually this year. At this event, we had a chance to share some tips and updates about applications. Mentors and mentees also got to know each other in breakout rooms with fun games facilitated by our board members. Thank you so much to everyone for your participation! We had so much fun!

INTERVIEW WORKSHOP



We also hosted a virtual interview workshop, where mentees had a chance to practice their interviewing skills. Thank you to the mentors who volunteered their time to help with the interviews!



**POTENTIAL FUTURE EVENTS:
SPRING 2022**

MCAT+ANKI WORKSHOP



**MEDICAL SCHOOL APPLICATION/IMI
HOOLA WORKSHOP**

SUBSPECIALTY SEMINAR



PBL DEMO



**OUT OF STATE/NEIGHBOR ISLAND
PANEL**

SUTURE WORKSHOP



**MEDICAL INTERVIEWING AND
CLINICAL SKILLS WORKSHOP**

*Many of these events are contingent on the status of COVID

TALKING TO YOUR MENTOR

We hope that by now you and your mentor have successfully established contact with one another. We are so excited to support you on this journey and provide you with as much information as possible. Please know that there is no single "best" path to medical school; each of us carve our own paths that prepare us for medical school.

We hope that you are able to learn from your mentor's experiences to better prepare you for your journey. Know that we are all rooting for your success so please do not hesitate to ask any questions. Many of us participated in the MSMP program when we were in your shoes and found it to be an invaluable resource and we hope to offer you the best experience possible! If you're stuck on things to talk to your mentor about, here are some ideas below:



General Topics

- What is JABSOM like (pros/cons)?
- What was your journey to medical school?
- Why do you want to go into medicine?
- Thoughts on taking a gap year?
- What was the most beneficial thing you did to prepare you for medical school?
- What would you have done differently if you applied again?

Early Undergrad

- Choosing a major
- Pre-requisite courses
- Is medicine right for me?
- Timeline and logistics for applying to school
- Extracurriculars
- Clinical experience
- Finding balance with school, extracurriculars, research, etc.

Planning to Apply in 1-2 Years

- MCAT study resources
- Study strategies and scheduling
- MCAT target scores
- Time commitment to prep for the MCAT
- Ideal time to take the MCAT
- Retakes
- Not feeling ready
- Letters of recommendation
- MD or DO?

Currently Applying

- Any aspect of the AMCAS application
- Personal statement help
- Secondary applications
- Interviews
- Financial aspect of applying
- Choosing medical schools
- Re-applying and what to do for a gap year



What was your journey to medical school?

Luke: I went to Chapman University for my undergrad where I majored in Biology and minored in Chemistry. I did a lot of academic and clinical research throughout college and also when I came home to Hawaii for breaks. Gaining clinical research experience early on was really helpful in exploring the worlds of medicine and research. I also sought out lots of opportunities to shadow physicians, PA's, nurses, and other medical professionals in Hawaii, which was extremely helpful for gaining insight into day-to-day medical practice. I also volunteered in an ER and at a soup kitchen, which were both very valuable experiences. I think all of those experiences were instrumental in shaping my perspective and getting me to where I am today, so I definitely recommend finding things you're interested in outside of school during undergrad. I didn't take any gap years, so it was important that I gained experiences during undergrad. If you have the chance to take gap years, even better! That is a great time to explore different aspects of medicine.

Ben: I went to the University of Northern Colorado where I graduated with a BS in Biology/minor in chemistry. I participated in research throughout my four years and was accepted into the McNair Scholars Program where I wrote a thesis on bat immunology and their role as viral hosts. I was able to present that research at a number of conferences including Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) and for Beta Beta Beta National Biological Honor Society. I was also involved with student council for the College of Natural Health Sciences and University Student Senate at my college. Like everyone else, I volunteered at the local hospital, student groups, and community programs to gain experience. After college, I went to Boston University where I received my MS in Pathology. I did most of my shadowing during this time and volunteered with Cambridge Family Services to mentor a high school foster care child who was interested in pursuing medicine. I took a bunch of gaps years after retaking the MCAT and reapplying to medical school. Through each admission cycle, I spoke with the admissions committee at JABSOM to find ways to improve my application. While I was in Boston, I worked as immunology research technician at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center studying a number of vaccine candidates for HIV, Zika, and Ebola. I moved back home to Hawaii after a few years and worked as a certified nursing assistant at a skilled nursing facility/rehabilitation center to gain some direct patient experience. I eventually accepted a position at Tripler Army Medical Center doing translational cardiovascular/pulmonology trauma animal research and clinical pulmonology research. Fortunately, I was accepted and successfully completed the 'Imi Ho'ola Post-Baccalaureate at JABSOM and matriculated into the Class of 2025.

