

John Allen



Hi y'all! I am in the Hendersonville part of the Asheville Longitudinal Integrated Curriculum for my third year of medical school. I could not think of a better way to spend my clinical year than here! The opportunities to work directly with attending physicians while being an integral member of patient care are amazing! My preceptors have taken the time to teach me despite the demands of busy clinics by pushing me to read up on topics before clinic, perfect my physical exam skills, refine my clinical thinking, and practice hands-on procedures. The required shifts in the Emergency Room have been exciting, fast

paced and full of learning. Even though this campus is known for producing great primary care doctors, I was able to scrub in on approximately 3-5 surgical cases a day during our 6-weeks of surgery. You don't get that experience at other places! I am also a Kenan Primary Care Medical Scholar and have enjoyed this path at UNC which included a 6-week Family Medicine internship in the mountains of Western North Carolina in the summer after my first year.

I grew up on the North Shore of Boston where I loved playing sports, especially soccer and wrestling. My father instilled in me a love for the Appalachian Mountains and wilds of northern New England. I climbed my first 4,000-foot mountain at age 5 and began backpacking at 12. After high school, I tried college for a year before deciding that working outside with my hands was my preference. I did stints as a farmer and landscaper before settling into carpentry. I specialized in historic houses and did everything from framing to finish work to custom cabinetry. I ran my own business for three years before deciding it was time for my next adventure. I enlisted in the US Army, eventually earning my Green Beret and spending ten years with four combat deployments to Afghanistan as a Special Forces Medical Sergeant. I was afforded the chance to work with and train medics from numerous foreign militaries. I was blessed to be mentored by some of our nation's finest trauma surgeons as well as provide medical care to the children of remote villages in Central Asia.

My wife and three children accompanied me to Western North Carolina and we all love it here! It is such a great area to live and raise kids. We have barely scratched the surface of hikes to waterfalls or grassy balds in the area. We would love to stay in the area and grow roots. I am still leaning towards Family Medicine in a rural area and this program is perfect for that!

Noah Brown



Hey y'all! My name is Noah and I'm so happy to be here in Asheville for my third year. I was born in western NC and raised in Charlotte, but the Blue Ridge Mountains have been my second home for as long as I can remember. My journey towards medicine began while I earned my undergraduate degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN. Following undergrad, I decided to check out another city known for its Blues music, Chicago, IL. I worked as an anesthesia technician at the Lurie Children's Hospital, where I fell in love with the operating room environment. After two frigid winters, the Carolina sunshine called me back to UNC to pursue my MD. The preclinical years in Chapel Hill were amazing, but I couldn't wait to start my clinical work surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains.

I chose the Asheville campus because of the opportunity to develop close connections with my preceptors and my patients. As I consider a career in surgery, operating with the faculty in the area has been invaluable. The small learner-to-faculty ratio has provided me with some incredible experiences. Outside of the clinic, I love being in the heart of the mountains, surrounded by world-class rock climbing and hiking. I've had a fantastic experience here thus far and can't wait to continue exploring!

Brainard Burrus



Hey everyone! My name's Brainard and I grew up just west of Asheville in Canton, NC. I went to college at UNC, where I majored in biochemistry but spent most of my time singing college a cappella. After graduating, I spent a few years doing neuroscience research (at UNC and another less reputable school down the road), discovered I liked working with people more than working with pipettes, and began working in the hospital to explore a career in medicine. Eventually I decided that one basketball national championship wasn't enough and I needed to come back to UNC for medical school to experience one more!

After spending so much time in Chapel Hill, it's been great to come back to the mountains for my third-year clinical rotations. The unique curriculum here really does cultivate the connections with your preceptors and with your patients that make medicine meaningful, and it also allows the time and flexibility to process, discover, and explore – whether that's medicine, service, music, research, waterfalls, Brazilian partner dance or one of the thirty different breweries nearby!

Leeallie Carter



Siyo! Hello! Hola a todos! My name is Leeallie and I have come to the mountains by way of Miami, FL and Ava, MO. I am here with my family and as you can see we love to celebrate and have enjoyed making Asheville home. As a child in an economically poor rural area, I gained a love of Nature as well as a deep understanding that those most affected by any given challenge are also best positioned to innovate solutions. I used my time obtaining a degree in filmmaking to explore human stories and was then able to travel internationally doing the same. During this time I began to gain an understanding for the global interconnectedness of issues that I first experienced in my own small town. I saw

health as a state of being through which we experience life, with access structurally limited depending on factors outside of any individual's control. I began working in public health but eventually decided to also pursue a career in medicine. Living in Western North Carolina while completing my clinical training has already offered the opportunity to live and serve in communities actively collaborating to bring about better health for themselves.

