The Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP) is a FREE (full tuition, housing, and meals), six-week summer academic enrichment program for freshman and sophomore college students interested in careers in medicine and dentistry.

What’s an average day like?

**Natacha:** “An SMDEP day starts early with scheduled lectures (Physics, Chemistry, Anatomy lab, Microbiology, etc.) to refresh your science knowledge to prepare for the MCAT or DAT. There’s a lunch break, then from noon until 5:00 p.m., you attend workshops on health care policies, cultural competency, school financial planning, or you might shadow a dentist or doctor from a nearby hospital. After 5:00 p.m., you’re given free time to explore the town with other students.”

**Nicole:** “The day can be challenging, but it’s also engaging and fun at the same time. While it is hard work, you’re greatly increasing your knowledge and sharing the experience with others who have similar interests and goals, so it makes the work more fun.”

What was the best clinical experience you had in the program?

**Michael:** “I shadowed an attending emergency medicine physician in a medical center where I was able to participate on a stroke and motor vehicle trauma case. I also had the ability to assist at a free community clinic staffed by medical students.”

**Netosha:** “My most profound clinical experience took place while making rounds with an emergency physician. I saw the importance of the knowledge a physician must have to make a quick, proper diagnosis in a life threatening situation, and the responsibility they have to the well-being of each patient. This clinical experience humbled me.”

**Fitz:** “Although I want to go to dental school, I was very intrigued with the emergency room simulation. I also enjoyed shadowing a fourth-year dental student, taking impressions, and molding teeth with wax.”

For you, what was the biggest benefit of SMDEP?

**Nicole:** “SMDEP gave me a greater focus on my goal. Afterward, I knew exactly how and what I needed to do to attend medical school, and I am willing to work harder because I know its possible.”

**Michael:** “The biggest benefits of the program are networking and academic preparation. I had the ability to connect with medical students, faculty, and administrators, which opened doors to more opportunities like mentorship and research. The science coursework made my following semester much easier and helped with MCAT review.”

**Netosha:** “The biggest benefit of SMDEP was the confidence I gained from working in a rigorous academic setting. Nothing compares to the self-efficacy the program provided.”

How did this experience help you to prepare for medical school?

**Natacha:** “Working with cadavers in the cadaver lab for Anatomy and Physiology definitely helped me prepare for medical school. I had never been near a cadaver, and attending lab weekly helped to prepare me for the exposure I’ll have in medical school.”

**Michael:** “The science coursework at SMDEP made classes at my home university much easier and gave me a leg-up on MCAT review. Through networking, I secured a mentor that allowed me to participate on a research project with the medical school after the program. I also made very good friends with whom I stay in contact regularly.”

**Erick:** “I believe it has helped me through giving me inspiration. The focus on health disparities at Case really opened my eyes to a new side of medicine. I no longer see medicine the same; I see it for the better bigger picture.”
**Fitz:** “SMDEP definitely helped me prepare for dental school. The program put me on track to graduate from undergrad on-time and get into dental school.”

**Would you recommend SMDEP to other pre-meds?**

**Natacha:** “I would definitely recommend SMDEP to other pre-meds. This program gives you an inside look as to what you are getting yourself into both educationally and personally.”

**Nicole:** “YES! For six weeks I lived as if I was a medical school student. All the experiences I had combined with the friendships I established – I can’t wait to go to medical school in the future.”

**Michael:** “Yes. SMDEP is an invaluable experience for any interested pre-medical student, especially for those from underrepresented and disadvantaged backgrounds.”

**Christian:** “Yes, and apply early to the program! That is KEY.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING HOW TO APPLY, VISIT WWW.SMDEP.ORG, OR EMAIL AT SMDEP@AAMC.ORG.

**BIO INFORMATION**

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