

Path to Pediatrics

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In reflecting on my journey to medical school, I realized that it was the field of pediatrics that drew me to medicine, rather than the other way around. I have always loved working with children and knew early on that my career would be focused on this special population. What I didn't know was which field of service would be right for me. Throughout college, I tried to answer this question by exploring public health, education, advocacy, and research. I eventually discovered that medicine would allow me to draw on aspects of all these fields. Not only could I be a clinician, but also an educator, an advocate, and an innovator, all the while serving a population close to my heart.

My passion for pediatrics grew during my pre-clinical years of medical school as I developed relationships with mentors in the field. I felt at home within the culture of collaboration and collegiality they promoted within pediatrics. I found they exemplified the humanistic approach to healthcare and dedication to their patients that I aspire to emulate in my future career. My mentors also helped me explore the diverse paths within the field and ultimately shaped my goal to become an academic pediatrician and a physician advocate. I had always felt drawn to the unique emphasis of pediatrics on advocacy, both at the individual patient and policy level, and was so fortunate to become involved with AAP Chapter 2 as the Medical Student Representative.

When I began advocating for my own patients during my clinical rotations my third and fourth years of medical school, my decision to pursue pediatrics was solidified. Through working directly with children in clinical settings, I came to understand what an incredible privilege it is to help guide children and their families through some of their most challenging and vulnerable moments. Whether I spent my day providing reassurance to first-time parents or having difficult discussions with a family about their child's unclear diagnosis, I went home each night with an unmatched sense of fulfillment and feeling of confidence that my team's work had positively impacted the trajectory of our patient's experience of health and healthcare.



It is hard to imagine that I ever considered another career because now I cannot see myself pursuing anything other than pediatric medicine. I am thrilled to be applying into pediatric residency this year. I am excited to learn the results of the Match on March 18, 2022. I cannot thank my mentors enough for all their guidance and support along this journey of mine.

Emma Burdekin is a fourth-year medical student at DGSOM graduating with the Class of 2022. She is applying into pediatrics and plans to pursue a career in academic general pediatrics with a

focus on advocacy. She is looking forward to celebrating with her peers on Match Day on March 18, 2022.

The chapter would like to recognize and thank Emma Burdekin for her dedication and contributions to the chapter!

To all the medical student members, good luck this Match Day 2022!