

By Brooke Harrison

Ariana Trautmann, having recently been accepted to Florida State University's College of Medicine, has pursued medicine since childhood. She was eleven years old when her brother, who was fourteen at the time, was diagnosed with cancer. It was her family's experience that gave Ariana a fierce desire to become a doctor. "It's something that can be incredibly rewarding," Ariana said, "After being in a position where I felt like I didn't have much control, I like having the ability to help people." While attending Chiles High School, she took classes like anatomy and found that she really enjoyed them. She became particularly interested in family medicine.

During high school, Ariana developed a team for Relay for Life called Siblings of Survivors and has continued to support the team even beyond her four years at Chiles. Ariana has also volunteered her time at Capital Regional Medical Center and with the Hang Tough foundation, a nonprofit organization with a focus on pediatric illness. More recently, she developed a branch of the nonprofit at Florida State University so other FSU students can get involved.

But Ariana's path to med school wasn't always easy. She faced "road blocks" after transferring to FSU from Tallahassee Community College, where she'd received a scholarship to complete her first two years of undergraduate work with the honors program. These challenges included an academic advisor who didn't believe she'd make it to med school. When Ariana realized she hadn't taken two important subjects prior to the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), physics and biochemistry, she took it upon herself to learn the material. "I stuck with it, and I'm glad I did. I'm definitely very proud of getting into med school," said Ariana. She's particularly appreciative for the support of her fellow classmates and also her family, and feels lucky that her parents and grandparents live in town. Her brother is in remission, and like Ariana wants to pursue a career in medicine. Ariana's advice for younger students is to keep trying. Ariana said, "Listen to what your gut tells you, and if it's something you really want, keep going for it."

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