

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

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**Hanh Pham**  
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Houston, TX

## Be confident and remember why you started

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Every day, Hanh Pham arrives at a medical lab in southwest Houston and uses the knowledge and skills she gained from her time in the MD Anderson School of Health Professions' (SHP) Histotechnology program to help patients get answers about their health.

“From the very first day of my studies at SHP, I knew deep within that I would fulfill my dream of becoming an integral part of a histology lab, contributing to the diagnosis of patients’ diseases through meticulous microscopic examination,” says Pham, who received her Bachelor of Science degree from SHP in 2020. “I am fully aware of the profound impact that this work can have on patients’ lives, and I am committed to making a difference in their well-being through my expertise in this field.”

As a histologist, Pham uses both automatic and manual staining methods to examine patient tissues under a microscope and then sends the lab results to a pathologist for disease diagnosis.

“With two years in the Histotechnology program at SHP, I gained the comprehensive knowledge and specialized techniques in all areas of a histology laboratory such as embedding tissues, sectioning biopsies (skin, gastrointestinal, excision, alopecia) by microtome and staining slides with hematoxylin and eosin for microscopic examination,” says Pham, adding that these techniques enable her to detect a wide range of diseases, including skin cancer, inflammatory disorders and infections. “The supportive environment and guidance from my professors during my time at SHP helped me grow and develop into an enthusiastic histology technician.”

Pham’s interest in the medical field blossomed while she was taking high school science classes, compelling her to volunteer at a local hospital, where she had the opportunity to engage with patients, nurses and the medical technicians working behind the scenes. This

experience solidified Pham's decision to study science at Lone Star College and discover the next step on her educational journey.

While at Lone Star College, Pham participated in science and laboratory courses so she could further explore her passion by examining animal and plant tissues under a microscope. Then, during a transfer fair event, Pham was introduced to SHP's Histotechnology program. Quickly recognizing the connection between her passion and the program's focus, Pham applied to SHP.

"I can confidently affirm that my decision was indeed the right one. I very much appreciate the opportunity I had back then to get to know the school and the program," Pham says. "I am filled with gratitude towards SHP and MD Anderson for providing me with numerous opportunities to pursue my studies and passionately explore my interests to become who I am today."

Pham also has this advice for current or prospective students:

"I would say to them, 'Be confident and remember why you started.' It can be difficult to work on a team due to the various personalities involved. However, it is important to consider the patients, as they are the driving force behind our choice to study and work in the medical field." Pham adds, "I believe that having confidence based on what we were taught and experienced helps to accomplish work efficiently. Paying attention to the smallest details is key to minimizing mistakes."

Pham spends her free time learning how to play the ukelele and expanding her knowledge of the Korean culture, cuisine and language, with hopes to travel to Korea one day. She also enjoys listening to music, watching movies and hanging out with friends from her local church.

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