

Toma Timothy

Age: 25

Second Year Medical Student University of British Columbia School of Medicine
Island Medical Program, Class of 2009

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Where you are from

The Sliammon First Nation, Powell River BC

- I am Coast Salish

Work/ education experience prior to medical school

Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology, Minor in Human Kinetics, Trinity Western University, 2003

- I did some genetic research at Trinity Western University

-Worked at the One Sky National Resource Center for Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention for two years in Portland Oregon.

Steps you took to get admitted to medical school

- Firstly, I didn't limit myself in terms of my career aspirations
- I didn't listen to people when they told me that I didn't have what it takes to get into medical school
- I did listen to professors and physicians when they had positive, helpful advice for me.
- I tried my best in school
- I volunteered at doing things I enjoy- (working with Aboriginal youth, Habitat for Humanity)

• Biggest challenges in medical school (pre- or post-admission) and how you have dealt with them

• In medical school, there is a seemingly infinite amount of material to learn and not much time to learn it in- you must know how you can learn quickly and efficiently. For me, it meant drawing almost everything from bones to brains. I still like colouring- I'm a simple guy;)

Biggest surprises (good or bad) about medical school

- Medical school is a lot of fun, you meet so many great friends, you get to travel, and you learn extremely valuable skills.
- Medical school is also difficult at times. Sometimes you can't spend time with loved ones, you have to be away from your home community most of the time, and you can get stressed out- especially during finals.

Things you learned along the way that you wished you had known prior to starting the admissions process

- It's a whirlwind process -there is a lot of support for Aboriginal applicants. I wish I knew about IPAC when I was applying to med school.

Why you decided to go to medical school

- I saw a great need for Native doctors living in Canada and in the United States.

Tips or any other messages for First Nations, Inuit or Métis people considering medical education

- If you are interested in a career in medicine, then go for it. Don't let anything or anyone hold you back.
- There is so much support for First Nations, Inuit, and Metis pre-med students, plug yourself into IPAC and pick doctor's, residents, and medical student's brains about the profession.
- Feel free to e-mail me with any questions you have about medical school, I'll be glad to try and answer any questions that I can.