

COMMUNITY FOCUS

Benjamin Arbuckle



Meet Benjamin Arbuckle, MS1
Hi, everybody. I'm Ben Arbuckle. I'm originally from Sand Springs, Oklahoma, and graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2019 with a Chemical Engineering degree. In my time at OU, I grew a passion for both mentoring and volunteering, both of which I've been very fortunate to continue doing here at the OU-TU School of Community Medicine. I play guitar, drums, sing, and enjoy learning more about live sound/recording in my free time. Thus far, my favorite experiences at OU-TU have been serving as a Class President, volunteering at an on-site COVID-19 vaccination clinic, and getting to serve in a variety of volunteer positions out in the community. No matter where you come from, I forward my own mentor's advice to always "embrace your place," work hard, and ask questions (always feel free to reach out). No matter what your dreams may be, always know you'll have the support you need to get there at the OU-TU SCM.

What does being a doctor mean to you?

I knew in eighth grade that I wanted to be a physician. During high school, I read more and more on different aspects of psychology and drug addiction, solidifying my intentions to go into a field where I could use science to help people directly. It wasn't until my return to school in 2015, however, that I realized the privilege and duty I had to my community. Being a physician means a lifelong dedication to serving others in whatever capacity that may be. I never think of it as a job or work, simply a way of life.

What was a challenge you faced? How did you overcome it?

One of the biggest challenges I faced early on was the loss of my mother (and her half of the family). While growing up, I didn't realize how much of an impact that loss had on me until I realized in early adulthood how much I lacked in emotional intelligence. I had to take a step back and put my dreams on pause for almost half a decade, knowing that then was not the time. Without that time away from the academic environment, however, I wouldn't have learned some of the more challenging lessons of life and loss, and I am almost sure I wouldn't have the work ethic and drive I've managed to hold on to the past several years.

What advice would you give to your younger-self?

Trust the process. This past year has taught everybody that life will not always go as planned. It also taught a lesson in resilience. I started this journey in 2005 with several bumps along the way. Although I learned early on to be self-aware, I am still learning lessons in self-compassion. Giving that break to yourself frees up so much positivity, creativity, and passion.

What would you tell younger students who are exploring health careers?

Much of the information you need to apply to various programs is accessible over the internet in this day and age. That's a blessing and a curse because there's a lot of information. That being said, to anybody interested in an area of healthcare as a career, never feel hesitant to reach out to those living what may be your dream. School systems (medical, nursing, dental, etc.) are a great place to start because students in those programs have the process fresh in their minds. They are also very close to your shoes of simply deciding which path to take next. The hardest part is making that initial contact, whether it be by phone, email, or in person, but it only gets easier from there. Reach out, explore (it's never too early to reach out about shadowing or mentorship for a potential career), and latch on to things that interest you. You just might be surprised by what ends up driving your passions.



The First Class Meet-Up: The Gathering Place, August 2020



Post-Exam Lunch: Neighborhood Jam, February 2020