

WWAMI Student Profiles

In the summer 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 what was your major?
2. What has been the highlight of med school thus far?
3. What areas of practice are you considering and why?
4. What areas of the country would you like to practice in and why?
5. What do you like about the WWAMI program?
6. What brought you into the field of medicine?

Lingga Adidharma

Laramie, Wyoming

1. Johns Hopkins University - Biomedical Engineering.
2. My clinical experiences with my preceptor and hospitalist have been my favorite part. Not only do these experiences ground the material we are learning in class, but they also remind me of why I wanted to go into medicine in the first place.
3. I am interested in combining engineering with medicine and could see myself doing this in many areas of practice. Currently, I see the most potential for overlap with surgical fields.
4. I do not have a specific town in mind, but I would like to practice in an area close to my family that has easy access to the outdoors.
5. Similar to my highlight, I have enjoyed how the WWAMI program exposes us early on to clinical experiences. I am excited to continue these experiences learning from preceptors and working with diverse patient populations around the WWAMI region during clinical rotations.
6. Through my research and engineering experiences I found enjoyment in the innovation inherent to engineering, but I felt a disconnect between my work and the people it impacted. Experiences in volunteering and shadowing exposed me to how physicians had the privilege of working on challenges in a more direct, personal level and developed my desire to become a physician.



Ethan Slight

Cody, Wyoming

1. Boise State University. Health Science Major, Biology Minor.
2. Really getting to understand the human body. Very amazing to me! Along with all the great experiences working with my preceptors and getting some great patient time.
3. That is a great question. I really have no idea. I like IM and EM but haven't ruled anything out at this point.
4. Wyoming. Beautiful country, great people and been my home since I was a kiddo.
5. The small class class size, ability to travel and the TRUST program.
6. The desire to serve other people. I watched my father do this in his practice when I was a kid. He has been a constant inspiration for me to always do better and work hard to help those around me.





Austin Lever

Rock Springs, Wyoming

1. Boston College, Biology.
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been being able to spend so much time with preceptors and physicians in the area during the first year. It has been amazing having the opportunity to spend time in clinic with patients while learning from great mentors.
3. I am currently interested in internal medicine because of the broad focus and ability to work and interact with patients from a diverse population with a wide range of pathologies. However, I am open to many specialties and excited to explore them as my education continues.
4. Having grown up in Wyoming, I have a huge love for this state and its people. For this reason I would really like to return to Wyoming to practice medicine.
5. One of the aspects about the WWAMI program that is invaluable is the ability to gain so much clinical experience outside of the classroom during the first year. Along with this, every person involved with the WWAMI program is so invested and supportive which creates a great environment.
6. I wanted to study medicine because I have always had a passion for science and public health. What really appealed to me was that the integration of the scientific and personal aspects of medicine make it a dynamic field that allow you to make huge impacts on people's lives.



Cody Hansen

Rock Springs, Wyoming

1. I earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Neuroscience from Brigham Young University.
2. The highlight of my medical school education thus far has been working with my clinical preceptors and in the hospital. I really enjoy working with patients and collaborating with other physicians to find ways to better their health and care. It's been great to see how what we are learning in class applies directly to improving our patients' lives.
3. Right now, I am considering ophthalmology, radiology, and anesthesiology. I have always enjoyed health professions that allow you to perform procedures and have loved working with doctors in these fields. I also enjoy the work-life balance that comes with these areas of practice.
4. I want to practice in an area of the country where I can raise a family and be close to the outdoors. I'm planning on coming back to Wyoming after my medical school training and practicing somewhere in the state. I want to live somewhere that will allow me to be a strong member of the community I live in.
5. The WWAMI program has been an amazing opportunity. I'm grateful to be a part of this program and to get to learn from instructors and physicians throughout the WWAMI region. I also have enjoyed serving in a smaller community and getting to know the other Wyoming and WWAMI students as we work towards our individual career goals.
6. I was drawn to the field of medicine during high school because of amazing high school science teachers. I loved being able to serve and help others, throughout my undergraduate time, and felt like an education in the field of medicine would best help me to apply the knowledge I was learning to others' care. The field of medicine allows me to care for others, raise a family, and be a strong citizen in my local community.



