



## **iCAN Make a Difference**

Meet Nick Frederico

Age: 29

Chapter: KIDS Connecticut and Global iCAN Network

Joined iCAN: 2015

Future Plans: MD graduating in 2020 from the University of Connecticut. Currently applying for a US residency in Emergency Medicine.

Favorite iCAN Moment: Seeing all the kids come together and get to know each other during the first iCAN Summit in Washington, DC, USA. It was the first time we'd all met in person, and it was awesome seeing the kids make connections and have fun dancing on the roof at the hotel!

If you have been in iCAN for a while, then you may know me as the first iCAN Coordinator, back when the organization was first getting started. At the time, it was just a few of us working together without much infrastructure. We put together the first Summit and started to add more and more young person's advisory groups into the network. I've been amazed to see it continue to grow! Now you have a board of directors, committees to get involved with, etc. I'll talk a little about myself in the next paragraphs, but the real story is all the wonderful young men and women who make up this organization and all the important work you do in your communities. I have always been very proud of the kids in iCAN; you all inspire me to work hard and be the best I can be.

I was a fairly average high school student, and I ran track—also averagely. When I graduated, I had the somewhat random idea that I wanted to be an airline pilot, so I went to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and obtained my bachelor's and a commercial pilot license. During school, I broke my leg and needed an operation and hospital stay, then a bunch of physical therapy. That experience exposed me to medicine, and I really liked it. I decided to go back to college at UCONN for medical school prerequisites, and while I was doing that I drove a city bus around campus as a part-time job. The job was a lot of fun, and I met some great people who I am still friends with, including Meghan, the next iCAN coordinator after me. After UCONN, I volunteered with my fire department as an EMT and I worked with iCAN for a couple years while applying and getting ready for medical school. While I was working for iCAN, some of you met my girlfriend Shannon, who is now my Fiancé-- we are getting married May 2020.

Now I'm in my final year of medical school with the goal of becoming an emergency physician, which is a three- or four-year residency. I also joined the Air National Guard (which is a reserve component of the US Air Force), and I am training to become a flight surgeon. My plan is to work part-time taking care of Air Force pilots and crewmembers while I also work on my civilian emergency medicine career. I thought this would be the perfect way to blend my experience in aviation with my newfound passion for medicine. My advice to you is to remain open to opportunities that might come your way. Focus on building relationships with people along the way. Follow your heart and do what you are passionate about. And if your interests change, it is okay to change your path; you can always use your prior experiences in a new field. I wish you all the best of luck in everything you do, and if I can help anyone in any way, please reach out.