

**Saturday Academy: Why Us? Please touch on your top 3 career aspirations.**

Ever since I started high school, I've been giving college and career choices a lot of thought, and I've spent a lot of time exploring potential job options. All throughout high school, I've taken rigorous science and math courses, and have partaken in my school's biomedical pathway. During the summer, I've also had the opportunity of participating in summer programs at UMKC and KU that gave me a lot of insight on careers in the medical field. I am absolutely fascinated with healthcare, and I know I want to be a healthcare professional. I think it is a very rewarding field where you can improve people's quality of life. Although I haven't previously participated in Saturday Academy before, I think that it would be incredibly beneficial and give me a lot of helpful information that would help me now and in the future.

My first career choice that I have in mind is a family medicine physician. I learned a lot about that career in the 6-week UMKC STAHR program I completed, and I just loved everything about it. In family medicine, you get to be a primary care provider, which means that you are usually the first person that a patient goes to when they are sick, and you can work with other specialists if needed in order to effectively treat the patient. Family medicine is my favorite speciality because you have the opportunity to treat people of all ages, genders, and sicknesses, on all parts of the body. Another thing I like about this career is how you don't necessarily have to work in a hospital, but you can also open up your own practice. That really suits me because although I like the work environment of hospitals, I prefer a smaller, quieter clinic.

Another career I'm interested in is becoming a nurse practitioner in primary care. I've had the chance to participate in KU's Nurse Academy as well as connect with nurses through my school's medical club, and those experiences have only amplified my interest in nursing. One thing I really like about this career is that nurse practitioners can do a lot of the things that doctors can do, and they get to spend a lot more time with the patient. Lately the trends in medicine have shown that a higher population of people have preferred to see nurse practitioners for their primary care visits, and it's encouraging to see that more people are more open to not exclusively seeing a doctor. I think that nursing can be a very taxing job, but is also a rewarding career, and the degree is very flexible.

The last career choice on my mind is a dental hygienist. During the UMKC STAHR program I completed, we had a week on dentistry where we learned about all the different careers within the dental field, and dental hygiene was the one that caught my attention. The thing I like most about this career is that not only do you get a lot of direct patient care, but you also get to educate the public about how important oral hygiene really is. I think that's vital because I feel like oral health is often overlooked, especially because many people choose not to go to their dental checkups. There also tends to be a bad stigma around going to the dentist, and I think that working to reverse that, and instead have people look forward to their visits.

I really want to participate in Saturday Academy because it has a strong reputation for being beneficial for STEM careers. Those who have attended stated they enjoyed all the hands-on activities and places they've gotten to go to, and I want to join them! I would be really interested in learning more about STEM and how everything seems to be connected to each other in one way or another, while also gaining tips on how to become a better student. I feel like I would be a good fit for the program, and would be able to use the wealth of information I would obtain to better help others in my future. I look forward to all the skills I could learn related to the medical field as an attendee of the Saturday Academy.