

# WWAMI Student Profiles

In the spring edition of Wyoming Medicine Magazine, we take the time to profile Wyoming students who are in their first year of the WWAMI program. This year, we asked them the following questions:

1. What is the name of your undergraduate institution and major? If you have a graduate degree, you can list that as well.
2. What has been the highlight of med school thus far?
3. What areas of practice are you considering and why?
4. What do you like about the WWAMI program?
5. What brought you to the field of medicine?
6. What is your favorite book or movie and why?

## Amanda Golden

Cody, Wyoming



1. University of Nebraska-Lincoln, bachelor's in psychology
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been the interactions I have been able to have with patients. Hospital mornings provide an opportunity to investigate different diagnoses and learn about symptoms and conditions that add to the information we have learned in class. Additionally, I have really enjoyed the Primary Care Practicum. I have learned about different techniques and procedures and grown in my confidence and ability to interview and interact with patients. I am thankful we have these opportunities to work with patients early in our education.
3. I am currently considering either OB/GYN or pediatrics. As a physician, I want to build long-lasting, quality relationships with my patients where I can truly invest in their health and wellbeing. I am passionate about women's health and have always loved working with children.
4. I love our small class size. Being in a class of 20 has allowed us to grow close as a group and bond right away. Each person is able to share unique perspectives and life experiences that enrich the class as a whole and allow us to look at issues from many different angles. Being in a small class also allows us to have more individual attention and instruction from instructors. This has greatly enriched my learning.
5. I have known I wanted to be a physician since I was in sixth grade and I have not wavered from that decision since. I always loved my science classes and thought the human body was amazing. Additionally, being in the medical field leads to lifelong learning. The field is constantly growing and expanding and providing new, fascinating information to digest. I wanted to work in a field where I could be a leader within my community, enjoy lifelong learning, and invest in the well-being of others. The medical field allows me to do just that.
6. My favorite book is "Tuesdays with Morrie" by Mitch Albom. I first read this book for Death and Dying, a class I took in undergrad. I loved this book because it talked frankly about the ups and downs of human life while giving advice about how to live life to the fullest and how to die with dignity and grace. It also showed the importance of spending time with those you love and sharing stories to learn what shaped them into the person they have become.



## Caleb Brackett

Big Piney, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in microbiology
2. The highlight of med school so far is being able to learn from so many incredible instructors. Our anatomy lab coordinator has done a fantastic job of providing a hands-on learning experience with ultrasounds, prosections, and everything in between. The same applies for the foundation of clinical medicine lectures and activities. I could not have hoped for a more supportive educational experience.
3. Family medicine has always been at the top of my list for what kind of field I want to practice in. I'll be able to take care of a wide range of patients with many different conditions. I'll also be able to stress the importance of prophylactic care and make a big impact in a smaller Wyoming town.
4. The WWAMI program has given us significant patient exposure. We have a few mornings at Iverson Hospital, shadowing opportunities galore, and preceptorships in different fields of medicine. Likewise, we have patient simulations that coincide with what we are learning in our blocks.
5. I have always been fascinated by the body and have been doing community service since I was in elementary school. I'll be able to combine the best of both worlds and have a fulfilling occupation.
6. I can't say that I have a single favorite movie. It's kind of an impossible question. I'd say that a few of my favorites include: "The Princess Bride," "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World," "The Dark Knight," "Up," and "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." I have an extensive must-watch movie list.