WWAMI Student Profiles

Dillon Brown

Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. Brigham Young University- Russian Major
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been learning how to suture. I love using my hands so getting to suture was such a tangible realization that I am really here and on the path to becoming a physician. Clinical experiences and little breaks from book work like this that help inspire me to reach for mastery of the material in order to help my future patients.
3. I am keeping my mind open so that I don't miss learning about specialties and discovering new things that I like. In the past I have been interested in surgery, but recently discovered that it was doing procedures and being in the OR that I really love. Through this realization, I also have seen the other areas of medicine that allow me to do what I love. My top interests now include, interventional radiology, anesthesiology, and orthopedics.
4. I laugh when people ask me where I want to live because it's still about 9 years before I'm even done with residency if all goes as planned. However, I love the West. I can't imagine a life without the mountains. Wyoming and surrounding states are at the top of my list of places to practice someday.
5. I love that in the WWAMI get early clinical experience and that we have connections to our home state and at the same time have all the resources of the University of Washington at our disposal. In our class size of 20 we have good friends and lots of individual attention from teachers. Couple that with the great reputation of UWSOM that we carry to residency applications and you have a winning program.
6. I first became interested in medicine through the surgical repair of a high school knee injury. The medical team and the way they helped me to gain such great knee function through surgery and rehabilitation really touched me. I want to do the same for others.



Heidi Hanekamp

Laramie, WY

1. University of Wyoming; Majors in Molecular Biology and Physiology; Minor in Music
2. I have really enjoyed being able to see the direct relationship between the manifestation of a disease and findings on a physical exam. I am amazed by how many different systems can be impacted by one disease!
3. I am still exploring my options for different specialties, but I have an interest in OB/GYN because I enjoy the combination of both surgery and primary care medicine.
4. I am open to living where my specialty of interest takes me, but I will likely end up in some sort of primary care medicine, which will hopefully bring me back to beautiful Wyoming!
5. I have enjoyed interacting with other Medical Student Association (MSA) members and faculty from all of the WWAMI regions. Being in MSA has showed me how many resources are available to us through connections with four other states.
6. There are many reasons why I decided to pursue medicine, including an interest in the details of how the body works, a love for lifelong learning, and a passion for helping others. What I enjoy most about medicine though are the complexities and challenges that come with functioning at the crossroads of physiology, psychology, and sociology.





Madeleine Birch

Cody, Wyoming

1. The University of Utah. Major in biology.
2. The course at NOLS was a highlight. Working with my preceptors, Dr. Schiel and Dr. Ewell has been great.
3. Emergency medicine, or a specialty off internal medicine.
4. Wyoming.
5. The small class size the first year and getting to attend such a high esteemed medical school.
6. Exposure to the profession from a very young age. I discovered my own fascination of the sciences in undergrad and love how it is integrated into medicine.



Michael Robison

Green River, Wyoming

1. I attended the University of Wyoming and earned a B.S. in Physiology. I graduated in 2013.
2. I have enjoyed our hospital mornings. Five of us students met biweekly with a hospitalist and discussed clinical medicine, read ECGs, and saw hospital patients. We also practiced bedside case presentations. I liked that the patient presentations were more complex, and that we had the time to do more in-depth analysis. I also enjoyed observing my colleagues as their clinical skills developed over the year.
3. I really like Internal Medicine and the associated subspecialties—especially Cardiology, Pulmonology, and Critical Care. I'm interested in a balance between procedural medicine and clinical medicine. I enjoy complex cases, and I'd really like to become an expert of a smaller field of medicine. While our program puts an emphasis on primary care, I believe that Wyoming needs more specialists who are motivated to be based in Wyoming. With Internal Medicine, I could choose to either stay in primary care or to further specialize. I like that flexibility.
4. I'd like to come back to Wyoming. I'd like to honor my WWAMI contract, plus it's close to family.
5. I love the small class sizes. It's been a great chance to get to know my colleagues and the faculty. I've enjoyed the early exposure to clinical medicine. We are doing things in our first year that many students don't experience until their third year. That puts us at a huge advantage for becoming competent clinicians. The value of the WWAMI program simply cannot be beat. The connection to University of Washington really gives us a lot of educational and career opportunities that we otherwise wouldn't have. For example, I'm part of an elective LGBTQ Health Pathway. This pathway is training me to provide culturally responsive care for the LGBTQ population in Wyoming. I'm excited to see where this training takes me in extending better care to more of Wyoming's underserved populations.
6. I will be the first physician in my family. My career exploration began with a love for science. As I learned more about medicine, I realized that becoming a physician is something I simply needed to do. Physicians interact with patients at some of the most significant moments of their lives—from birth to death, and in illness and in health. I find that relationship inspiring. Also, doctors get to be trained to do some amazing procedures that few people are able to do. Getting a medical degree from the WWAMI program is going to open a world of opportunities for me, and my hope is to pay back the investment when I'm through with my training.

