

I am a fourth year medical student at SUNY Downstate and am originally from New Rochelle, NY (a suburb of NYC). I will be going into Pediatrics. I studied Human Development at Cornell and worked in project management at an electronic medical record company for 1 year and then participated in the Americorps Community Healthcorps program for 1 year, before starting medical school. When it came time to apply for medical school, I applied broadly and entertained a few different options, though Downstate began as my top choice. The combination of studying and living in Brooklyn, in-state tuition, great hands-on clinical experiences, and commitment to a diverse student body and patient population drew me in.

Reflecting on my time here, I have been very grateful for the training I've received. Our class was the first to pilot the new Foundations Curriculum, and even through the invariable growing pains that accompany the implementation of a new structure, our class has remained extremely cohesive and supportive. The reasons why I chose Downstate have been validated. Living in Brooklyn is amazing, and helping an underserved community is uniquely rewarding. During your clinical years, you get the opportunity to assume responsibility for patients, rather than watching from the sidelines. You get very comfortable seeing your own patients, and refining your physical exam, history taking, and presentation skills. There are ample opportunities to pursue extracurricular interests (via the Student-Run Free Clinic, interest groups, research etc.). While here, I've enjoyed participating in a summer research fellowship program, volunteering at the free clinic, mentoring underclassmen, leading reflective practice rounds, and more. I feel well prepared for residency and am grateful to have interviewed at nearly all of my top choice programs.

Helena