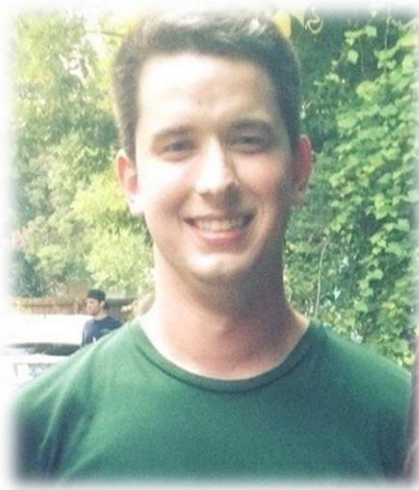
Ashley Crosby



Hello! My name is Ashley Crosby and I'm a part of the Asheville longitudinal program. After graduating from Bowie High School in Bowie, MD, I majored in biology at Mount St. Mary's University, a small Catholic school hidden in the mountains of Maryland. During the summer between my junior and senior year, I came to Chapel Hill to participate in the life-changing MED program where I solidified my love for medicine. I had the opportunity to participate in research at the UNC Gene Therapy Center during my two "gap" years, where my projects focused on use of AAV vectors to deliver therapeutic genes to patients with hemophilia and other diseases. Although I'm a long way from home, Chapel Hill has had a special place in my heart and the mentorship that I have received there has been instrumental to my current success. My love for travel and experiencing new cultures has brought me

all across the US and also to Belize, Germany, and Italy. I've always been passionate about using medicine to reach underserved communities, and I've never shied away from an opportunity to explore a new area, so I was sure that spending Application Phase in Asheville would be a great fit for me. As a budding future pediatrician, I'm excited to see where this journey will take me next.

Duncan Dorris



Hey! I'm Duncan Dorris. I grew up in Asheville before heading to Chapel Hill for my undergraduate degree. During my time at UNC, I fell in love with the town, the Tar Heels, and Al's Burger Shack. The relationships I was able to form with patients while volunteering during my college years transformed medicine from an interest of mine to something I knew I wanted to pursue as a career, and I was thrilled to have the opportunity to return to UNC for medical school. When I was looking into options for application phase, the chance to come back to the mountains, train in the community I grew up in, and enjoy time with family was too good to pass up. I was also drawn to the opportunities students in the Asheville curriculum have to shape their experience to suit their interests and to form relationships

with patients in a 9-month, longitudinal setting. So far this year, I've really enjoyed the getting to know my preceptors and patients in the outpatient setting, and look forward to the rest of the longitudinal component of the curriculum. After enjoying my time inpatient much more than expected, I'm also glad to have white space time to get more exposure to fields that I have interest in as I plan for fourth year and beyond.

Julia Draper



Hey there, I'm Julia Draper, one of the lucky Application Phase students at UNC Chapel Hill's Asheville Campus. I was born and raised in Tallahassee, Florida but spent many summers exploring the North Carolina mountains. I moved to North Carolina to go to Guilford College in Greensboro and never left. I created my own major in Integrative Healthcare, studying the intersections of society and health. While in school I worked as an emergency medical scribe in the Cone Health system at both urban and rural hospitals and spent time abroad in Senegal examining their approach to rural public health. My senior thesis was in Adverse Childhood Experiences and ever since I've been pursuing an interest in health disparities and care of vulnerable populations.

As one of the Kenan Rural Scholars and a Primary Care and Population Health Scholar I look forward to a career in primary care, hopefully in Western NC. When I'm not working, I'm hiking, kayaking, or doting on my plants. I'm so grateful to be in Asheville, developing strong longitudinal relationships with preceptors and patients as well as lasting connections with our small but colorful cohort.

Blaise Ellery



My name is Blaise Ellery. I grew up in Black Mountain and attended undergrad at UNC Chapel Hill where I studied anthropology and religion. During my time at UNC I had the privilege to live abroad in India where I became interested in rural medicine as well as underserved indigenous communities. I still find it strange that I found my love for rural medicine in a country of over a billion people!

