

Young Gifted and STEM Profile – Who Am I?

Monique Wheatle – UK

1. Who are you and what is your STEM Superpower?

My name is Monique Wheatle, I am a graduate medical student with a first class degree in biomedical science. My STEM superpower is making stem accessible, fun and interesting for students!

2. When did you first realise you were passionate about your STEM subject or field?

In secondary school, I went to a science specialist school and found those subjects most interesting. Medicine seemed to be the logical combination for me, combing my love for science with the fact that I am a 'people person'. Completing work experience in medicine is what cemented it for me and made me want to pursue medicine as a career.

3. Describe the route you took, which lead from finishing your GCSEs until now.

I finished GCSEs and went on to complete 4 A levels in Biology, Chemistry, Maths & RS. I did not get the A2 grades I needed for medicine so then pursued medicine through the graduate route. I studied biomedical science for 3 years and got a first-class degree in that, which lead to me getting 3/4 offers for medical school. I am now in my penultimate year of graduate medicine.

4. If you had to study/focus on ONE STEM area for the rest of your career what would it be and why?

I think I would focus on psychiatry and mental health within medicine. I think it is a highly neglected area of study, but is very rewarding and fits well into my own interests. Also, within the Black community specifically, I think the health literacy around mental health is sometimes poor, so I would love to do something along those lines if I had to choose one area. I would also throw in some Chemistry titration experiments for fun!

5. What do you enjoy most about your day to day role?

I enjoy interacting with people and the trust that comes with being a student doctor. Most patients are very respectful and grant you access into all areas of their lives, because our profession. There is a lot of trust and rapport building which I love. Finally, there is also always something to learn, a new advancement or technology which centres around making people's lives better, which is something I really enjoy and makes all the work I do worthwhile.



Monique, during her shift at the Hospital

6. Who would name as your main STEMspiration and why?

To be honest, I don't think I have one. I think I am lucky to have a community of people who inspire me in different ways, I don't think there is anyone in particular that I look up to in the STEM industry.

7. Outside of STEM, what are your other hobbies?

I am the co-founder of African Caribbean Medical Mentors (ACMM), an organisation with aims to realise the potential of current and future doctors and dentists. We run a mentoring schemes, outreach, and events to support and champion our community. As co-founder I run a core team of 15 to support our development as an organisation.

I also work with the careers network at my university to facilitate tasks to students on volunteering, work experience and medical school. I play netball in my spare time which is a great stress reliever, and I've playing netball since I was 11 years old and something I really enjoy.

I am also from Jamaica and Guyana and have been playing Mas at carnival since I was 18. I play mas each year and go to as many soca fetes as I can fit in during the year too, which is another source of enjoyment.

8. Lastly, if you could give our Young Gifted and STEM readers one piece of advice, what would it be?

Believe in yourself, believe that if you want something it is already do yours, as long as you work hard and believe in your ability.