## Alexis Anderson

Jackson, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in physiology
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been our primary care practicum experience. It has been insightful in allowing us to practice physical exam skills, differential diagnosis formulation, and assessing how to treat patients in real time.
3. I have yet to make a decision regarding my specialty. As I have not had the opportunity to see internal medicine, OB/GYN, pediatrics, cardiology, or any other such specialties, I have not been able to pare my list down. I did find interest in our cardiology block and enjoyed working in the emergency department with my primary care practicum. However, I cannot make any significant decisions at this time due to lack of exposure.
4. I love the strong connection to the surrounding communities, the small class size, and the support the program offers. WWAMI is constantly encouraging students to pursue passion projects while supporting us in our academic studies. Such encouragement helps create a good school-life balance.
5. I saw a three-legged toad when I was 4 or 5. I "doctored" the toad for a few weeks and that is when I knew I wanted to go into healthcare. I have continued that pursuit since then.
6. My favorite book is "The Art of War," by Sun Tzu, because it applies in almost any situation.



# WWAMI Student Profiles

## Aleksandra “Ola” Zarzycka

Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in microbiology.
2. My highlight has been the FCM simulation patients. This is the time that we truly get a chance to apply what we are learning in class to a real life situation with a patient. I really enjoy learning about the patient's history and figuring out what their diagnosis is.
3. I am looking at primary care, but I truly don't know which area yet! Pediatrics has always interested me, but I am keeping an open mind.
4. My favorite part of the WWAMI program is how close our class has become. From the professors teaching us to my classmates, everyone is so nice and it truly makes class fun!
5. Medicine has always attracted me because of its combination of science and service. Practicing medicine will allow me to stay in tuned with my science side by getting to learn constantly. But the most important aspect of medicine, in my opinion, is helping others live their best life.
6. My favorite movie is “Eat, Pray, Love.” I love to travel and explore different cultures and this movie encapsulates just that.



## Jesse Hinshaw

Kemmerer, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in chemical engineering, master's in molecular biology.
2. My favorite part of medical school so far has been being able to connect all of the medical knowledge we gain in class with the clinical experiences I have had with my preceptor and hospitalist. It is really rewarding to see the efforts I put into studying pay off when I can understand what is happening in the hospital.
3. I am currently interested in internal medicine and emergency medicine, but I have not ruled anything out. I would like to be in a field that will allow me to participate in expanding medical technology fields like medical genetics and telehealth in Wyoming.
4. We are lucky in the WWAMI program to have such a small class size with such a large availability of access to our instructors and mentors. Our exposure to clinical medicine is also incredible, we are frequently able to see knowledge from our courses applied in real scenarios.
5. I was initially brought to the field of medicine by looking up to my father, a physician. However, throughout my education, I have found my own interests in medical technology and using medicine to improve the lives of the individuals in the communities around me.
6. That is a hard question, but I think my favorite movie is “Scott Pilgrim vs. The World.” Who doesn't like video games, rock n' roll, and a good love story?





## Sean McCue

Cody, Wyoming

1. Carroll College (Montana), bachelor's in biology
2. I have really enjoyed the clinical experiences offered through the WWAMI program. In working with my preceptor Dr. Emma Bjore, and physician mentor Dr. Julie Carlson, I have had the opportunity to work closely with patients and put my clinical skills into practice.
3. I am open-minded about which area of practice I want to pursue. Currently, I'm interested in emergency medicine and internal medicine due to the broad scope of practice inherent to these fields.
4. The small class size, affordability, and emphasis on early clinical experience combined with the resources of a large, well respected institution make this program an incredible opportunity for Wyoming students.
5. I was drawn to the field of medicine by a desire to integrate my interest in human physiology with the positive experiences I had working with patients as an EMT. Additionally I appreciate how a career in medicine incorporates teamwork, lifelong learning and service.
6. I have always been a fan of movies about space exploration, so "Interstellar" and "The Martian" are at the top of my list.



