

# Alumni Profile

## Andrew Parker Morgan BSPH Class of 2009

Graduate Student, Bioinformatics & Computational Biology, UNC-Chapel Hill

**BSPH, Biostatistics, UNC-Chapel Hill, 2009**

### **What is your current occupation?**

Right now, I am a graduate student/research assistant in the bioinformatics & computational biology (BCB) program here at UNC. My thesis adviser is Fernando Pardo-Manuel de Villena, Department of Genetics/Center for Integrated & Systems Genetics/Carolina Center for Genome Sciences.



### **What are you researching?**

I am interested in the effects of paternal age on human health, as many conditions and diseases have been correlated with the age of the father at the time of his child's conception or birth. So now, I study the impact of paternal age on mutation rate and neuropsychiatric phenotypes in mice. Ultimately, my goal is to unlock some of the secrets of paternal-age-related psychiatric disease in humans.

### **What do you consider your most significant contribution to the field of public health?**

That would definitely be my service as 2012-2013 director of a free clinic, the Student Health Action Coalition (SHAC) Medical Clinic. Since 1967, it has been operated exclusively by students in the allied-health professions schools at UNC. The clinic employs over fifty volunteers each week and provides care for over five hundred patients annually. They derive primarily from underserved segments of the community.

### **What advice would you give to aspiring biostatisticians?**

Firstly, pursue broad interests. Go where your curiosity takes you! For example, I didn't just study Biostatistics. I studied public health in general. Exploring many aspects of this field as an undergraduate prepared me well for the challenges of graduate-level work.

Secondly, seek out faculty members outside the classroom. At UNC's medical and graduate school, I found meaningful, exciting opportunities to work closely with biostatistics faculty. I wish I had sought out similar opportunities as an undergraduate. Seize the moment!



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