

Why I chose to participate in an externship

Dermatology stands out as a unique field within medicine. The rapidly changing and evolving ecosphere of this specialty, with new therapeutics developed and approved almost daily, attracts exceptionally intelligent physicians as well as innovators and entrepreneurs. The dynamism of this specialty was one of the main reasons I was drawn to dermatology, and I aspire to identify problems and innovate solutions within our field. Upon starting my dermatology residency, I sought out opportunities to participate and learn about innovation in dermatology. I came upon Advancing Innovation in Dermatology (AID) and had the opportunity to meet Afton Chavez, MD, a past AID extern. Discussion with her, combined with my passion to gain more exposure to innovation in our field, culminated in my decision to participate in an AID externship.

My externship experience

VeraDermics, Inc., is Series A funded novel therapeutics company, primarily developing pediatric treatment modalities. As the VeraDermics extern, I have been fortunate to participate in twice weekly meetings, as well as board meetings, product development meetings, and pipeline product meetings. This invaluable experience has given me a front row seat to product ideation, testing, and development. I have learned about the intricacies of pitching ideas, fundraising, investor relations, clinical trial positioning and preparation, investigative new drug and device FDA filings, materials sourcing, and much, much more. I have worked with VeraDermics for a little over a year and plan to continue learning from them throughout my residency. Through this opportunity, I have also had the opportunity to develop my own innovative sustainability initiative, and my externship has offered me support through feedback, mentorship, and advice from the VeraDermics, Inc team.

Final thoughts

I cannot imagine a more inspiring or rewarding role than I have had working as the extern at VeraDermics. As I approach my final year of dermatology residency, I am confident I will look back on this externship as one of the prolific experiences of my medical education and arguably my favorite experience during residency. Not only have I been inspired to pursue my own innovation, the culture and camaraderie I have found through this experience have helped me develop confidence as an innovator and an individual. I truly cannot speak highly enough of this experience and would recommend an AID externship to anyone who is interested in innovation in dermatology and beyond.

Morgan Murphrey, MD