

a Healthy Beginning

Gil Diaz honors family's healthcare roots while contemplating his own path

Some kids go to summer camp. Gil Diaz sterilized dental equipment during the summer as a kid.

"My dad's been trying to get me to work for him since I was little," Diaz joked.

Diaz's father owns a dental office in Puerto Rico, and after graduating with his degree in Management in May, he plans to move back to the U.S. territory to work for his dad full-time.

"I want to see where I can take my dad's business," Diaz said. "That's my challenge right now—coming up with ways to bring more patients in, improve the entire system and just make sure everyone is as effective as possible."

Diaz has been in the continental U.S. since he was 13, from Texas to Arizona and now back to Texas to attend Baylor. He started working for his dad remotely during his sophomore year at Baylor—first with payment reconciliations and then with more and more duties, especially after Hurricane Maria struck the island in 2017.

"A lot of the businesses around there were struggling, and a lot of the dentists around my dad's

office went out of business," he said. "You never want something like that to happen, but at the same time, that's an opportunity."

Diaz sees a lot of opportunity to grow his dad's business, but he's only planning to work there for a year or so, before going to graduate school.


"I'm not planning to end up there," he said. "I love Puerto Rico. It's home. My family and friends are there, but I can grow a lot more here."

After working in his father's business, he plans to return to Texas for a graduate healthcare MBA program. After all, healthcare is the family business, not dentistry. In addition to his dad's office, Diaz's mom is a pharmacist turned healthcare businesswoman, his stepfather is an executive pharmacy benefits salesperson, his aunt and uncle own medical practices in the San Antonio area and his cousin just started on a healthcare consulting career path. In fact, Diaz's first internship was with Bandera Family Healthcare, his aunt and uncle's business in San Antonio.

"I was always very interested in my aunt and uncle's business—from day one," he said. "I was lucky

enough to witness how they grew it from one office. They let me float around and learn the different parts of the business—I shadowed the receptionist, accounting and the operations manager. It solidified my choice of major, but I knew I wanted to be in business. It's been ingrained in my mind since high school that I want to go into business. I knew that's what my job was going to be."

Business, it is, but he's still not sure how that will manifest into a career, or if he'll stay in healthcare administration.

"I don't think I have enough experience to know what I want to do yet, or what I'm passionate about," he said. "Management is a versatile major, because if in 10 years I decide I want to shift industries, I can use that degree." 

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