



CHRIS KATKOCIN, MBA, PMP, CHFP —— 2011 Graduate

GW MBA HELPING GRAD REFORM HEALTH CARE

Chris Katkocin's career focus is business, but healthcare has always been close to his heart.

He grew up fascinated by medicine and healthcare systems because his mother was head nurse of Pediatrics at Albert Einstein College Hospital in New York City, and his father earned a Ph.D. in Microbiology en route to a career creating vaccines.

So when Chris, with his business sensibilities and family history in healthcare, learned about the George Washington University's online Healthcare MBA, he was naturally drawn to it.

"This program teaches you all the components of a traditional MBA, but it applies it directly to the healthcare industry," he said. "You really get a business-minded perspective on the healthcare industry while also learning how to improve it through operational enhancements."

Chris now serves as a Deputy Director within the Business Advisory Services Group at the Altarum Institute, a nonprofit that bills itself as a health systems research and consulting organization, where he manages a staff of about 40 employees and oversees a dozen or more healthcare-related projects.

BROADENED HORIZONS

Chris was working as the Assistant Director of Operations at Sentara Potomac Hospital when he decided it was time to make a shift in his career. But to fit an education into his rigorous schedule, he needed the elasticity of an online program.

"The hospital environment is very demanding. It's not a work environment that offers a lot of flexibility. With the speed at which GW's Healthcare MBA program moved and the ability to really reach out and work collaboratively with a lot of the other people within my cohort, that helped balance out my time management. The flexibility of an online program really made that work."

He said the program's healthcare focus, as well as classes like Healthcare Consulting, helped him decide on consultation as a career that would allow him to impact change and make a difference on a national scale.

"The program really helped give me an idea of everything I could possibly be dealing with in the healthcare environment and from a business perspective. To me, it was a great program for getting me my career to where it is today. I can see it being used in a multitude of different positions, to include Healthcare Administration, Healthcare Management and healthcare Consulting."



AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT

GW's Healthcare MBA is designed to teach students current, relevant skills and techniques to help them succeed immediately in the industry.

In 2010, before he had even finished at GW, Chris took a job at the Altarum Institute. On the first day he was able to use the skills he learned at GW to help on a major, years-long project with the federal health provider and the largest integrated health system in the country.

The project, in which Chris was involved for his first couple years at the institute, entailed consolidating revenue collection and management from 153 federal medical centers across the nation to seven centralized locations. It was a resounding success.

"They now collect close to \$3.3 billion a year in terms of their total collections. They weren't experiencing anywhere near that performance back in the '90s and early 2000s."

CHARGING AHEAD

What makes the GW program special to Chris is how it was designed to teach the same principles students would find in a traditional MBA, but with a focus on healthcare.

"I was always interested in getting an MBA. But the way that this program takes the components of an MBA and applies it to the healthcare industry — to me, that was really what made GW's program stand out."

In the six years since he began working with the Altarum Institute, Chris has progressed quickly. He started as a junior analyst while finishing up his MBA, and since then has advanced through five positions before landing in his current role as Deputy Director.

Chris said the knowledge he gained remains as relevant in his work today as when he first began. In fact, he finds himself referring back to some of the books he read for classes at GW, and uses them as training resources for new hires.

"The program has absolutely done wonders for not just my career advancement but also in creating a strong network both locally and nationally," Chris said. "Continuing to use the applications learned and applied from the program — using that in my day-to-day work — has been fantastic."



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Visit <http://healthcaremba.gwu.edu/gradkatkocin> or call 1.888.989.7066 for more information about the George Washington University Healthcare M.B.A. online program.

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