After college, I returned to the mountains where I finished pre-med requirements and had the opportunity to participate in the MAHEC internship program. I immediately found a family here and knew that UNC and MAHEC in particular were the right fit for me. Fast-forward to 3rd year and I am a Rural Scholar at the Hendersonville campus and I couldn't ask for a better experience and opportunity to serve the mountain community. I have delivered high school friends and go to a barber that is a patient. I think it is this closeness of both the medical as well as the larger community that makes this such a unique experience.

While I have always been interested in Family Medicine, going through my rotations I realized that I liked everything and couldn't possibly make up my mind so Family Medicine it was. I hope to practice full spectrum family medicine in a rural mountain community.

Jeb Fox



Hey! My name is Jeb and I'm currently a third-year medical student with the UNC SOM Asheville program. I'm also a Kenan Rural Scholar, musician, and skier. My roots are in Bethel N.C., just outside of Boone and my plan has pretty much always been to return to the area and practice rural family medicine. Music has always been my greatest passion, though snow skiing is a close second. I started skiing when I was 2 and have been on the App. Ski Mtn. ski patrol for the past 11 years. If I have the free time and I'm not skiing, I'm probably writing or producing music.

In 2010, I was fortunate enough to be selected as a Park Scholar at N.C. State where I graduated with a degree in chemical engineering. It was somewhat of a unique path to medical school but I'm continually rewarded by the problem-solving skills I gained from my engineering studies. Now, I hope to solve problems related to health care disparities, specifically in the rural Appalachian Mountains.

I instantly knew that I wanted to be in Asheville as soon as I learned of the integrated longitudinal program early in my first year of medical school. In no way am I exaggerating when I say the scenery, the music, and the people of Asheville are almost as attractive as the MAHEC program itself. The program has provided a host of invaluable experiences, often allowing me to connect with like-minded individuals across multiple disciplines. Everywhere you go (both in MAHEC and the larger Asheville) you're exposed to a special blend of creativity and loving kindness. There are so many little (and big) things that this city and the MAHEC program have to offer. I certainly hope to spend at least a few more years exploring this special place before I head back to Bethel!

Molly Hamilton



I'm Molly Hamilton and I'm one of the Rural Scholars spending my third year as part of the Asheville program in Hendersonville. I'm originally from Mt. Airy, NC. I studied biology at Centre College in Danville, KY. In college, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to study abroad, spending a semester in Glasgow, Scotland, and a month in New Zealand studying volcanoes. Between college and medical school, I spent a few months in the western US on a NOLS trip. Afterwards, I worked near Shenandoah National Park in Virginia in outdoor education. I have always loved western North Carolina and believe it's the best place in the world to be. I'm thankful to get the opportunity to spend part of medical school here, allowing me to pursue my passions both inside and outside of the clinic. I hope to practice family medicine in the future and I look forward to being a part of a rural

community and serving the people of North Carolina.

Shawheen James



Hi Everyone! My name is Shawheen James and I'm one of the third year medical students doing his rotations here in the Asheville program. I am a native of Durham, North Carolina, and have spent the majority of my life here. I attended Duke University for undergrad and majored in international studies. I also minored in environmental science and policy. Post college I spent 3 years abroad in Haifa, Israel, as a religious volunteer and subsequently returned to the States where I worked as a mental health counselor in an emergency clinic for adults with development and intellectual disabilities.

I have enjoyed my time here in Asheville so far. The focus on patient care and connection has probably been the most meaningful part of this experience. Those in Asheville take their shelf exams later than other campuses, which allows us to focus our attention on patient care and

not just studying for a test. Additionally, we are afforded two to three half days a week during our outpatient experience which allows us space to explore interests, learn more about patients, and, if needed, to take time for self-care. Most importantly, the Asheville program has built into its curriculum the recognition that becoming doctors is more than just learning about disease processes but also about navigating our personal growth as doctors and as people. Through the ethics and humanism sessions we have once a month, as well as through the art of medicine course, we explore complex ethical and deeply personal issues we encounter during third year and help each other navigate our responses to those experiences.

Overall, Asheville has been great for my professional and personal growth and I would recommend this program to those who are self-motivated learners that have just as much a desire for meaningful connection with patients and peers as they do for understanding underlying disease processes.

