

News Release

U of M Crookston Senior Ashley Martell Keeps her Eye on the Goal in the Classroom and on the Court

By Itollefts on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 She's cool. On the basketball court or in the classroom at the University of Minnesota

Crookston, Ashley Martell (in photo, right) keeps it together. With a major in health science and a minor in chemistry, the senior from Somerset Wis., has become adept at making decisions that will keep her on track and her priorities straight.

Basketball brought her to the Crookston campus and Martell has been a leader for the Golden Eagles serving as captain of the team for the last two years. Playing since she was six years old, Martell grew to love basketball and devoted time to better herself as a player.

Outside of basketball, she was deeply interested in health science. A genetic disorder in her family known as Marfan syndrome ignited her interest in science and the health field in particular.

A major that focuses heavily on the sciences requires a high level of dedication. "I have had to make tradeoffs," Martell explains. "In order to give the time I needed to homework, I put school first and fun second, but I was willing to give up something I could do in the moment for something I really wanted long term.

And, I have always found time for friends and fun as well."



She credits the instructors in health science for helping her achieve. "I liked the small classes and the fact that I know my instructors well," Martell says. "Coming to the University of Minnesota Crookston has been perfect for me. I don't think I could have accomplished what I have here anywhere else."

Under the guidance of Associate Professor Venu Mukku, Martell has been working on an undergraduate research project isolating bacteria to identify possible resistance to pathogens. She also works five to ten hours a week at RiverView Health in Crookston in the care center.

These hours help fulfill a vital part of the requirements she needs to attain her goal to become a physician assistant.

"As part of the application to school in a physician assistant program, I need to have a significant number of patient contact hours," Martell says. "Those hours helped me get accepted into the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora where I will start school in May following my graduation here."

Martell likes the fact that as a physician assistant she will be able to spend more time with patients, have decision-making responsibilities along with some independence while working as part of a team led by medical doctors. In many ways, it is similar to her experience on the basketball court where she worked with her teammates under the guidance of a coach--a truly successful formula for her.



Volunteering has been an important part of her experience in Crookston. Last summer she spent time every week at the Care and Share, a local homeless shelter; at Washington Elementary School, and with Head Start. She also spent a week in Haiti (photo, left) with medical personnel as a volunteer working with children on dental care and more as part of the clinics the group set up in local churches.

As a tutor for chemistry and organic chemistry and helping with reading at the elementary school, Martell has developed her teaching skills. "Assisting as a tutor has taught me that we all learn at our own pace and what comes easily for one person doesn't necessarily mean it will come easily for the next," she says.

Involvement with several clubs including serving as an officer in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Club fills out Martell's time. To say she is busy is an understatement, but no matter what she is busy with, she always gives her best effort.

"I am not a procrastinator," Martell says. "I have always liked a challenge and I am willing to work hard to accomplish it."

She has proven that claim to be true. When Martell sets her mind to something, there is no stopping her and the good news is she is just getting started.

The University of Minnesota Crookston now delivers 31 bachelor's degree programs, 22 minors, and 36 concentrations on campus as well as 14 degree programs entirely online.

These degrees are offered in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from more than 20 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

In the center photograph, left to right, are Golden Eagle Women's Basketball players Ebony Livingston, Ashley Martell, and Kenzie Church.

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