

STEM

Student Ambassador Spotlight

Marie Fong

Biology and Biochemistry
University of Memphis



Q How did you select your college major?

A Ever since I was a toddler, I've wanted to go into the medical field. In the 2nd grade, I was introduced to biology and anatomy for the first time, and I've been hooked ever since. In high school, I found a strong interest in chemistry and its integration with our world. Aside from having a true passion for the two subjects, these two majors will allow me to best prepare for medical school

Q What was the biggest influence in your selection of major?

A When I was three years old, my grandmother was diagnosed with multiple types of cancer. There were copious days and nights when my parents took me to visit her at the hospital, and oddly enough, I loved it there. Even stranger still, I can actually remember feeling awed by the superheroes with clipboards and lab coats whom I decided to make it my goal to be one day. There was an instance when one of my grandmother's doctors took me into a room to let me listen to my heartbeat with a stethoscope, and that was the exact moment that I knew the medical field had to be in my future.



Q If you could go back to high school and select any elective course to take that would have better prepared you for college, what would it be?

A I would have somehow taken a computer applications class because between volleyball, band, and later art in lieu of band, my schedule never had an empty class period for it. I saw many benefits of the class through my friends. They became familiar with tools such as Microsoft Excel, a commonly used program that I still know very little about.

Q What is your favorite aspect of your major?

A I love the universalness and necessity of my major. No matter where you look, you are smacked in the face with biology and chemistry; you see it in nature, in a pencil, in sidewalks, in breathing—literally everything. There is no refuting that.

Q How does you/your major make a positive impact on society/our community?

A Many of our society's problems are directly linked to biological processing and chemical engineering (i.e. pollution, war weapon usage, melting polar ice caps). Counteractively, all of these problems can be solved by designing plans based from chemical calculations and biological inferences.

Q What's the most interesting thing you have been able to do in your college career?

A As a freshman, my college experiences are limited, but I volunteered to cheer on walkers and runners at the St. Jude 5k in September with one of the university's student organizations, and that was incredible! Seeing thousands of Memphians come together to support St. Jude was absolutely inspiring, and losing my voice from cheering for two hours straight was something I would have never guessed my first full month as a freshman would hold.



Q What makes you get up each morning excited about your major?

A The idea of actually applying what I am learning—even at the base level—to one-day help treat patients and potentially attempt to solve the world's pressing medical issues truly makes my heart want to (metaphorically) explode.

Q What advice would you share with K-12 students who are considering your major?

A If you love it, go for it! Do not listen to anyone who does not support you! As long as you have an interest in science and want to pursue a career in the STEM field, go wherever your heart and happiness take you.