



## **Today's Podiatrist: Tomika Coleman**

### **Podiatric Medical Student**

Tomika Coleman, a third-year podiatric medical student at the New York College of Podiatric Medicine, is happy she decided to pursue podiatric medicine as a career. "The camaraderie I see among my classmates, upperclassman, and practicing podiatrists is great. I feel like I'm part of one big, happy family, and I love that about this profession."

Many college students who are interested in medicine choose to take the pre-medicine route, usually majoring in one of the core sciences. Coleman was no exception to this rule. In 2000, she graduated from Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland, with a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Still unsure of her medical career path, Coleman worked as a researcher in nuclear medicine at the University of Maryland Medical School and the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. "I always knew I wanted to go into medicine at some point. I chose to attend graduate school as a way to increase my chances of getting in." In 2005, Coleman graduated from the Johns Hopkins University with a Master of Science in Biotechnology and Biodefense.

After receiving her master's degree, Coleman needed to discuss her medical school options so she turned to her undergraduate pre-medicine advisor, Taresha McBride, for advice. "I spoke to my advisor, and in our discussions she suggested podiatric medicine as an option." This field of medicine had not crossed Coleman's mind as she only associated podiatric medicine with cutting toenails or similar footcare procedures. Her advisor dispelled some of those myths by explaining the educational requirements and training involved and encouraged her to research the career further. "I took my advisor's advice and the more I learned, the more I was drawn to it." Her decision to enter podiatric medical school was confirmed after she shadowed with the American Podiatric Medical Association's past president, Ross Taubman, DPM.

Even though Coleman is at the beginning of her journey of becoming "today's podiatrist," she has already learned valuable lessons. "I've learned podiatric medicine is a dynamic and ever-changing profession. The quality of residency training will continue to advance exponentially for the generations to come, creating better practitioners and raising the quality of treatment for patients. I am excited about the possibility of pursuing sub-specialties in podiatric medicine such as biomechanics, pediatrics, sports medicine, and research."

For Coleman, the future as a podiatric physician is bright, and with the support of her podiatric medical "family," she will undoubtedly be a success.

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