

THE NEVADA STEM STUDENT VOICES PROJECT

White Coat By Nicole Rowe

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About Me

If you know you're meant to do something you should never give up. I knew I was meant to be a physician senior year of high school. We got to wear white lab coats for my AP environmental science lab. **As soon as I put one on and looked in a mirror I knew this was what I was meant to do, it was simply a feeling.** I grew up in a small town in Nevada and always saw myself becoming a nurse. Now, at age 20 I have done enough research and experience to proudly say I am pursuing a degree in Chemistry to obtain my goal of going to medical school.

My Challenges

The only thing that discouraged me was the finances of going to medical school. I grew up in the middle/lower class and we lived comfortably but neither my parents nor I have the financial stability to support me through medical school. This caused me to change my major. I switched from a degree in biology to biomedical engineering. It had a good job market and I would only have to pay for school in 4 years. Ultimately, I sacrificed my own dreams because I was scared. **Recently, I came to terms with my fears and decided that I am stronger than them and will pursue my dreams no matter the potential consequences.**



Finding my Passion

My next struggle was deciding which degree to pursue. My first choice was biology, but as I advanced in my biology coursework I became less fascinated. I do love biology, but mainly at the molecular/cellular level. **My affinity grew for chemistry. Chemistry keeps me on my toes.** There is always something new and it's very structured like mathematics. Chemistry is more challenging than Biology for me.

My Career Goals

In the future I believe that I will go through the same problems with choosing a specialty in medicine. Currently, I am interested in reconstructive plastic surgery. **I would like to work in a trauma unit as a reconstructive plastic surgeon.** Once I am an established plastic surgeon I would like to donate my time in the Peace Corps under their response team!

My Advice

What I've learned through my few years in college is that **there is no reason to stress about changing your major.** I really thought it was putting me behind, which it is **but it's more important to pursue something that you care about** and could actually see yourself doing.

Another piece of advice is to **never be discouraged academically, financially, or even emotionally.** Every goal can be attained it just may take a little bit of courage and hard work!