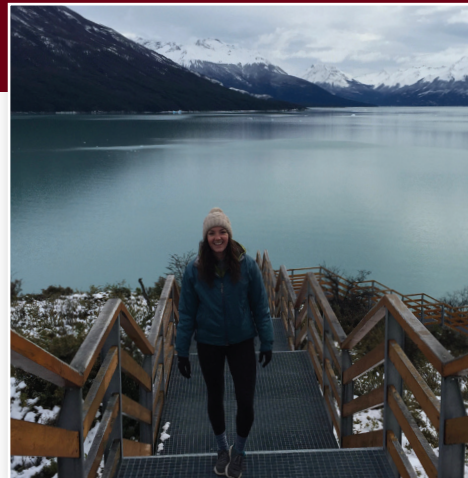


WWAMI Student Profiles

Sarah Maze

Ranchester, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, B.S. Physiology, minor in neuroscience, B.A. Spanish
2. I loved wilderness medicine training with NOLS in Lander, and have greatly enjoyed my preceptorship experiences. It is such an incredible opportunity to learn in a variety of clinical settings and apply our knowledge hands-on so early in our education.
3. Right now, every aspect of medicine is fascinating, I'm really looking forward to continuing to explore a variety of specialties.
4. My upbringing in Wyoming instilled a desire to work toward increasing access to health care in rural areas as a physician. I would like to incorporate global medicine into my future career, ideally practicing in a rural community similar to the one that shaped me in Wyoming and also spend time serving abroad.
5. The WWAMI program is such a supportive learning environment—it's great to have our faculty, staff, and really the whole state of Wyoming behind us, advocating for our education and the future of health care in Wyoming! I also love the importance placed on early clinical exposure, and the "learn by doing" approach.
6. Combined with my interest in human physiology, my passion for serving others fueled my interest in medicine. Medicine is an opportunity to have a meaningful impact on the lives of others while learning something new every day. I look forward to working with patients to optimize their individual health and ensure they are able to live a rewarding life.



Jordan Reed

Gillette, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, Bachelors in Microbiology and Minor in Chemistry
Colorado State University, Masters in Biomedical Sciences
2. The highlight of medical school so far has been getting to know the other students in my class and establishing friendships. I have also enjoyed the clinical experiences. We are able to interact with patients early in our education and we are provided with a plethora of shadowing opportunities, both of which are quite unique and extremely beneficial as first year medical students.
3. I am currently keeping an open mind as I gain more experience and exposure to different specialties. However, I have always enjoyed working with children, and the pediatric age group is the population in which I would like to work with.
4. I would like to come back to Wyoming and practice. Wyoming has always been my home as I was born, raised, and received the bulk of my education here. I would thoroughly enjoy giving back to the state and citizens that have helped me get to where I am today.
5. The WWAMI program does an excellent job providing engaging preceptors and hospitalists. Their contributions undoubtedly help solidify the knowledge gained in the classroom by applying it to a clinical context.
6. Medicine provides an avenue that combines my passion for learning, science, and my desire to work with people. Through my prior experiences in the medical field, I discovered the teamwork involved in medicine along with the gratification of helping others in need, which confirmed my decision to pursue a career as a physician.





