

Why I chose to participate in an externship

Prior to starting medical residency, I worked in business and spent a significant amount of time in a wet lab while pursuing a master's degree in clinical and translational research. During my dermatology training, I found myself interested in understanding the intersection between business, research and clinical medicine. Through the externship experience, I hoped to better understand how my passions could inform my career while exploring alternative paths in medicine. The AID externship program offered a number of different positions, allowing me to find an experience that completely matched my interests and goals.

My externship experience

Almirall is a global pharmaceutical company based in Barcelona, Spain with an interest in innovative opportunities for dermatological diseases. During my externship, I worked directly with the VP of External Research and Innovation, Edward Hsia, PhD. In my role as an extern, I helped to identify and evaluate early-stage external opportunities. Dr. Hsia took the time to understand my background and ensured my projects and research allowed me to fully explore my interests by drawing on my clinical, basic science and business backgrounds. Dr. Hsia met with me on weekly calls to help guide projects and to discuss my career interests. I was given the opportunity to make initial connections with start-ups and present findings remotely on company meetings held in Spain. When designing my externship experience, I elected to spend 6 months working with Almirall in a part-time capacity, which allowed me to follow projects through various stages.

Final thoughts

I am so grateful to AID for the externship program. Working with Almirall gave me the opportunity to explore an alternative career path that was complimentary to my clinical interests. I was given the support and mentorship to develop a skillset that I'm sure will benefit me in future endeavors. Almirall and AID provided ample flexibility, allowing me to help craft my externship experience. Almirall is a wonderful company to consider if you plan to work remotely given that the global nature of their company necessitated video conference calls even prior to the pandemic.

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