

2023-2024 Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center Resident Bios

(PGY1 Residents)



Jacee Billings, PharmD

Hometown: Denver City, Texas

School of Pharmacy: Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Jerry H. Hodge School of Pharmacy

Professional Areas of Interest: Geriatrics, because they are the cutest patient population around, but I love learning new things!

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? Still exploring this, but I hope to work in some capacity as a CPS for the VA! The biggest goal for me is being able to make a difference in the lives of my patients and feel excited and fulfilled by my career!

Hobbies: Days on the lake, gardening, scrapbooking, baking, painting, working out at 9 Round, and brunching.

What is your favorite part of living in Tuscaloosa? How green and full of life everything is! Although Taco Mama is a close second. 😊 I am excited to go to a few BAMA football games as well!

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? It was the perfect fit! TVAMC matched all of my career interests in regard to rotation opportunities, the people seemed like my kind of people with fun free-spirited personalities, and the focus on preventing burnout and emphasizing work/life balance was far and above any other programs out there!



Blake Christensen, PharmD

Hometown: Boise, Idaho

School of Pharmacy: University of Houston

Professional Areas of Interest: Psychiatric Pharmacy

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? After completing my PGY1 residency here at TVAMC, I plan to pursue a VA PGY2 Psychiatric Residency.

Hobbies: Hiking, biking, stained glass, laser engraving.

What is your favorite part of living of Tuscaloosa? Druid City Makerspace!

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? TVAMC has many opportunities for gaining experience in a variety of psychiatric care as a PGY1 and a PGY2. Additionally, the environment is welcoming and supportive and makes for a great place to learn.



Morgan Pierce, PharmD

Hometown: Red Bay, Alabama

School of Pharmacy: Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy

Professional Areas of Interest: Geriatrics, Home-Based Primary Care, Ambulatory Care, and Mental Health

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? After completing my PGY1 residency, I plan to pursue a PGY2 in Geriatrics or Ambulatory Care.

Hobbies: Reading, sports (softball, basketball, football), hiking/long walks, workout, playing with my 11 pets, spending time with friends and family.

What is your favorite part of living in Tuscaloosa? I don't actually live in Tuscaloosa, but I do love the farmer's market and being able to attend ALL the softball games at Rhoads Stadium! Plus, there is always some kind of event going on in Tuscaloosa, so it is fun to go out with

friends and co-residents to explore.

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? The people and the care community! Everyone is so friendly and supportive here, so there is always someone willing to lend a hand if you ever need it. That is definitely the first thing I noticed about TVAMC. I also knew TVAMC was the place for me, because the institution places a focus on ambulatory care practice in several of my interest areas such as Primary Care (including HBPC) and outpatient mental health. I also have a passion for Geriatrics and this is definitely an area where TVAMC provides a wealth of opportunity to gain clinical experience.



Jessie Jo Salvatore, PharmD

Hometown: Niles, Michigan

School of Pharmacy: South College School of Pharmacy in Knoxville, TN

Professional Areas of Interest: Psychiatric Pharmacy, Ambulatory Care, Cardiology

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? After my PGY1 residency at TVAMC, I would like to complete a PGY2 in Psychiatric Pharmacy or take a position within the VA health system!

Hobbies: Horseback riding, hiking, reading, baking.

What is your favorite part of living of Tuscaloosa? I love the farmer's market! I have gone almost every Saturday since moving here for Chilton County peaches.

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? Being a Navy Veteran, a VA residency was my top priority. I wanted to complete my PGY1 at the Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center specifically to explore my interests in psych and ambulatory care. Shelley our RPD was also a big part of my decision on choosing TVAMC. I have a tendency to take on too many tasks and in the past have faced burnout. It was important for me to choose a program that can teach me to have a successful career. I want to love pharmacy just as much 20-30 years from now as I do today. I know that my time here will teach me to be a great clinical pharmacist!

(PGY2 Residents)



Sahil Patel, PharmD (PGY1 Completed at TVAMC)

Hometown: Madison, Mississippi

School of Pharmacy: University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy

Professional Areas of Interest: Serious Mental Illness, Substance Use Disorder Management

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? After completing my PGY2 Psychiatric Residency, I hope to stay in the Veterans Affairs (VA) System as a clinical pharmacy practitioner in either the inpatient or outpatient setting.

Hobbies: Sports, trying out new restaurants, hiking, spending quality time with friends and family

What is your favorite part of living of Tuscaloosa? My favorite part of living in Tuscaloosa is all the opportunities you have for outdoor activities such as hiking, kayaking, etc., while also enjoying the small-town feel that this town provides. Also, Tuscaloosa is within close proximity of Birmingham, Therefore, if you cannot find any activity to do here, then you can just drive up to Birmingham and explore what the city has to offer.

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? The versatility that the Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center provides in terms of opportunities to grow into a well-rounded clinical pharmacist academically, professionally, and personally are immense. These opportunities include being part of an inter-professional team managing several disease states in Primary Care, Mental health, and Geriatrics settings, precepting IPPE/APPE students, and learning about Pharmacy Management along with many other opportunities. Furthermore, from day one, you will feel supported by a team that wants to see you succeed and accomplish your goals.



Jeremiah Wojtowicz, PharmD (PGY1 Completed at Memphis VAMC)

Hometown: Knoxville, Tennessee

School of Pharmacy: University of Tennessee's Health Science Center

Professional Areas of Interest: Psychiatric Pharmacy and Substance Use Disorder

What do you want to do professionally after completing this residency? I would like to be a psychiatric pharmacist at a VA Medical Center. I am still narrowing down the exact position, but would like to start somewhere.

Hobbies: I enjoy watching sports, primarily baseball. I also watch older sitcoms like Frasier and Seinfeld. I occasionally plan video games as well, though not as much as I did in my younger days. Finally, I watch more YouTube videos than is probably recommended by the CDC.

What is your favorite part of living of Tuscaloosa? I tend to keep to the town of Northport as it is a bit quieter. I do enjoy looking at the older buildings around town though. I also really like getting spicy chicken from Mr. Chen's. They don't like when I wear orange around town for some reason...

Why Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center? I chose the Tuscaloosa VA due to the plethora of opportunities in the psychiatric field. This is a well-rounded program with opportunities in outpatient, inpatient, SUD, RRTP, geriatrics, and much more! This balance attracted me to Tuscaloosa, and is why I came!