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Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy **Reflections of a Student Pharmacist**

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College Connection

by Ziad Dabbagh, PS-2, ICHP Historian

Will Assibey, Jr. is a PharmD candidate who is studying at Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy. Through his reflections on his past experiences, I learned about his involvement on campus and how his activities relate to where he wants to take his pharmacy career. Beginning pharmacy school in the Fall of 2015, Will has had a variety of experiences which he was willing to reflect on during our interview in hopes that they will aid other students who may be interested in becoming more involved with organizations during pharmacy school.

Our interview began with an explanation of past experiences as they related to his first year as a pharmacy student. “I wasn’t very sure where I wanted to go in my career, like many students, so I decided to join organizations,” explained Will. During his first year, he was a member of many organizations. Will explained that it was easy to become overwhelmed with the amount of information and the multitude of directions that each organization could take a person. Through various campus activities which encouraged involvement and self-discovery, Will was able to whittle down his interests to four organizations in which to immerse himself. Will chose to become involved in Phi Delta Chi (PDC; to foster camaraderie with other students), the American Pharmacists Association – Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP; due to his interest in pharmacy as a profession), the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS; to gain some insight into the pharmaceutical industry), and the Illinois Council of Health System Pharmacists (ICHP; to gain a better understanding of pharmacy and how it is practiced in Illinois). Will spent the “majority of [his] first year getting to know others and picking their minds regarding school.”

Progressing to a second-year pharmacy student and with more refined interests, Will continued his involvement with all of the same organizations, except now taking on more responsibility as an elected board member for APhA-ASP and PDC. One particular project Will enjoyed was being a volunteer for the Medication Therapy Management / Collaborative Healthcare Advocacy Team (MTM/CHAT) in Bolingbrook, Illinois. MTM/CHAT is a collaborative effort at a healthcare center in Bolingbrook which enables students to give back to the community by practicing medication therapy management services and gaining experience by counseling patients about diabetes. Asked to comment on his second-year, Will had to say that aside from studying his “roles have taken a better portion of [his] time which has limited [him] from being involved with other organizations.” Recalling the time spent being involved with APhA-ASP and ICHP during his second-year, Will enjoyed when these organizations brought in professionals to share their insight on different areas of pharmacy; he also shared with me that it is his goal to one day speak about his experiences in pharmacy.

Although this is now Will’s third year in pharmacy school, he recollects his memories about things he has experienced thus far for the purpose of sharing his perspective. This year, Will has “learned how to taken charge of projects while aiding in the improvement” of organizations in which he is involved. Organizations such as PDC, of which he is currently the president, along with APhA-ASP where he serves as the Membership Chair. Recently, he was involved in the promotion of an event for APhA-ASP which brought students and residency

directors together to discuss residencies and answer any questions students may have regarding post-graduate education.

While only time will tell what happens in Will's future, he hopes to stay involved and muses over what a fourth year pharmacy student's life may be like and the things that he may learn. Hoping that "rotations will give more insight on what the real world is like," he realizes that so far, he seems to have a strong interest in clinical pharmacy and plans on pursuing this route as a long-term career path. Until then, it is Will's goal to apply for a residency in this area and stay up-to-date with the profession.



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