

PHARMD SPOTLIGHT



Julian Garcia, PharmD

Postdoctoral Fellow US Medical/Medical Science Liaison:
Neurology at Sanofi

1. What drove you to choose a fellowship in the functional area you currently work in and can you briefly describe some of the responsibilities you have as an MSL fellow?

The reason I chose medical affairs/medical science liaison is because I genuinely enjoy the science behind the medications and the opportunity to be able to communicate the most updated information to differing audiences via various mediums (oral, written, poster, etc.). MSLs must also be skilled at building relationships with many people very quickly and I have always found that I enjoy making friends and connecting with people on different aspects of life. My first responsibility as an MSL fellow with Sanofi is to become an expert in my therapeutic area (neurology) to be able to comfortably communicate with health professionals when traveling alongside full-time MSLs on their visits with key opinion leaders (KOLs). Beyond that, I will be developing strategic plans, publishing papers on my therapeutic area, and participating in medical congresses and conferences around the world. Because my fellowship is in conjunction with an affiliated school of pharmacy (MCPHS), I will have my own responsibilities with them as well including serving as a teaching assistant, giving lectures, and precepting students.

2. At what point in your undergraduate education did you realize you wanted to attend pharmacy school, and why did you choose a PharmD degree instead of another advanced degree?

I have a very unique story in that I graduated with a BS in chemical engineering and began working for Frito Lay, and it was only until that point did I decide I wanted to attend pharmacy school. My goal was to be a medical science liaison from the start, and I saw that PharmDs are incredibly sought after for this position, hence my effort to attend pharmacy school. I knew I did not want to attend medical school since I would be locked into a long residency program that I had no desire to begin, and I did not see myself pursuing a PhD either since I did not have much research experience before pharmacy school. A PharmD program was perfect for me since I would be able to complete it and jump into industry immediately after graduating.

3. In what ways did your pharmacy school curriculum prepare you for your fellowship and how did you make the most out of your time in pharmacy school to gain entry into the pharmaceutical industry?

My pharmacy school curriculum prepared me for my fellowship by giving me the clinical knowledge and confidence of a clinician, which is why PharmDs are so valuable in the pharmaceutical industry. By thinking of the patient first and understanding when specific drugs are appropriate for a patient, my pharmacy school did a great job in preparing me for an industry fellowship. There are ways to maximize your time in pharmacy school to give you the most valuable experience to be successful in a fellowship, however. Getting involved in a research opportunity at the school is an incredibly powerful way you can make the most out of your time in pharmacy school.