## Rida Fatima

Rock Springs, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, dual bachelor's in microbiology and molecular biology.
2. All the clinical experiences that have been incorporated in to our first year of medical school through hospital mornings, preceptorship, and shadowing have been the highlight for me. We get to meet interesting people from all walks of life and apply the knowledge we learn in class.
3. I am unsure of exactly which specialty to choose because I still have so much to experience. I am drawn to primary care because it will allow me to make long-lasting relationships with my patients while being very involved in disease prevention. I am especially interested in Internal Medicine because of the wide variety of pathologies I will be exposed to.
4. I am so grateful to be a part of WWAMI because we get the love and support of a small program with the access to all the resources of a large institution. Everyone involved with the WWAMI program cares so much about each of us and are invested in our success. Our mentors and teachers are so eager to share their wealth of knowledge with us and are always looking for great teaching opportunities.
5. Medicine has long been a passion for me. I am motivated to pursue medicine because it provides me with many opportunities to help others take care of themselves and offer support during their hardships, triumphs, and everything in between. I am especially interested in providing care to those who have been neglected or underserved. It is a dream of mine to be involved in helping extend healthcare to those that have been unable to access it previously, locally and globally
6. This one is hard to answer. I guess I will go with "Take the Lead" because I love dance movies!





# WWAMI Student Profiles

## Conner Morton

Casper, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in family and consumer sciences.
2. Being able to learn material knowing that it could potentially apply to any specialty of our choosing is probably my favorite part (until board scores strongly sway me to go into family medicine). The weekly clinical experience is also a relief from the day-to-day grind of bookwork. Seeing how the knowledge is put into practice is such a big part of medicine, so early exposure to that is refreshing.
3. I currently enjoy emergency medicine the most, but have recently found interest in critical care and family medicine. They all have their quirks, but the fast pace of the ER with quick decision-making is what has initially drawn me toward it.
4. I think the best is still yet to come when we begin our clerkships and see the diversity that the different WWAMI regions bring to our clinical experiences.
5. The ability to serve others with a combined love of science and lifelong learning.
6. Favorite Book: "Neither Wolf Nor Dog." Favorite movie: "Office Space."



## Reed Ritterbusch

Sheridan, Wyoming

1. Augustana University (South Dakota), dual bachelor's in biochemistry and sociology
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been my clinical experiences with my preceptor. I have felt very fortunate to see a diverse set of patients in a family medicine practice and to have great patient care mentoring so early in medical school. Another highlight has been winning the UW 3-on-3 basketball tournament with some of my classmates.
3. I have not decided on any particular specialty and am looking forward to more clinical exposure and clerkships to begin narrowing down specialty choices.
4. I like the range of opportunities available to us in the WWAMI program and having a small class size so we can really get to know our classmates. I love being in Wyoming and the access to the outdoors for fun, but also appreciate that we have the resources of a major academic center in Seattle at our disposal.
5. What brought me to the field of medicine was an appreciation of how medicine bridges together science, service, problem-solving, and teamwork. I always felt like the impact a physician can make on their patients and a community is a special and rewarding thing.
6. My favorite book is "When Breath Becomes Air" by Paul Kalanithi. It's a very thought-provoking and inspiring book for anyone interested in medicine.





## Elliott Trott

Jackson, Wyoming

1. Ohio State University, bachelor's in biology
2. My highlight of medical school thus far has been my preceptorship at Cheyenne Children's Clinic with Dr. Katarzyna Zarzycki. She allows me to have a lot of time working independently with patients. Further, after seeing patients she works diligently to help improve my clinical acumen.
3. While I have an interest in surgery, I believe it is still too early to hone in on one intended field. I will have a better understanding of which field I want to pursue once I complete all of my third-year rotations.
4. My favorite part about WWAMI has been the early clinical exposures. Through both our hospital mornings and our primary care practicum, we have a lot of one-on-one time learning how to interact with and create differential diagnoses for our patients.
5. I grew up in a medical household. With a nurse anesthetist as a mother and a physician for a father, dinner conversations frequently revolved around interesting cases. While it felt as though medicine was the family business, I was still unsure what I wanted to pursue once I started college. However, once I began volunteering at free clinics, I realized the impact access to healthcare can have in the lives of others. The unique impact medicine has in the lives of those in need is what drew me to this field.
6. My favorite movie is "Step Brothers." Even as a medical student, everyone needs a juvenile laugh once in a while.



