



## Sunitha Konatham

MD + MPH

Hometown: Austin, TX

Undergraduate Institution: Texas A&M University

Undergraduate Degrees: BS in Biology

### Why do you want to be a physician?

I am passionate about the field of medicine and am inspired by the difference physicians make in the lives of their patients, whether in a physical or emotional capacity. The career of a physician is not a job, it is a vocation, as they have an incredibly large social responsibility to act with selflessness, treat patients with respect, and make quick but informed decisions. By committing to the medical field, I will have opportunities to have a lasting impacts on the lives of my patients and members of my community at large.

### Why did you choose Texas A&M College of Medicine?

I applied to Texas A&M for my undergraduate degree because of the incredible research opportunities, rich traditions, and diverse student population. However, I chose A&M because I felt at home from the moment I set foot on campus for my prospective student tour, and I feel so privileged to continue my journey as an Aggie at the Texas A&M College of Medicine. Throughout my undergraduate studies, there were many medical schools students, faculty, and advisors who invested in me and guided me on the path to success, and I am incredibly grateful for their continual support as I embark on the next stage of my journey towards a career as a physician through the MD Plus program.

### Why did you choose to pursue a graduate degree in addition to the MD?

I chose to pursue a Master's in Public Health with a focus on Health Promotion and Community Health Services because I believe it

is important for public health professionals to identify and help address the unique issues in a given place because it can truly change and even save the lives of the people living there. As someone who has a long-standing passion for preventative medicine and health education, the MD Plus Program is providing me with the understanding of public health that I need to be a physician who is equipped to recognize the issues that are affecting a particular region or population, and implement a solution.

### What are your career goals and how do you feel the MD Plus Program will help you?

It is becoming increasingly apparent to me in the midst of a global pandemic that public health and medicine are intricately linked, so my broad career goal is to incorporate my knowledge of public health into my clinical practice, and my clinical experience into my public health efforts. Preventative medicine is a broad field ranging from individuals to entire communities, and I believe it is equally important to both educate the public on how they can prevent disease or maintain health and provide curative care when a patient needs it. The knowledge and skills acquired as a medical doctor provide a framework of thinking when understanding the complex nature of community health and promoting health at various community levels, and public health in turn helps a doctor look at a patient not just as an isolated individual, but as a dynamic part of a linked community. I hope that by earning my MPH through the MD Plus program, I will gain valuable knowledge and experience in both graduate school and medical school that I will be able to synthesize to maximize my impact as a physician