

Virgil L. Gregory, Jr.

What are you doing now?

I am currently a PhD candidate in the IU School of Social Work at IUPUI. The primary focus of my program is research. The program has provided me with theoretical and empirical knowledge and skills to contribute to the progression of social work practice. Since entering the doctoral program, I have been able to learn more about my particular areas of interests. After obtaining the PhD in social work, I want to be employed in an academic setting where I can conduct research regarding psychometrics and the effectiveness of social work interventions. However, I have not ruled out the possibility of other occupational opportunities. I am now focusing exclusively on the completion of my dissertation. Since my completion of the master's degree in social (MSW) work at IUPUI, I have been employed as an assessment counselor and as a case-manager.

How did IUPUI help you achieve what you have become?

I obtained a bachelor of arts in psychology. My success in graduate school has been greatly enhanced by my undergraduate experience in psychology at IUPUI. In Dr. Drew Appleby's B103 (Orientation to a Major in Psychology) and B454 (Capstone Seminar in Psychology) courses I was prepared for graduate school by learning about (a) factors that graduate schools consider when reviewing applicants to their program, (b) how to increase my chances of being accepted into the graduate program that I was pursuing, (c) the process of obtaining favorable letters of recommendation, (d) my own idiosyncratic strengths as a student, (e) how to prepare a resume which highlights my strengths and potential, and (c) APA writing style among many other things. Additionally both of these courses helped me explore my exact occupational interests and the particular graduate programs that best fit my desires and preferences. These two courses aided me in considering the pros and cons of different educational and occupational options after my completion of the psychology degree at IUPUI.

Dr. John Guare's B382 (Practicum in Community Psychology) course was also beneficial to my graduate education and career. Via the community psychology practicum at Larue D. Carter Memorial Hospital, I was able to gain experience in observing and interacting with youth who have behavioral and emotional problems. This was my first experience in mental health and it allowed me to confirm my desire to work with persons who suffer from mental disorders as well as expose me to the practical side of psychological theories. In retrospect, the coursework and opportunities for learning as an undergraduate psychology major at IUPUI have been essential in preparing me for success in graduate school and my career.

What advice would you give to students who are thinking about becoming IUPUI psychology majors?

I would tell such students that there are many opportunities to learn and prepare themselves for their careers. Choosing to take advantage of those opportunities will be of benefit to both their academic and their occupational goals.