

Jeffrey Ordner D.O., Public Health

Jeffrey Ordner entered Stockton University as a first-generation college student with an interest in science. While immersed in biology and chemistry coursework, Jeff enrolled in *Contemporary Health Issues*, a public health course taught by Dr. Elizabeth Calamidas that covered various determinants of US health care disparities. The course helped him understand the field of public health as a unique and necessary fusion of the biological and social sciences—a lens through which he wanted to see the world. And so, Jeff declared a Public Health major. The experience motivated him to enroll in *Epidemiology* in which his final project tracked antibiotic resistance trends amongst the major malaria subtypes of Sub-Saharan Africa. The project further fueled his interests in blood-borne parasite identification on peripheral blood smears.



Intrigued by the opportunity to grasp basic microscopy, Jeff took an apprenticeship in a histology laboratory at Southern Ocean County Hospital in Manahawkin, NJ before securing a full-time position at Atlanticare Regional Medical Center in Atlantic City, NJ. He ultimately applied for and passed his histotechnician certification exam with the American Society for Clinical Pathology and later went on to work as a full-time histotechnician and manager of a gastrointestinal pathology laboratory in Egg Harbor Twp., NJ. It was here that he had the opportunity to discuss complicated patient cases with the treating physicians and treatment team during the group's various conferences.

After 7 years in the laboratory sciences and excited to play a more direct role in patient care, Jeff decided to apply to Rowan School of Osteopathic Medicine (SOM) in Stratford, NJ; he was accepted into the class of 2020. At Rowan SOM, Jeff had the opportunity to rotate through the various medical subspecialties and work directly with patients on the floors of his previous stomping grounds, Atlanticare Regional Medical Center. During this time, Jeff also went on a medical mission trip to Ho-Province, Ghana where he, his colleagues, and local public health officials had the opportunity to provide village community wellness checks that included administering antibiotics and treating the wounds of those suffering severe disfigurement from Leprosy. Jeff also discovered that many of those suffering from malaria in the community would have their blood smears unread for months, delaying their treatment. Moved to serve underprivileged populations and determined to understand the patterns of the countless microscope slides he created, Jeff applied for an Anatomic and Clinical Pathology residency program at the New York University (NYU) Grossman School of Medicine in New York, NY.

“Part of the attraction of NYU’s program for me was its mission and commitment serve NYC’s flagship hospital Bellevue, the oldest public hospital in the country,” said Jeff. “Many of these patients are uninsured and lack access to care. Many of them present with advanced disease and/or are homeless. I truly felt that I was making a difference...the entire pathology service was being run by residents.”

During his time at NYU, Jeff not only sharpened his diagnostic skills in pathology but also assumed the elected role of Chief Resident from 2023 to 2024. He was also involved in several research projects which resulted in first-author publications in highly reputable journals. One project established the benefits of favoring patient surveillance over more invasive therapies for patients with prostate cancer, under certain conditions. Another project studied the tumor microenvironment of gynecologic carcinosarcoma and proposed that select tumor immunophenotypes may benefit from immunotherapy.

Upon graduation from residency, Jeff will take an Oncologic Surgical Pathology Fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan followed by a Hematopathology Fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania. His ultimate goal is to return to community practice as a pathologist serving underserved populations.