

Sage Offers Flexible Option for Graduates Interested in Medical School

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Albany and Troy, NY - Christina Yerdon's college advisor told her to forget about medical school. Her grade point average was too low. She accepted what she saw as her destiny and went on to earn two master's degrees and work as an acute care Nurse Practitioner in a Central New York hospital.

But the desire to become a full-fledged physician never waned so several years later she's going back to medical school by way of The Sage Colleges' new Post Baccalaureate Premedical Program. Frequently, additional science courses and labs are required before individuals are prepared to apply to medical school, which is why 12 New York State schools offer a "post-bac, premed" program, The Sage Colleges being the newest among them and the only one in the Capital Region that results in a Certificate in Post Baccalaureate Premedical Studies from the New York State Education Department. The certificate confirms students who complete the program have met premed requirements.

A projected shortage of physicians – and desire to expand course offerings – gave rise to Sage's new program. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), several factors have contributed to the shortage, including:

- An aging physician workforce – one in every three active doctors is over age 55.
- A doubling in the number of people over 65 between 2000 and 2030.
- Longer life expectancies.
- A projected glut of physicians that never panned out.
- And even, according to the AAMC, a new generation of physicians who may choose to work fewer hours.

Yerdon's work as a Nurse Practitioner in Central New York, where she provided patients with medical services in the hospital setting, inspired her to try for medical school. "This will allow me to provide more services for my patients and their families," the 31-year-old said, sitting at a conference table in Mueller Science Hall on the Troy campus where she studies every day from 2 to 5 p.m. before a four-hour-long chemistry class. She'll complete the program while she continues to work 12-hour-long weekend shifts at Samaritan Hospital.

In addition to preparing students for admission to medical school and physical therapy programs, which now require doctoral degrees, "our program also prepares students for physician assistant schools," said Mary Rea said, chair of Sage's Biology Department. The "post-bac, pre med" program can be completed in one year which includes summer courses. Both programs include preparation for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) and assistance with the medical school application process.

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About The Sage Colleges

The Sage Colleges is an independent comprehensive university with two four-year undergraduate colleges: Russell Sage College for women in Troy, N.Y and the coeducational Sage College of Albany. Through SCA's Sage After Work program, working adults with prior college credit can complete the bachelor's degree in a flexible schedule and format. The coeducational Sage Graduate School offers master's and doctoral degrees on both campuses.