## Logan Taylor

Sinclair, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's degrees in Spanish and electrical engineering.
2. Getting to know my classmates and making friends with other students who have similar goals has been great. It has provided a real sense of belonging and friendship, which I really enjoy.
3. I am still considering all fields of medicine. I hope that some of the third-year clerkships will help me narrow down what my interests are. Regardless of the specialty, I look forward to returning to Wyoming and becoming part of a community.
4. I enjoy the small class size and individual care that the WWAMI program provides for those of us in Laramie.
5. After completing several engineering internships, I realized I enjoyed both science and interacting with and helping people. I decided to investigate several other professions and after shadowing a physician I discovered it was what I eventually wanted to do.
6. I don't know if I truly have a favorite book or movie but one of my favorites would have to be "Catch Me If You Can" (the book). Frank Abagnale Jr.'s autobiography was one of the most entertaining books I've ever read. His creativity and resourcefulness were admirable. I hope to develop the problem-solving abilities that he had, but apply them to more reputable causes.



# WWAMI Student Profiles

## Ryan Winchell

Cody, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in psychology.
2. For me, the highlight of med school has been making 19 new friends.
3. I'd like to work in emergency medicine.
4. WWAMI offers a nice mixture of rural and urban experiences.
5. I started working in emergency medical services in 2005 and wanted to further my education, which led me to medical school.
6. My favorite movie is "Interstellar."



## Alanna Hall

Rock River, Wyoming

1. Creighton University (Nebraska), bachelor's in economics.
2. The highlight of medical school thus far has been my primary care practicum in emergency medicine. Being able to apply class material to the variety of clinical scenarios seen on a daily basis in the ED and to work through patient cases with my preceptor has been invaluable.
3. I'm looking forward to allowing clerkships to guide me in selecting a specialty but at this time I am most interested in psychiatry and internal medicine.
4. I love the community we have within our foundations site while maintaining the benefits and connections of the greater WWAMI region and the University of Washington.
5. I recognized the role that medicine inevitably has in the lives of people from all walks of life and believe a career in healthcare to be fundamentally impactful and rewarding.
6. My favorite book is "Being Mortal" by Atul Gawande. It has really challenged me to perceive the objectives of medicine in a more holistic and humanistic way.



## Marcus Couldridge

Casper, Wyoming

1. Western Washington University, bachelor's in biological anthropology.
2. The first summer experience at my TRUST (Targeted Rural Underserved Track) site in Thermopolis has been a highlight.
3. I'd like to focus on family medicine, because I enjoy the relational part of medicine along with the flexibility and diversity.
4. I like the WWAMI program because of the support systems both from the University of Wyoming and University of Washington.
5. My mom was a big influence on my decision to pursue medicine.
6. "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix" (book NOT movie). Most recently, my favorite book is "Neither Wolf Nor Dog" by Kent Nerburn because it challenges my privilege and the notion of "helping."





## Renee Wollman

Huron, South Dakota

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in physiology.
2. Our time with preceptors and spending time in the hospital is a great opportunity to apply the general knowledge taught in the classroom in a clinical setting. I'd say it's a highlight to finally be able to see what being a physician entails.
3. Most of my clinical exposure has been to the surgical field and emergency medicine, my interest is directed accordingly. Both areas offer stimulating environments with high-risk situations that push the comfort zone of medicine. While it certainly is interesting to a first-year medical student, I'm sure my perspective will continue to change with increased exposure to other disciplines.
4. Our small class size has formed a cohesive group that has made it easy to transition into the medical school environment. We have become a true family and being part of each other's lives has been truly amazing and an advantage both socially and educationally.
5. I became interested in medicine when I realized its role in integrating all the academic fields with potential for endless innovation without neglecting the humanity component.
6. "Pan's Labyrinth" is a movie about innocence and imagination not only prevailing in the face of evil but forging a new and different path, either by imaginative ingenuity or madness, depending on how you would like to interpret it. "The clues to the answer can be found by those who have eyes to see."