What was your journey to medical school?

Kylie: I graduated from Punahou in 2013 and then went to the University of Southern California where I majored in Human Biology and East Asian Languages and Culture. At USC, I spent most of my time with Alpha Phi Omega, a community service fraternity, where we volunteered in various projects around Los Angeles. I also did the Hawaii Pacific Health Health Careers internship for two summers in a row. After I graduated, I moved to Japan to do an intensive language course and later stayed to do research. I then moved back to Hawaii for my first application cycle and worked as a medical assistant at an orthopedic urgent care. Unfortunately I was unable to get off the waitlist at JABSOM, so I moved to New York City where I worked as a scribe and research assistant at Mount Sinai. I did this for a year before reapplying and thankfully was able to get in the second go around! I took a total of 4 gap years, so don't ever feel like it is too late!

Carley: I graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2016 with a BA in Biology. I felt like I didn't have a lot of volunteering, clinical, or research experience prior to graduating so in my situation, taking time to do these things was essential. During my first gap year I did research and the subsequent years I focused on gaining clinical and volunteering experience. I worked as a phlebotomist with DLS for about a year to gain hands-on patient experience. Afterwards, I worked as a medical scribe at the Queen's Medical Center Emergency Department. Working as a medical scribe was an invaluable experience since I was able to learn how to chart and follow the doctors around. During this time I also volunteered at Shriners and studied for the MCAT.

ZoeAnn: Three gap years! During the first year I worked as the Chief Scribe for ScribeAmerica and as a full-time reproductive health research intern at Kapiolani Hospital. After this, I was a research intern at the Anatomy lab at JABSOM where I created 3-dimensional models of cadavers and created the online curriculum for the medical students. In my final year (while applying), I attended Dartmouth College to obtain my Masters in Public Health. I highly recommend an MPH, as I feel like it really gave me a lot to talk about in interviews and secondaries, and will help me as a physician in the future.

How did you balance all your responsibilities during college?

Luke: Keeping a thorough schedule and planning out your responsibilities is super important for managing your time during college. It can get really overwhelming at times with school, extracurricular commitments, socializing, and finding time for yourself, so keeping a running schedule can be very helpful. I used a planner and calendar to schedule all my commitments every week, even if it was something as simple as going to the gym. By putting things in a schedule, it helps you to better stick to that schedule and fulfill those commitments. I think planning things out is essential in college and beyond, so try getting in the habit of using a schedule now. Don't forget to make time for yourself too!

Ben: I tried to make sure I was active in volunteering/research/programs that I was actually interested in and not to overextend myself. I don't advise participating in something just to say you did it and check it off your list. Focus on things you're passionate about (if you can, but you also don't want to be the only one without shadowing experience, volunteer, etc).

Kylie: I would say I was pretty terrible at balancing all my responsibilities haha. During college, I worked ~25-30 hours a week and pretty much dedicated any other free time I had to APO/Hawaii Club. I was definitely big on cramming haha. If there was one thing that helped me, it was the Momentum extension for google chrome. It gives you a nice picture, motivational quote and has a to-do list feature that I used (and still use) to track all the tasks that needed to be completed. It is so satisfying to check off the tasks so it motivates me to get things done (even if it's silly things like "fold laundry") and also not forget important due dates/deadlines. It also shows up every time you open a new tab, so I feel a little guiltier when I'm opening a new tab to go on Facebook/Youtube.

Carley: To be honest, I didn't feel too overwhelmed during college since i knew I wanted to fulfill the rest of my extracurriculars during my gap years. I found that time management was important when I had to balance work and studying for the MCAT. Making time to study for the MCAT was my number one priority since I really struggled with it. Luckily, my job was really flexible with my hours so it all worked out.

ZoeAnn: I made sure to create a calendar with due dates for exams, quizzes, and handouts so I would not miss any assignments. This helped with time-management. I realized it was very easy to fall behind during the semester and would attend the Learning Emporium and library often to keep myself on-top of things. I would recommend to study as much as you can throughout the week and only go out on the weekends if you have finished everything during the week.

What is one piece of advice you have for premedical students?