Joshua Henry

Laramie, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, Major in Chemistry with Honors
2. NOLS was the most exciting part of medical school so far. Getting to know my classmates in the setting of Wilderness Medicine was an amazing experience. I also love emergency medicine and spending time outside so this experience was the perfect way to get excited for our future as physicians.
3. As I said before I am interested in Emergency Medicine as well as Radiology. I love fast paced acute medicine where making decisions quickly is necessary. I also enjoy using images and tests to reach a diagnosis. That being said I have yet to spend time in a clinic that I have not enjoyed. Any specialty is still on the table.
4. Most any rural location in the Rocky Mountains would be fine for me. I am partial to south-eastern Wyoming and the Douglas area is one of my favorite places to spend time. The outdoor community and down to earth people make me feel at home.
5. I most enjoy the faculty to student ratio. We have many faculty who dedicate so much of their time to our training as physicians and with only 20 students they are readily available for any question you may have. Being able to get more one on one teaching in with teachers has been extremely helpful in understanding challenging concepts and feeling at home.
6. I am the eldest of 5 boys which placed me in a sort of caretaker and provider role from a young age. This combined with my fascination in the capabilities and strengths of the human body made medicine appear as the only possible career choice once I hit High School. I love the conversations and the change you get to see in the lives of those you are fortunate enough to interact with.



Kelsey Tuttle

Rock Springs, WY

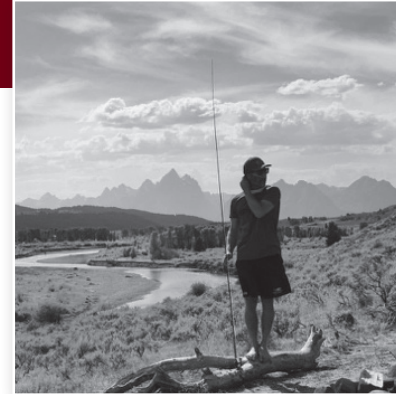
1. University of Rochester; Majors in Chemistry and Business, Minor in Movement Studies
2. I have especially enjoyed the time I spend in the community with local practitioners. We have so many generous physicians in our community volunteering their time to educate us as well as community members that are eager to be a part of our learning process. It makes for a wonderful environment to learn in!
3. I am undecided about what area of medicine I would like to practice in. I have found things I like about many of the specialties I explore, so I am keeping my mind open and continuing to investigate my interests.
4. I would love to come back to Wyoming! All of my family is in Wyoming and I look forward to being close to them.
5. I love that we have a small class size! It allows me the opportunity to know all of my classmates and it creates comradery among us. It has also made it easy to connect with professors and build relationships with those teaching and supporting us on this journey. I also enjoy the many clinical experiences we have been given, from family medicine, to the emergency medicine, to the operating room, we are able to explore many interests.
6. I grew up watching family members navigate the health system, so I originally became interested from a policy standpoint. Originally, I thought about going into policy or benchtop research in the basic sciences to do my part in improving health care, but the more I learned about medicine and health policy the more I realized I wanted to be a physician. I want to be a physician so that I can help people navigate the system we currently have while supporting and having a deep appreciation for those advocating for improvements in policy and those doing research to change medicine in the future.



WWAMI Student Profiles

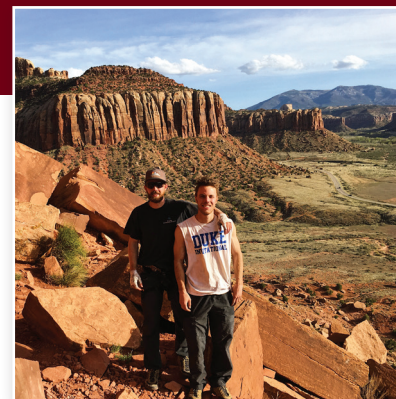
Aaron Robertson Douglas, Wyoming

1. Middlebury College, Music
2. Working with my preceptors, Dr. Amy Jo Harnish, Dr. Patrick Tufts and Dr. Paul Johnson. I have been able to see the specifics of their respective medical practices. This has given me the opportunity to refine my history taking and physical exam skills. Additionally, I have been able to participate in multiple procedures.
3. I am open to a lot of areas of practice at this point, I am keeping my options available. Four fields of medicine I am most interested in are internal medicine, emergency medicine, otolaryngology and orthopedics.
4. I will practice in Wyoming. I need access to the things I enjoy. Mountain biking, fly fishing, hunting, skiing, camping, etc. Wyoming is filled with hard working, good people. There is no better place than Wyoming for my future career.
5. The WWAMI program provides tangible hands on experiences from day one. This allows me to take complicated topics from my didactic learning and connect them to real life experiences. There is no better way to ingrain what you learn in the classroom than to see it in practice.
6. My initial interest in medicine is related to personal experiences as a patient. Since then, I have discovered that medicine is an engaging and fulfilling career path. It will allow me to live a life of continual learning while making a difference in the lives of Wyomingites.



