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Interview conducted by email Spring 2021

Why Did You Choose the Biology Major Program? 1-2 min

As long as I can remember, I've always been interested in the sciences. Both Chemistry and Biology were my two favorite subjects in grade school and subsequently, undergrad.

What Were Your Favorite Classes? Were there any specific Biology classes you loved?

I remember taking Zoology 151 and 152 and it's a given that I enjoyed both classes but out of the Biology major taking both Anatomy and Physiology is when I got extremely excited about delving into the course that would lead me into my future career.

How did you get to know the biology faculty and instructors? Who was your favorite faculty member?

My favorite faculty member was actually my advisor, head of the Food Science department, Steven Ingham. Being a student with such a large student body, can sometimes make you feel like you're just number, but there was never a time that I felt that way with my advisor. He had my best interest at heart and was one of my biggest supporters

Were you involved in any student organizations, clubs or research? If so, do you have a favorite memory or accomplishment?

During my senior year, CALS developed a program for the incoming freshman that would allow them to discuss their goals with someone in the same major. I became a Peer Advisor and was assigned to 2-3 students. Although they had a lot of footwork completed I felt that if they had even a sliver of doubt, they left our meetings feeling more secure about their decisions. For my Capstone, Mr. Ingham discussed a research project that was just starting in the Food Science department and asked if I would like to be an Undergraduate Researcher and use the research as my Capstone. I gladly accepted and had an amazing time learning from the graduate students. If I remember correctly, not only did I plate agar in the laboratory but I learned how to make the different types of agar and pour into the Petri dishes. And of course, how to sterilize my equipment. These concepts may seem so small but in the grand scheme of things, the utmost importance of understanding microbiology and how it affects all of us starts with the very things I was learning and reporting in the lab.

How did the Biology Major prepare you for your career as a General Surgery Nurse Practitioner (feel free to change if title is no longer applicable)

Understanding the human condition, starts with the knowledge of where we all began. No matter how complex a child's diagnosis is, if we return to our basic knowledge of the human body and what its function is, we can work our way to a solution to the problem. As a Pediatric General Surgery Nurse Practitioner, you are tasked with utilizing everything you've learned in undergraduate and graduate school and continuing to build on it. The Biology Major allowed us that solid foundation

How would you describe your current role? And what is something you enjoy most about it?

As a Pediatric General Surgery Nurse Practitioner, we are responsible for the care of the services patients' (round, manage/place orders, involvement in plan of care for the day and assist with care coordination). We work closely with the residents, surgeons, dieticians, pharmacists, RN case managers, social workers and of course bedside RN's that are direct care of our patients. First and foremost, I enjoy witnessing the progress each patient makes and being involved in that process. Educating families and patients has always been an important factor in the care I give throughout my entire career. I have been placed in the position where families are listening more intently, so I do my best to provide as much information in a succinct fashion.

How did the nursing program help you discover your interests in the medical profession?

*After graduating from Wisconsin, I entered an accelerated Bachelors Degree in Nursing program at Jacksonville University, a small, private university in FL. These programs are tailored for students who've already obtained a BA or BS in another program. It was 16 months of intense work but an experience that solidified my love for working with people, specifically the pediatric population. Prior to starting the program, I was already planning on obtaining my Master's degree, which I graduated from in April 2019 at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (Dual Acute and Primary Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Program). Having the experience of working as a Registered Nurse for 10 years at 2 pediatric hospitals and an urgent care, truly laid the foundation for my career as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner. Although slightly deviated from the norm, I wouldn't change it for the world.

What Advice Do You Have For Alumni and/or Current Biology Majors?

Use your resources; advisors, instructors, professors and especially other alumni. The connections you make through each stage of your life make huge impacts: quote in class, a little advice a friend gives or a book that was given to you by an instructor. Take all in stride and remember to ask your fellow Badgers for help and assistance when trying to determine your career path.

