

I moved to North Carolina in July to attend my dream school and pursue the career I've been working towards for years. With a large majority of our learning taking place online, the first semester has been challenging. Between 1-2 exams per week and being stuck inside while staring at a screen for 15 hours a day, I have slowly acclimated to the rigorous schedule of PA school. The 2nd semester I was able to get into the flow of things and have a little more time for friends and caring for my well-being. During this time, I have met some amazing people in my cohort and we have been able to support each other while on this endeavor. Despite our minimal interactions with faculty and staff, I feel a sense of community that is always accommodating when necessary. I have mostly spent my time studying this year, but when I was able to put down the books, I have volunteered multiple times, such as packing and delivering food or working at a COVID vaccination clinic affiliated with Duke University. During my winter and spring breaks, I made sure to refrain from studying and use my vacation to spend quality time with my husband and friends. This summer I will finally be coming home to Santa Cruz and see my family for the first time since July, so I am looking forward to that immensely. In July, we start our clinical year where we have a series of clinical rotations. I am very nervous, but excited to apply the material I have been learning over the past year. I am so grateful for the Vera Taylor Scholarship and want to thank you all for helping me become a physician assistant, so that I can give back to the community in the near future.