

# PHARMD SPOTLIGHT



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*1. What inspired you to seek a job in the pharmaceutical industry as opposed to the more traditional pharmacist careers?*

During my PharmD I participated in faculty-led research as my 'elective' with a faculty member in my college of pharmacy. The research lab and PhD students were not conducting wet bench research, but rather, were training to be data scientists. The research being conducted in the lab was in genomics and used very large datasets (which I would later see is akin to some of the big datasets used in real-world data analysis in HEOR). I was fortunate enough to use this time to learn more about statistics, data analysis, and play around with R (a statistical software). I really enjoyed the process of research and found satisfaction in generating answers myself. Prior to this research experience, I was vaguely aware of industry and the potential roles for pharmacists. Often, students decide to pursue a career in industry, and then try to make themselves fit into a functional area. For me, it was somewhat the opposite. I discovered my desire to pursue research, and to learn more about data analysis and research methodologies, and industry/HEOR felt like the logical path.

*2. What organizations or extracurricular activities would you suggest to current pharmacy students to get involved in to see if pursuing industry is right for them?*

Consider what you enjoy and what you want in a career. If you feel that a certain functional area aligns with what you want, then pursue it and build those relevant experiences. There is no specific activity that I recommend because it depends upon your area of interest (for me that experience was research, because that was my functional area of interest). What is it that you love about healthcare, medicine, or pharmacy? Do you love interacting directly with patients and can't imagine being extricated from them (maybe industry is too far removed for you)? Do you enjoy interacting with and educating other healthcare professionals (maybe you would enjoy MSL work)? Are you passionate about patient safety (maybe you would enjoy pharmacovigilance)? If you are not aware of the options that are available to you in industry, i.e., the different functional areas, start there!

*3. What drove you to choose a fellowship in the functional area you currently work in?*

Why a fellowship? Industry is notorious for being difficult to break into. Fellowships provide a great opportunity to get a foot in the door, and to learn in a relatively safe environment. For my area in particular (HEOR), I wanted additional experience, and I chose to pursue a fellowship program that granted an MS degree to help me build a stronger foundation in research. Why HEOR? Hopefully this is already clear! HEOR captured my desire to conduct research and aligned with the things that I most enjoyed about pharmacy.