Spencer Pecha Gillette, Wyoming

1. Undergraduate institution: Duke University, Major: Environmental chemistry with a minor in Earth and Oceans Science
2. So far, the highlight of medical school for me has been really diving into the curriculum. I find the pathophysiology of the conditions we study, as well as the related anatomy of the organ systems, fascinating and enjoyable to study. Additionally, spending time outside of the classroom learning through preceptorships with Dr. David Kasarda in the Laramie ED and Dr. Carol Schiel of Cheyenne Regional Pediatrics has been amazing. I have really enjoyed getting more comfortable around the pediatric population of patients via working with Dr. Schiel.
3. At this point I find nearly everything interesting and am very open to all possibilities. I hope to hone in on an area of medicine that I am passionate about, and one that allows for a good work-life balance. I am looking for a specialty that incorporates both procedures and patient care and am strongly considering anesthesiology, emergency medicine, internal medicine, and ENT/facial & neck surgery.
4. Really the only places I see myself practicing are in Wyoming or the Rocky Mountain Region. I am really interested in rural healthcare delivery and see myself practicing in a rural area. But, I also really enjoy teaching, so teaching medical students and residents at a teaching hospital would not be out of the question in the future.
5. I really like how the School of Medicine is so open to student feedback, especially concerning curriculum improvement. They are always asking for student feedback and are willing to improve things based off that feedback.
6. Medicine represents and incorporates what I want out of a career: critical thinking and life-long learning, team-work, interpersonal relationships, service, and teaching to name a few.





Mason Stillman

Gillette, Wyoming

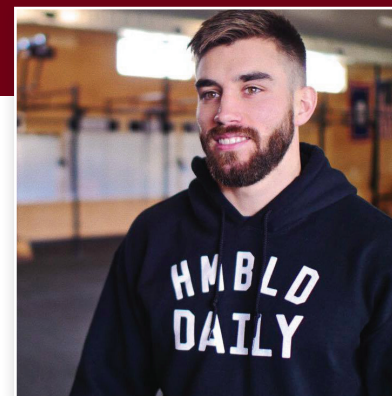
1. University of South Dakota – Biology Major
2. The best part of medical school so far has been the ability to apply information I've learned to patients in my clinical experiences.
3. I'm currently exploring a lot of options, but my biggest areas of interest are psychiatry, neurology, emergency medicine, and internal medicine. I really enjoy anything concerning thought processes and brain function, but I'm interested in the others because of the variety they offer.
4. Wyoming, because it would mean a lot to be able to help the communities that raised me. I also enjoy hiking, biking, and fishing, so Wyoming has a lot to offer.
5. I really like the community feel that the program offers. Every staff member is very helpful and concerned about the success of the students, and that makes for a very inclusive learning environment.
6. My brother was born 3 months prematurely, so I've always been around healthcare. I just really liked what I saw in the medical field during that exposure. The difference that healthcare professionals were able to make for my family and countless others had a large impact on me.



