

Hi! I'm Sam, a current 4th year medical student here at SUNY Downstate. I was born and raised in Ithaca, NY, went to college at the University of Vermont, and spent 3 years between undergraduate and medical school living in Boston working in a cardiology research lab, playing hockey, and growing up. When I started my medical school application I was overwhelmed by the task of narrowing down my list of prospective medical schools to apply to, so I started by picking out cities/regions that I thought I would enjoy living in. NYC was high on the list, and as a New York resident I appreciated the opportunity to soften the financial burden of going medical school with in-state tuition. I was also extremely excited by what I had heard about the clinical experience at Downstate, which boasts the reputation of producing incredibly able and competent clinicians due to the rich opportunities for substantial hands-on involvement and active learning during the clinical years.

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to choose between several medical schools, and ultimately chose Downstate because of the people. When visiting Downstate I was immediately attracted to the atmosphere and the sense of community and camaraderie among the entire Downstate family. I decided to swing back for a "second-look" day, which further cemented my decision, I felt like this was a place where I would be pushed, motivated, encouraged, supported, and perhaps most importantly, would have FUN during my training.

As I reflect back on my experience here at Downstate, I am extremely happy with my decision to matriculate here. NYC has been a great new home for me, Brooklyn won me over and the rest of NYC is lying at your fingertips. The pre-clinical experience, which was recently reinvigorated with the implementation of a new curriculum, was engaging and I felt the faculty were invested in my personal success, and extremely responsive to the feedback from our class. The clinical experience, which was a large selling point for me as an applicant, completely lived up to its reputation. I had the opportunity to be an active, valued, member of my clinical teams, to get my hands dirty, to learn by doing, to take ownership of my patients and make a meaningful impact on their medical care.

At the end of the day, I chose my medical school based on the gut sense of "fit." In an application/interview process that is riddled with stress and over-analysis, I know how difficult it can be to sort through the various attributes of each program and predict where you will be the happiest. I would suggest to try to slow down, listen to your gut, and enjoy the process. If Downstate felt like the best fit for you, we would be thrilled for you to join our family and contribute to the community that makes this such a unique place! I wish you all the best in the process, and look forward to working with all of you in the future!!

- Sam