

# THE WHY FOR DANIEL

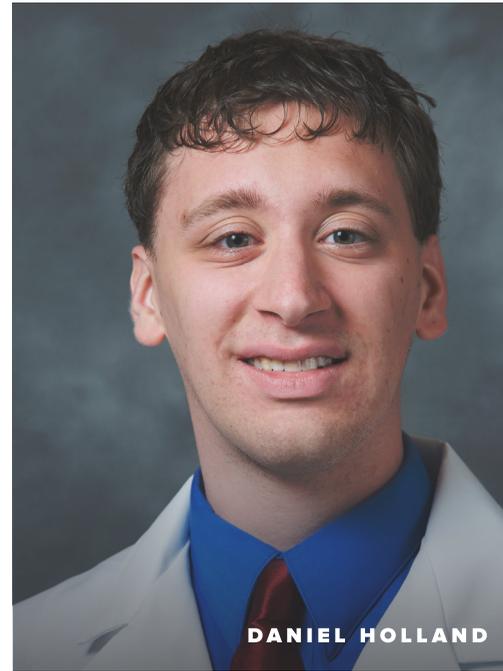
FIU's first admit to the new MPH program

By Monica Smith

*“ I want to pursue my MPH degree because it will provide me with a needed soft science focus —it’s about its interconnectedness with the world and how things come together ”*

Daniel Holland, the first admit to Florida International University's newly launched, fully online Master of Public Health program, is a licensed, working pharmacist in Connecticut. It was important for him to find an affordable Master of Public Health degree he could earn completely online. A science writer with an interest in neglected tropical diseases, Holland is undergoing a partial career change. To accomplish this, he'll begin his 18-month program Fall 2018 with FIU Online and start his new path.

“I want to pursue my MPH degree because it will provide me with a needed soft science focus —it’s about its interconnectedness with the world and how things come together,” he said. “I plan to couple my pharmacy background, both clinical and pharmaceutical, with my writing skills in public health to help change policy, perhaps working for an NGO.”



FIU's long history since 1998 as a leader in online learning attracted Holland who carefully examined many online MPH programs. And with the university's proximity to the Caribbean and South America, naturally, the program's research and courses will be more current on neglected tropical diseases.

Holland's knowledge on neglected tropical diseases is extensive and he talked easily and excitedly about a project he worked on where he studied the effects of Ebola. Within his research, he realized that the Ebola crisis, which went from just a few people in a village to affecting several countries, had a public health element that was crucial to stopping the disease.

“In the case of Ebola, it was so important to understand anthropology—how people handled their dead and the lack of education about the disease. People were afraid to go to hospitals to get care. A respected doctor became a pariah. So, what happens after an epidemic is important to societies as well,” he expounded. “Often, people don't think of a threat until it's real to them.”

But it's not just the exotic disease that moves Holland. He explained that his pharmacy education included work with underserved populations (migrant farm workers, itinerant and undocumented people) facing social, political and other pressures within our complicated healthcare system and society at-large.

“Although I learned much from these experiences, my skills, the hard skills, associated with epidemiology are still underdeveloped. I look forward to advancing these skills in this program in preparation for an epidemiological career,” he surmised.

FIU's MPH is accredited by The Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). For more information on the program, visit [fiuonline.com/master-public-health](https://fiuonline.com/master-public-health)