Quinn Rivera

Cody, Wyoming

1. University of Wyoming, Physiology.
2. The highlight of medical school thus far been the ample patient interaction that we receive so early on as a part of the WWAMI program. That experience holds so much value in building our confidence and professionalism early. I've also thoroughly enjoyed getting to know my classmates and all of those who make the WWAMI program possible. It is a devoted crew that helps make our goals a reality, and I am very thankful for that.
3. I am currently interested in Ophthalmology and Radiology. My time spent with both of those specialties has proved fruitful, and they both align with many of my interests. After my training I hope to pursue mission work alongside my practice, and Ophthalmology has a ripe mission field due to the high prevalence of preventable blindness caused by cataracts. I plan to remain open minded during my future rotations and look forwards to learning about each area of medicine.
4. I would love to come back and practice in Wyoming. The people in Wyoming are unparalleled and throughout my life here I have been molded and shaped by the communities I have been blessed to be a part of. I see no better way to give back than to come back to the state to practice.
5. The early clinical experience has been a great advantage of the WWAMI program. I also enjoy the small class size and the comradery that has been built between classmates because of it. The doctors in Wyoming seem to be very fond of the WWAMI program and that allows doors to be opened for us students to gain additional experience which is also a great aspect.
6. I pursued medicine because I have deep rooted passions to serve, learn, and teach, which are all encompassed by the medical profession. Physicians have a unique opportunity to serve patients and build bridges when they are often in a very vulnerable state. I greatly look forward to the relationships that will be built throughout my career through the pursuit of health and the highest quality of life.



WWAMI Student Profiles

Jackson Schmidt

Cody, Wyoming

1. University of Colorado - Degree in Psychology
2. Learning about so many disease processes involving various organ systems, and then using this knowledge while seeing patients in order to categorize problems and explain them to patients.
3. I am interested in surgery because it is such a fascinating and challenging skill but also equally intrigued by family and internal medicine because of the broad spectrum of knowledge necessary to practice in these fields.
4. Wyoming, Colorado, or Montana, as I have always loved these states above all the others I have visited.
5. It is very personal and the faculty are genuinely invested in our progression toward becoming physicians. It truly is an amazing program.
6. Mostly the desire to gain knowledge that would allow me to help other people with their health problems in a variety of settings. It's the universal utility of medicine that exists regardless of culture or region that drew me to the field.



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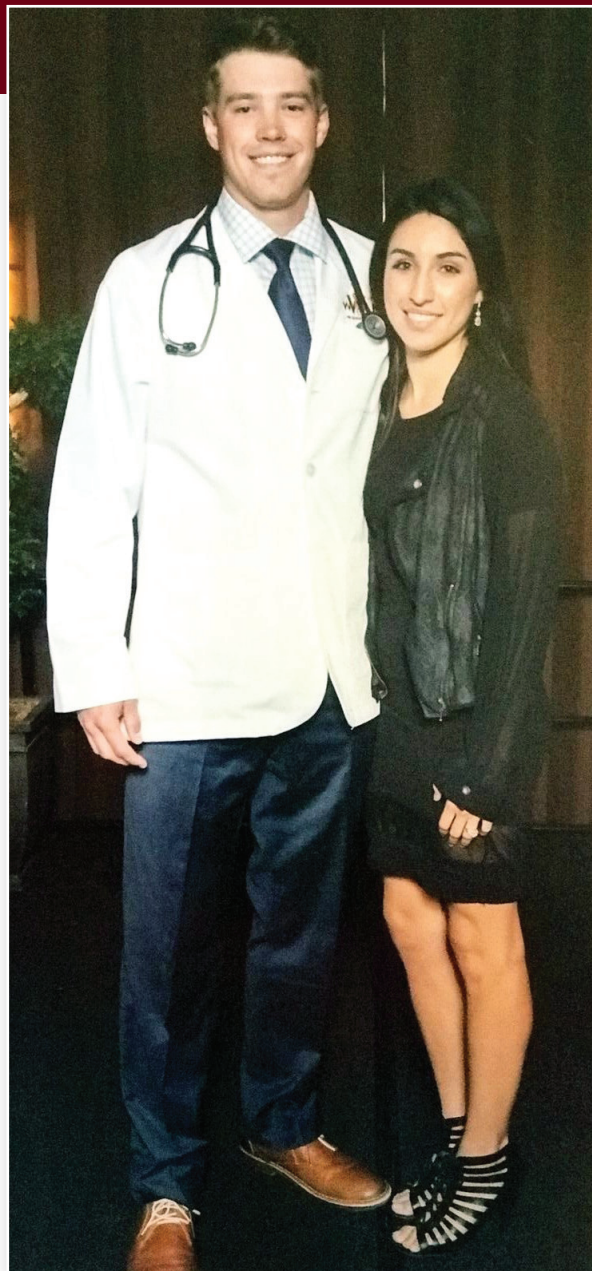
The Wyoming State Bar does not certify any lawyer as a specialist or expert. Anyone considering a lawyer should independently investigate the lawyer's credentials and ability, and not rely upon advertisements or self-proclaimed expertise.