Anna Jones



Hi! I'm Anna, a current third-year student at Asheville. I'm from the Chapel Hill area originally, but grew up visiting Asheville as a kid and always dreamed of getting to spend more time in the area. Dream come true!

Before med school, I left NC for college and spent some time working in outdoor education in Colorado and Maine before returning to NC for a teaching job. When I decided to apply to med school, I knew that if I went to UNC I wanted to be a part of the Asheville program.

Some reasons I'm glad to be in Asheville:

- 1-Small is beautiful! With a small cohort, you really get to know your classmates and feel very well supported by the administration.
- 2-Asheville is beautiful! Seeing the mountains to the west makes every day better. I love playing outside and there are numerous opportunities for trail running, cycling, mountain biking, hiking, rafting, climbing...
- 3-Independent learning. The flexibility of the longitudinal curriculum has enabled me to explore opportunities in subspecialties of medicine, follow my preceptors and patients into different settings, continue teaching meditation, study when it best suits me, and manage my life.
- 4-Asheville is yummy! Besides playing outside, I love playing in the kitchen (my spirit vegetable is a sweet potato) and making ice cream. As a vegetarian, there is no shortage of places to eat. My list keeps growing longer.
- 5-Amazing preceptors. One of the great parts of the longitudinal curriculum is the opportunity to work with the same mentors for a year. It's been really special to meet their families and learn more about their lives outside of work.

Kayla Krajick



Hey all! My name is Kayla and I am lucky to be one of the third year medical students at the UNC SOM Asheville program. Originally I am from a small farming town in Maryland, but through Teach for America, I was introduced to NC. I started in Clinton (rural east NC), made my way to Chapel Hill, and landed in Asheville.

My husband, 14 month old, and I absolutely LOVE Asheville for many reasons... 1) Amazing preceptorship 2) One-on-one time with physicians 3) Diverse population of people 4) Many rural locations within 30 min-1 hr drive 5) Great work/life balance 6) The mountains 7) Breweries for my husband 8) Cider places for me 9) Dog friendly living for our 3 dogs Hera, Butkis, and Zero 10) This list could go

on and on!

I have the opportunity to spend a total of 3 years here in Asheville- 1 research year (yes there are research opportunities even out here in Asheville!) as well as 3rd and 4th year. I even hope to attend residency out here we love it that much! If you are a motivated individual who likes building relationships, being autonomous, and balancing several rotations at once, then Asheville might be the place for you. ☺

Nico Lenze



Hey! My name is Nicholas Lenze, and I'm best known by my friends and colleagues as "Nico." I spent most of my childhood growing up in a quiet North Carolina town called Summerfield, except during the fourth and fifth grade when my family lived in England as expats for my dad's job. It was there that sparked my original curiosity in the human condition. United by our common interest in soccer, my three best friends hailed from Denmark, Malaysia, and Brazil. I marveled at how different our stories were yet how close we became, confiding in each other secrets that I wouldn't have even dared tell my friends back home. I still keep in my room the mementos we exchanged as parting gifts.

Upon returning to the United States, I completed high school and obtained a degree in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology from the University of South Carolina. While in college, I discovered that my degree itself was quite bland. I enriched my schedule with many 15-student Honors College courses on topics such as homelessness, harmonica & blues, and the history of medical experimentation & the black body. I helped write a hiking guide called "Exploring the Southern Appalachian Grassy Balds," gaining a new appreciation for the sacred mountains that bind us. I embarked back to England briefly, this time for a semester abroad in Leeds. Though disparate, these endeavors all helped cultivate my love for the human condition and desire to advocate for people in need.

I feel extremely blessed to be at UNC SOM and to one day serve as a doctor. Furthermore, being in Asheville for my clinical rotations has been the perfect inauguration into the field of medicine. The one-on-one relationships with attendings, the close-knit cohort of peers, and the sharing of our stories through monthly Ethics & Humanism sessions have been some of my highlights. Regardless of where life takes me, the people and mountains of Western North Carolina will always hold a special place in my heart.

