

# **Making the Most of Summer 2021**

## ***Health Professions***

Below you'll find ideas to structure an engaging and productive summer in order to keep building on your current skills and preparing for your future career pathway.

### **Continue to Serve Others (5-10 hrs/week)**

Wanting to be of service to others is a cornerstone for your interest in the health professions. While it may not be possible yet to volunteer in the traditional ways (hospitals, nursing homes, hospice care, etc) we would encourage you to investigate the following options:

- Be an active, helpful member of your home community. Volunteer to cover childcare needs for neighbors or to check in (by phone/from a distance) on the elderly. If you're part of a religious community, see if there are ways that you can provide support through them. Check with organizations where you have volunteered in the past to see if you can step back into previous roles.
- Use [idealist.org](http://idealist.org), [volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org), or [omprakash.org/](http://omprakash.org/) to seek other local options
- Look into the volunteer [National Medical Reserves Corps](#) branch near you
- Donate blood and volunteer to help the [Red Cross](#) address blood delivery and donation support needs in your community. (Remote volunteering options exist for those at high risk.)
- Check to see if [Meals on Wheels](#) needs more volunteers in your community. Inquire whether other local organizations focused on supporting the elderly need volunteers.
- Food pantries, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters in most areas are continuing to look for volunteers and have been trying to maintain social distance for their volunteers and those they serve. [Feeding America](#) can help students to find their local food pantry.
- Many chapters of the [United Way](#) have updated their volunteer opportunities to show all the local non-profits seeking help.

### **Develop Your Knowledge About Medicine (10-15 hrs/week)**

Professional schools always value applicants who have taken the time to really learn about their chosen career field, and to think critically about their fit for the profession.

- Contact alum physicians utilizing Wisr, UChicago's alumni directory, or LinkedIn. It will be interesting to talk with them about their experiences as physicians, especially during this time. Of course, they may be far too busy to connect with you for quite a while. Consider seeking out retired physicians who are watching this unfold, or medical students.
- Virtual Shadowing opportunities are a great way to gain insight into the career as a physician. Several platforms have been created during the pandemic, including <https://virtualshadowing.com/>, <https://www.clinicalshadowing.com/>, <https://www.prehealthshadowing.com/medical-shadowing/> or <https://www.webshadowers.org/>
- Read books that provide insight about being a doctor, applying to medical school, or learning about other health careers.
  - Book lists:
    - [Goodreads.com: Popular Medicine Books list](https://www.goodreads.com/list/show/popular-medicine-books) <https://limbookclub.weebly.com/> .
  - Book recommendations from advisors:
    - [The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down](#)

- [The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks](#)
- [Being Mortal](#)
- [When Breath Becomes Air](#)
- [The Emperor of All Maladies](#)
- [My Own Country](#)
- [Teeth: Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America](#)
- [Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States \(Seth Holmes, MD/PhD\)](#)
- [Mountains Beyond Mountains](#)
- Read **Blog posts** from current medical students
  - [AACOM's Choose DO Blog](#)
  - [AAMC Aspiring Docs Diaries](#)
- **Podcasts** are a great way to learn and engage.
  - [Top 10 podcasts for pre-meds from Diverse Medicine](#)
  - Premed Mondays with Dr. Dale: <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/anchor-podcasts/premed-mondays-2>
  - The Short Coat Podcast: <http://theshortcoat.com/tag/dave-etler/>
  - Talking Admissions & Med Student Life hosted by Dr. Benjamin Chan: <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/talking-admissions-and-med-student-life/id722416493>
  - [All Access Medical School Admissions podcast](#) with Christian Essman, director of admissions at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine
- **Watch documentaries**
  - [Making Rounds](#) features cardiologists at Mt. Sinai
  - [Vaccines: Calling the Shots](#)

### **Research Professional Schools (2-4 hrs/week)**

When you are ready to apply to professional school, you will give yourself the best odds for acceptance by applying to a carefully cultivated range of schools for which you demonstrate a good “fit.” The more you know about a school, beyond their average GPA and MCAT, the better you will be able to create such a list.

- Surf through websites for schools to learn more about the curriculum and experiences in which you can expect to engage once you reach professional school
  - [AAMC Allopathic \(MD\) Medical Schools](#)
  - [AACOM Osteopathic \(DO\) Medical Schools](#)
- The [website of the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions](#) maintains a comprehensive list of pre-health events around the country, including many virtual events. The site also has a plethora of information on the various health professions under the “[Student Resources](#)” tab.

### **Hone Your Skills and Knowledge of the Healthcare System (8-10 hrs/week)**

Healthcare is a massive industry, encompassing nearly 1/5<sup>th</sup> of the gross national product in the United States. How much do you know about its origins? Why do we do things the way we do? How are healthcare policies developed? What leads to the health disparities that exist? How will you seek to make an impact through your own career? A multitude of online courses exist that can help you in gaining the answers to these questions!

- [Class about pandemics from Harvard](#)
- Class about [community change in public health from Johns Hopkins](#)
- [Essentials of global health](#) from Yale
- [Ivy League free courses](#) list via [freecodecamp.org](http://freecodecamp.org)
- Class “[An Examination of coronavirus-COVID-19](#)” from St George’s University

- Medical School Headquarters YouTube: [premed.tv](http://premed.tv)
- Georgetown offers free MOOCs including [Bioethics](#), [Biomedical Big Data](#), [Globalization](#), or [Genomic Medicine](#).
- [Linkedin Learning](#), [Coursera](#)

### **Work on Life/“Adulting” Skills (2-4 hrs/week)**

Once you reach professional school, you will be consumed by your studies and future career development. The “everyday” essentials of independent life should not be an additional stressor. Take the time now to develop important life skills and a self-care routine!

- Do you know how to cook? Offer to cook and deliver a meal to neighbors trying to manage childcare and work obligations at home.
- Develop an at-home exercise routine (this is also good self-care!)
- Take up or revisit a craft or hobby -- origami, bike repair, gardening, the instrument or art supplies you put down at the end of high school
- If you’ve never tracked your budget and expenses before, analyze your spending from the last year and develop a budget moving forward (see [Nerdwallet tips](#))