Trevor Mordhorst

Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. I attended the University of Wyoming with a Physiology Major and Neuroscience minor. After the University of Wyoming I attended Tulane University for a Pharmacology masters program.
2. I have really enjoyed getting to know the fellow students in the WWAMI program and the time I have spent with my preceptors. The program helps to develop valuable relationships and promotes mentorship through early clinical experience.
3. At this point I am confident I would like something to do with sports medicine. I am unsure of which path I should take to get to this goal. Currently Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is my top choice, however the more I learn over the next year or so will refine my decision. I will spend time this summer with Physiatrists to learn more about my interests. I like that PM&R uses aspects of Internal Medicine, Orthopedics and Neurology to treat a patient's quality of life and the wide range of practice from sports medicine on a field or in a clinic to spinal cord injury in critical care.
4. I love Wyoming and plan on coming back to Cheyenne. I am not able to stray far from the front range area and all that it has to offer. Both my wife and I grew up in Cheyenne, where we still call home. We enjoy being close to friends and family and an outdoorsy lifestyle.
5. WWAMI has been absolutely spectacular for me. The staff and students have all been great. We get an early exposure to clinical skills that is not common in many medical schools. Things that we learn in class are further cemented in the clinic, as we see patients that bring a face and a story to a pathology. As I mentioned earlier the program also puts students in a position to develop relationships with mentors. I have found this valuable. As students we are experiencing most of medicine for the first time. These mentors help to provide a real-life guide to medicine on both an academic and personal level.
6. Firstly, I have had a lifetime of love for biology and the magic that is nature. I grew up on a small ranch between Cheyenne and Laramie and was always surrounded by animals and wilderness. In school I experienced a natural transition to studying physiology and the innerworkings of biology. I excelled in this area and was continuously fascinated with learning all that I could. Medicine was a perfect way to continue my passion for science and a lifetime of learning. Secondly, growing up my mother was diagnosed with an autoimmune kidney disease. She was on dialysis at home and our home was full of the medical equipment necessary to replace her malfunctioning kidneys. Over twenty years she has had many complications with her disease, including two kidney transplants. I witnessed the vast improvement medicine had on her life, and the lives of all of us in her family. I saw the potential I had in medicine to make drastic improvements in people's lives and this was too enticing not to take part in.



WWAMI Student Profiles

Sabrina Westover Cheyenne, Wyoming

1. I studied Molecular Biology and Physiology with a minor in the Honors Program at the University of Wyoming. I graduated with my Bachelors of Science in the fall of 2016.
2. I've really enjoyed my experience in my primary care practicum. The physicians and patients I met have been inspiring.
3. Pediatric Oncology has always been an interest of mine. I developed a passion for working with children and cancer when I completed an undergraduate research fellowship at the University of Colorado.
4. Wyoming because I enjoy the culture, the people, the outdoors, and have family nearby.
5. Early exposure to patients in our pre-clinical curriculum has been really beneficial. It's been a great break from classroom material and is a nice reminder of the reasons I wanted to enter the field of medicine.
6. A culmination of many experiences over time has lead me to pursue a career in medicine. I think what ultimately drew me to the field was knowing that the possibilities to help people are endless.



Giandor Saltz Powell, Wyoming

1. I attended the University of Wyoming for my undergraduate studies and studied Physiology and Spanish.
2. The highlight for my first year of medical school is my spring preceptorships in geriatrics and ob/gyn specialties. I was lucky to be able to work with two different physicians.
3. I am interested in internal medicine. I like that this specialty has a broad spectrum and a lot of possibilities for sub-specialization. I am also interested in anesthesiology, as I really like the physiology and pharmacology involved.
4. I would like to stay in the west.
5. I like spending some of the pre-clinical phase in a rural area. This gives you a lot more hands-on experience with patients.
6. I have always loved working with patients. I was a CNA before I started medical school and patient interaction was the highlight of my job. I wanted to be able to do more for my patients and have so far loved my time in medical school.



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