

Dear Gator Supporter,

I started at UF with a relatively good idea as to what direction I wanted to take with my studies. That idea quickly changed into a feeling of uncertainty and helplessness. When I first reached out to the disability resource center it was when I changed my major from graphic design to Health Education and Behavior in the college of Health Studies. At the time, I wasn't sure if that was the right decision because I couldn't see myself pursuing a profession as a Health Educator.

The disability resource center was able to provide me with the encouragement and counseling I needed to stay on track. The center introduced me to a Support Service Coordinator and Learning Specialist whom taught me how to handle every obstacle thrown my way. There were so many times I felt overwhelmed and defeated and the Learning Specialist was always accessible to discuss and resolve all of my academic issues.

It was the Learning Specialist that was able to guide my focus and passion towards a career as a Physician Assistant, something I never thought was possible as a Health Education major. As I started this new path of study in medicine and science I found myself facing obstacles of anxiety and trouble with concentration during exams, it began to interfere with my academic performance. The disability resource center helped me to receive the necessary accommodations I needed in order to succeed. In addition, they were able to help me gain valuable and diverse clinical experience in hospitals, with various philanthropies and an opportunity as a research assistant.

I graduated during the summer of 2008. I have worked for the past 6 months trying to save some money for graduate school. I was accepted by the masters graduate program of Physician Assistant Studies at Pace University in New York City and am scheduled to start during the summer of 2009. I can honestly say that my success is due to the guidance I received from my DRC mentor. As an after note, I may have graduated from the University of Florida with my bachelor's degree in Health Studies but this department is still helping me and following through to help make my transition to graduate school as easy as possible.

Jaimie Schlesinger