Luke: As much as it is important to gain a variety of experiences as pre-med students to better prepare you for medical school and applications, try not to catch yourself "checking boxes." You've probably heard that said before, but it really is true. If I could give one piece of advice, it's this: find experiences and activities that you really enjoy, and invest your time there. If you love research, then dive deep into that. If you love working in the community, then do that. Interviews are a huge part of your medical school application, and it will go a long way if you can speak in depth on experiences you really enjoyed and dedicated a lot of time to. Find what you're passionate about and go from there.

Ben: If practicing medicine as a physician is your ultimate goal, don't give up on it if you don't get in your first time. I applied to medical school five times until I finally got in. Make sure you contact the admissions committee to show that you're still interested in that school and medicine. For JABSOM, you're able to make an appointment with Dr. Asano (Director of Admissions) to go over your application. If you ever need advice on reapplying, feel free to contact me at benlee@hawaii.edu!

Kylie: Find a good advisor/mentor and another pre-med friend that is on the same application calendar as you. They can be helpful for mcat prep, drafting/editing essays, mock interviews, etc. The med school application process is a very long, tiring, and stressful process so it is so helpful to have someone to do it together with. Also they keep you accountable, which was a huge help for me!

Carley: For those of you who don't get in your first time or don't get a good MCAT score, don't get discouraged. If this is truly what you want to do in life then don't give up! There were many times where I was discouraged by my MCAT score or getting rejected by schools but I knew I just had to keep trying because it was what I really wanted to do.

ZoeAnn: Focus on your grades and study as hard as you can for the MCAT. Also, don't be afraid to ask others for help on how they succeeded. I learned how to study for the MCAT through others and would not be here without them. I say focus on the grades because they are concrete and can't be changed once they are handed out. The extracurriculars can be completed during the summer or in your gap year, so don't overwhelm yourself during the academic year.

Is there anything you wish you did differently?

Luke: I wish I gained more hands-on clinical experience. I had opportunities to shadow and volunteer in hospitals, but I really wish I gained more experience directly interacting with patients. If you can get a job as a scribe or an MA, I think it will be a great experience and help prepare you for your first year of medical school.

Ben: Obviously, I would've preferred to get into medical school sooner, but life doesn't always pan out the way you want it to. I would make sure to take your college courses seriously and try your best to do well. That GPA is pretty much set in stone after college. If you're like me and didn't do that, you can take graduate level courses via a master's program (there are traditional research thesis masters and ones catered to pre-medical students).

Kylie: If I could do it again, I definitely would spend more time getting to know my science teachers (going to office hours, actually attending class haha, maybe do research with them etc.). Some schools required multiple science letters of recommendation, but I only had one, so this kept me from applying to many schools that I would have otherwise been competitive at. I know it is particularly hard now given the pandemic and online learning, but anyway to get your name out there is helpful!

Carley: One thing I would have done differently is to take the MCAT only when ready. I felt like I took the MCAT knowing I wasn't quite ready and it was a waste of a reported score (and money). Definitely rely on your practice test scores to gauge whether you're ready or not and have confidence!

ZoeAnn: Not at all. I felt the gap years helped me grow personally and professionally, and I was able to enter medical school when I felt I was ready. It's not a race. Do what is best for you! Good luck!

RESOURCES

- **Visit our website!**

<http://uhmsmp.org>

- **UH Manoa Pre-health Advising Center (PAC)**

<https://manoa.hawaii.edu/undergrad/pac/>

Here lies an abundance of information and resources regarding medical school: prerequisite courses, advising, volunteering and shadowing opportunities, research opportunities, pre-med programs, MCAT prep advice, and more.

- **AHEC Health Career Navigator**

<https://www.ahec.hawaii.edu/resources/health-career-navigator/>

A comprehensive guide for pre-healthcare students

- **JABSOM Medical School Requirements**

<https://admissions.jabsom.hawaii.edu/>

- **AAMC MSAR**

<https://students-residents.aamc.org/medical-school-admission-requirements/medical-school-admission-requirements-applicants>

Medical school admission requirements all in one place. It provides information on school-specific applicant average GPA, MCAT, letters of recommendation, course requirements, and more. You need to purchase an annual subscriptions, but you should also be able to access the site for free on the PAC computers.

- **Imi Hoola Program**

<https://jabsom.hawaii.edu/offices-programs/imi/>

'Imi Ho'ōla is a program within the Department of Native Hawaiian Health that accepts up to 12 students each year from economic, social, and/or educational disadvantaged backgrounds, who demonstrate a commitment to practice in underserved communities. Completion of the 12-month program results in entrance into JABSOM as 1st year medical students.