Felicia Lombardi



Hi, my name is Felicia and I am one of the fortunate UNC medical students to be able to spend my 3rd year here in Asheville. I grew up in a small town in Southern NH and then decided to give the South a try when I attended Emory University for my undergraduate degree in Neuroscience. I then spent my summer before medical school driving out to the mountains of Western North Carolina and backpacking along the Appalachian trail. When I found out I had the option of spending my 3rd year here in Asheville, I couldn't imagine myself anywhere else. I discovered the Medical Primary Care Rural Scholars program early in my first year and became excited about a future in serving rural communities as a primary care physician. So far, my favorite places in Asheville are Hole doughnuts, Ultra coffee, Bent Creek trails, and Haywood Common.

Zach Martin



I'm what you'd call a born-and-bred Tar Heel. My father and brother were massive Dean Smith and UNC basketball fans, and I took after them. I spent the first 11 years of my life in Fayetteville, NC before relocating to Raleigh for middle and high school. I went to UNC for undergrad. I chose to major in English, which always gives me something to talk about when meeting fellow medical students. I then returned to Raleigh to work as a tutor and a medical scribe for 3 years before going back to medical school.

I have broad-ranging interests in both school and life. I enjoy reading, both fiction and nonfiction. I'm a fan of just about any sport you can think of, but soccer and basketball are probably tied at the top. I love to do anything active, especially if I can do it outside. I like to cook, especially for a group of friends and family. In recent years I've developed a massive appreciation for mindfulness and contemplation. I'm not yet sure exactly what field I want to pursue as a career, but psychiatry is near the top of the list, and if I go that route then mindfulness is definitely something I want to incorporate into my practice. I also like

knowing a little bit about everything, so family and emergency medicine are also in the mix. Whatever path I choose, I want to provide positive energy and an eye for the big picture.

Quentin Reynolds



Hey ya'll! My name is Quentin Reynolds, but everyone calls me Que "Q". I am a third-year medical student at the amazing UNC SOM Asheville Campus at MAHEC. I am a NC native who grew up on the other side of the state in Holly Springs, just outside of Raleigh. I am the youngest in a giant family that spans all over the east coast. I moved across the state to Asheville in 2011 to attend UNC-Asheville, where I played soccer for the Bulldogs.

While spending four years on the soccer field, I majored in Psychology and Neuroscience. I became involved in healthcare towards the end of my college career, spending my summer as a MAHEC intern, working as a Pharmacy Technician, and lastly, as a mentor for teens at a Rehabilitation center. I spent six months working with teenagers through their trauma, PTSD, and anxiety and found my passion in being able to connect with

kids. After starting medical school, I wanted to continue that work by focusing in Behavioral Medicine and Psychiatry. During my first two years in medical school I also began to explore the aspects of teaching and creating a curriculum, and I am now taking part in medical education research. I enjoy the Asheville campus because the longitudinal program allows me to build relationships with patients and see them outside of the hospital setting. I am also so happy that I get to come back home to MAHEC as a medical student after spending a summer with them as an intern. I already knew Dr. Latessa and some of the MAHEC faculty during my short time as an intern and I couldn't wait to be in that type of learning environment again! When I'm not on the wards, in clinic, or studying the day away, you can often find me downtown or in West Asheville exploring the food and beer city scene! I also love to spend time with my medical school friends, my old college friends, as well as my wonderful fiancée, Tara, and our two pups, Ollie and Lily!

Kaitlyn Rogers



I grew up in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and then went to NC State University where I double majored in Biology and Spanish with a minor in Anthropology. After graduation, I worked for a year and a half in a laboratory that handled genetic testing. My real passion though was the interactions I had with patients when I volunteered at a free clinic in Raleigh. So, I returned to my home town in 2016 to start medical school at UNC and moved to Asheville in early 2018 to start my clinical rotations (ie. the 'hands on' portion of my training). I'm leaning towards a career in primary

care and can easily picture myself working in a clinic like the one where I used to volunteer. I still have many years of training ahead of me but I wake up feeling energized and excited about the things I've learned, the people I am meeting, and the work that I get to do.

Wes Roten



My name is Wes Roten and I'm one of the students in the class of 2020 spending Application Phase in Asheville with MAHEC and Mission. I grew up in West Jefferson, North Carolina, a small town near Boone. I enjoy hiking, fly fishing, road biking, and playing the banjo, all of which make me feel right at home in Asheville. The learning environment, opportunities to shape your own educational experience, and unique set of extracurriculars make Asheville great for self-motivated learners and those who are excited about rural medicine and/or primary care. I plan to choose a primary care specialty and practice in western North Carolina when I grow up, so becoming a Kenan Primary Care Rural Scholar and student at the Asheville

campus were easy choices for me to make. I'm so happy and proud to be part of this wonderful program!