## Adam Blaine

Gillette, Wyoming

1. University of Montana, dual bachelor's in economics and resource conservation.
2. Working with our clinical faculty, preceptors, and hospitalists have been a highlight of my first year. Our clinical experience is an outstanding opportunity that applies and reinforces the topics we cover during our studies.
3. Family medicine is the area of practice at the top of my list. Throughout our first year I have been fascinated by many of the topics we have covered. From immunology to pulmonology, I have found that a family medicine physician sees a little bit of everything we study.
4. WWAMI's unique class size provides the best setting to learn in a friendly environment with faculty members you can actually get to know. It also offers the strong backing of the University of Washington that provides opportunities in research and exploration that might not be found in a smaller school.
5. During my training as an EMT I was drawn to the science and patient care of medicine. I further developed a passion for physiology as I continued my education as a post-baccalaureate student at the University of Wyoming. In addition to the science I volunteered at a free clinic where I found the personal patient care extremely fulfilling. As a student I am excited to continue my studies to help patients achieve better health outcomes.
6. My favorite book is The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown. The personal story of struggle, work ethic, and teamwork was an inspiration.





# WWAMI Student Profiles

## Reno Maldonado

Laramie, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, bachelor's in kinesiology and health promotion
2. So far, the highlight for me has been the ability to learn information in class and then take that information and apply it in a clinical setting. With so many willing and excited mentors in the community we as students are able to really get great hands-on experience and teaching.
3. Currently I am leaning toward surgery. However, I have not narrowed down any specific sub specialty. I look forward to the ability to keep exploring all of the unique specialties.
4. I have really enjoyed being part of a larger collaboration with the WWAMI states. It is truly special to have access and exposure across such a wide area.
5. Throughout high school and my undergraduate education I always knew that I wanted to be a physician. As I sought opportunities for exposure to healthcare my passion for medicine just grew and always left me wanting more. Seeing the impact that I could have as a physician on patients and my community is ultimately what keeps me excited and eager to learn more.
6. My favorite movie is "The Big Lebowski."



## Trey Thompson

Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, dual bachelor's in molecular biology and microbiology
2. There have been a lot of highlights so far, including learning the basics of wilderness medicine at NOLS and learning hands-on skills during our workshops. My favorite highlight has been every morning that I have spent with my preceptor. Getting this much direct patient contact experience this early in medical school is a wonderful way to reinforce why I am pursuing this career, especially in the midst of lecture-heavy days.
3. There are so many different fields of medicine that are fascinating to me, and I am really excited to continue to gain more first-hand experience in the different areas. The idea that I might end up in a specialty that wasn't even on my radar prior to applying to medical is really exhilarating to me.
4. In addition to gaining such valuable clinical experience so early in medical school, I really like the WWAMI program because it allows me to continue my education in my home state. It is such a privilege to be one of twenty students that are able to pursue medical education right here in our backyard. Our small cohort really allows for a supportive learning environment that I think is unique to this program.
5. Medicine seemed like the perfect intersection of my strong passion for science and desire to work with people. The clearest "light bulb" moment, which finally cemented my career choice, came the night before I graduated high school. My grandmother surprised me with my grandfather's medical bag that he took with him and used during house calls. It still had some of his instruments inside. After hearing numerous stories from my mother and grandmother about his career, this vestige of his career and life, which I was never a part of, was the most thoughtful gift I have ever received. It was the last sign I needed to officially begin the path to this career.
6. My favorite movie is "Inglourious Basterds." I am a huge movie nerd, and slight history nerd as well. I think the aesthetic of this movie is undeniably flawless. The way Quentin Tarantino masterfully weaves tension through clever dialogue, even in multiple languages throughout this movie, is incredible.

