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Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science Opening Doors: How the ICHP Annual Meeting unlocked my future

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College Connection

by Kristina Laurente, PS-2, ICHP Fundraising Chairperson

Throughout my graduate school career, I have been unsure of what I want to do after I graduate from Rosalind Franklin University in 2020. I am interested in doing a residency; however, I was unfamiliar with the process. As a second-year pharmacy student there is still a lot for me to learn and attending the ICHP Annual Meeting and Residency Showcase was a great opportunity for me.

My first day of the ICHP Annual Meeting was Friday. I listened to the sessions that covered transitions of care, HIV, PCSK9 inhibitors, and biosimilars. It was very interesting to see how the topics that we learn in class are applied to the duties of pharmacists. Later that day, I was able to attend the President's Dinner with students from other chapters and pharmacists from all around Illinois. It was nice to get to know the other ICHP members on a more personal level.

Saturday consisted of the student session followed by the Residency Showcase. The student session was very interesting and beneficial for a student wanting to learn more about residency opportunities. All of the students were able to break into smaller groups and have the opportunity to listen to residents and pharmacists talk about their experiences after pharmacy school. The breakout sessions that had the greatest impact on me were how to prepare for residency, the process and tips on how to write letters of recommendation, what content to include on a CV, how to write a proper letter of intent, how to conduct myself during Midyear, and PhORCAS. Being able to listen to each speaker talk about their unique experiences through residency or fellowship was eye-opening. The speakers were all very insightful and were open to answering all of our questions.

I did not know what to expect at the Residency Showcase as I had never attended one. I was in shock as I walked through the doors. My eyes opened wide as I looked around at all of the booths and the program representatives waiting for students to ask questions. I spoke with a few PGY1s from the University of Illinois at Chicago. They explained what they do as a resident and different options for rotations. It was a great way for me to practice asking questions and prepare for when I attend Midyear.

The whole weekend impacted my view on what I plan on doing during pharmacy school and helped motivate me to pursue post-graduate opportunities. Now that I had the experience of the ICHP Annual Meeting and Residency Showcase, I will know what to expect at next year's meeting. After speaking to my peers about their experiences at the ICHP Annual Meeting, I learned that they were also grateful for the opportunity to attend and will come back next year. I would encourage other students to attend the ICHP Annual Meeting, especially those early in their graduate careers. Hopefully, all students will have the same rewarding experience that I did.

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