Hunter Smith



Hey there! My name is Hunter Smith, and I'm ecstatic to be an MS3 from UNC at Chapel Hill in the wonderful city of Asheville, NC. Family is a major part of my life, and I'm blessed to have incredibly supportive grandparents, two amazing parents, and a stellar sister who is also a Tar Heel! I was born in Raleigh and grew up in Cary, NC. Born and bred in North Carolina, I love the state from the beaches to the beautiful mountains and Blue Ridge Parkway. I'm very lucky to learn medicine from such an awesome population.

After graduating from Cardinal Gibbons High School, I ventured off to South Bend, IN to attend Notre Dame. While at Notre Dame, I was involved in my dorm's Bible study group, volunteered at the local hospital's pediatric therapy clinic, and majored in Chemical Engineering with a concentration in Biomolecular Engineering. After my first semester, I walked onto the Notre Dame football team and played and lettered as a long snapper and holder. At Notre Dame, I met my beautiful, kindhearted fiancée, forged a number of genuine friendships, and learned of my passion to make a true human connection with others in medicine.

As I started medical school, I knew I was interested in pediatrics but have kept an open mind throughout my studies. This has allowed me to fall in love with pediatrics along with several other specialties. I'm very appreciative of the opportunity to spend my third year here in Asheville, learning from my amazing preceptors and patients in Western NC.

Greeshma Somashekar



I was born in NJ and grew up in the Triangle area. My career aspirations as a little kid included becoming an astronaut-scientist or a pro swimmer or a voice actor. Since then, I've continued to dabble in a wide range of interests! I went to the NC School of Science and Math in Durham where I was privileged with some incredible opportunities in research and service. After that, I moved to California to attend college at Stanford, initially thinking I'd be an engineer. At some point, however, I did a 180 and graduated with an interdisciplinary humanities degree and an arts thesis.

As a future provider, I'm most drawn to working with folks who experience the tough stuff: trauma, violence, substance use, mental illness, chronic pain, “-isms”, loneliness, a lack of love, poverty... issues that medicine alone can't solve. I'm interested in innovative primary care models that recognize the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, and social well-being. Another long-term goal of mine is to give back to rural communities in India, where my family is originally from. I'm lucky to be in Asheville for application phase, where I have time to care for my soul despite our busy days in clinic and in the hospital. My longitudinal preceptors/patients are wonderful role models and teachers. Third year is a wild ride of exciting new experiences as well as challenging demands on our time and knowledge base. I'm thankful to be in a nurturing environment where we are supported through all of the highs and lows.

Emily Trambert



Hello there! I'm Em Trambert - one of the lucky third year medical students who gets to learn the art of how to be a doctor in Asheville, just off the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway. I was born and raised in New York City and spent much of my extracurricular time on stage; I have a love for musical theater. I attended Wesleyan University in Connecticut, where the curriculum allowed me enough flexibility to continue pursuing theater and science. In the end, my studies focused on how science is created in a social and cultural context, and how science and culture deeply influence and shape one another. I had been interested in healthcare since going to the doctor as a kid, and Wesleyan supported and connected me with other folks in healthcare so that I could see what the lives of physicians, nurse practitioners, and naturopathic doctors were like. I was not

sure that I wanted to be a doctor until I spent two years after college doing clinical research in how HIV affects mentation and the aging nervous system at Mount Sinai Hospital in Manhattan. There, I saw how varied the lives of physicians were and the impact they made in the communities they were in.

Having lived in the North East my whole life, I was excited and nervous to start this new chapter in North Carolina. I am so glad that UNC School of Medicine accepted me and that I have found deep connections with my community here. I am finding myself more and more enamored with living and learning in the mountains. I have loved the longitudinal curriculum. It allows me to get to know my patients over a longer period of time and follow them as they go to other doctors. Additionally, I have the privilege of working one on one with my preceptors while learning the art of medicine, the different paths open to me, and how doctors can balance their career with their personal lives. And, of course, I have loved getting off work and going for hikes on the Mountain to Sea Trail!

Paul White



Hey there, my name is Paul White. I was born and raised in Hertford, NC, a small farming town in northeastern NC. After high school I attended Elizabeth City State University where I earned my BS and MS in Biology. During this time, I thought it would be fun to also join ROTC, which eventually led to my commission in the US Army Reserve. Still waiting on that fun I was looking for. My path to medical school took a few more years than most but I am glad to say I finally made it to UNC.

It was in medical school that I began participating in Rural Scholars, all thanks to Dr. Bashford, Dr. Gilmer and Amanda Greene. While I always liked the mountains growing up and visited a handful of times, I never thought I would have the chance to go to medical school in Asheville and call WNC home. There are so many reasons why this program is best for me and choosing to complete Application phase in Asheville is without a doubt the best decision I have made in medical school thus far. I love the small class size, hands on experience and designated time to pursue individual interests and education. Most importantly the faculty and support here at Asheville and MAHEC makes it feel like a family environment.

Lastly, how can you not love Asheville and WNC? It offers mountains, hiking, rivers, food, and BEER, and lots of it. It's a pretty big deal. While I grew up on the coast my entire life and will always be thankful for my childhood, one can only take but so much flat land. I consider the mountains my new home and am sure that I will find myself here in the future.

Travis Williams



I was born and raised in the Chapel Hill/Carrboro/Durham area of North Carolina. After playing basketball for one year at Montreat College near Asheville, I decided to "be a big boy" and focus on school - so I transferred to North Carolina State University to finish out my degree in Human Biology with a minor in Philosophy. Soon thereafter, I became interested in underserved and rural medicine via medical trips to Guatemala, Belize, and Haiti. In the three years between graduating from college and starting medical school, I worked as a medical scribe for Raleigh Neurology Associates, P.A. Given the miracle of me actually getting into medical school, I was fortunate enough to be selected for the Rural Scholars program and it's a proud bond that I share with others who hope to improve healthcare in Western NC. My summer was spent with Dr. Charlie Baker in

Linville, who became somewhat of an idol for me as I chase my dreams of becoming a small-town rural physician.

My time in Asheville and the longitudinal program have been incredible thus far - not only because of the experience and learning that I've acquired here, but more specifically, the community aspect that we have. Dr. Latessa, Dr. Whitlock, Gaye, Jessica, Terri, and Kim are always available whenever we need help or someone to speak with about personal matters. It's something so much harder to sustain back in Chapel Hill when you have 180 students as compared to our 25 or so. As for the important matters at hand, there's nothing better than coming home from a long-day at clinic and walking no more than 5 minutes down the street to New Belgium for beer and food.

Kelsey Williamson



Hello all! My name is Kelsey Williamson, and first I must say that I am smitten with Asheville! It had my heart from day one, but it's taken several twists and turns to get me here. My family is from Raleigh but I've grown up all around NC, returning to my home city to go to college at NC State where I studied Biology and minored in Women's Studies. Already knowing I wanted to be an OBGYN, I was able to work at a busy private OBGYN practice, as well as volunteer at a local pregnancy clinic. I was a member of Sigma Alpha Omega, the Christian sorority on campus, which

connected me with a great cohort of girls interested in serving our community and loving on those in need.

Though I cherished my time at NCSU, I was so eager to start my medical journey that I finished in three years and then bounced right over to Chapel Hill to start medical school. I've thoroughly enjoyed continuing to reach my dream of becoming a doctor and finding ways to foster my interests. For example, I helped continue a pilot program called Carolina MOMS which is a service-learning opportunity that partners medical students with pregnant mothers throughout their prenatal, labor, and postpartum care. I also spent two months doing patient care and research on the Perinatal Psychiatry Inpatient Unit at UNC where I was able to combine my loves of obstetrics and psychiatry. Coming to Asheville is another great chance to explore my passion since this city is full of private OBGYN practices that model how I want to care for patients in a more suburban or rural setting.

When I'm not busy being a medical student, I am a daughter, a friend, a sister, and an aunt. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family, exploring this city, and going to Biltmore Church on Sundays! Surprisingly, I've still been able to keep up my blog, photography, and scrapbooking to some degree this past year which has been beyond wonderful! These hobbies have become the perfect way for me to track this journey season by season! Cheers to all that is ahead!