

**Please join #AltAc's meet and greet with its next rock star: Dr. James Dunlea**

**"FLIPPING THE SCRIPT: APPLYING YOUR PHD IN INNOVATIVE PLACES"**

Dr. James Dunlea flipped the script and took his expertise of social, cognitive, and developmental psychology to your local neighborhood pharmacy – Walgreens. At Walgreens, he helps the company better understand the individual- and societal-level factors that drive patients' health-related behaviors. Join us as Dr. Dunlea unpacks his transition from academia to the corporate space, and how he uses his subject matter expertise in broader ways.

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**James Dunlea, PhD.** James is a Behavioral Scientist at Walgreens. Here, James works with a cross-functional team of researchers to better understand the psychological, relational, and societal drivers of patients' health-related behaviors (e.g., maintaining medication regimens). In doing so, James provides key insights into how Walgreens can work toward advancing the health and wellbeing of every community in the United States. Prior to beginning at Walgreens, James earned his Ph.D. in Psychology from Columbia University, M.A. in Law from Northwestern University (Honors), and B.S. in Human Development from Cornell University (Honors & Distinction in Research). James lives in Chicago, IL with his partner, Nick.

**Contact Information**

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**Questions for Dr. Dunlea**

Background

1. Can you give us an introduction to how you got to this intersection and this research?
2. Can you walk us through how these research areas that you were exposed to through your various degree programs build on each other? And, how they contribute to where you are in your work today?

The Choice

3. What led you to this decision and what factors did you consider?
4. How did you prioritize the "practical" considerations (partner/familial considerations, salary, geographical location, control over where you live/work, etc.) over the academe-promoted prestige chasing?
5. Did you interview across industry spaces, or only at Walgreens?
6. Can you tell us about what drew you to Walgreens and why you felt the role was right for you?
7. When did you start looking for industry sector jobs? Is it a similar timeline as for the University-academic job market?
8. Can you tell us a bit about this process? How did you balance discussions around subject matter expertise from prior research with highlighting the underlying processes and skill sets themselves that overlap with the position you are seeking in an industry space?

## Research in (corporate) Industry

9. Can you tell us broadly what your role is as a behavioral scientist at Walgreens? And, what research looks like for you day-to-day?
10. First, who is the audience for your research?
11. What is the timeline of a “typical” research project that you conduct? How long does a project take from question formation through data collection, analysis, and production of deliverables? What do deliverables look like?
12. To what extent do you have control over the questions and methods? How close are you to the data on a day-to-day basis?
13. How much creativity can you infuse into your work? Do you tend to use similar research methods across your various research projects? Or, do you have opportunity to expand your research toolkit and work on different types of projects with a variety of methodological and conceptual approaches?
14. What do your work hours look-like, on average, per day?
15. Is your position part of Walgreens? Or, is it grant based or considered temporary somehow?
16. How does Walgreens measure your success as an employee?
17. To what extent does Walgreens encourage your scholarship as part of your role?
18. Do you disseminate your work? Or, is it considered proprietary?

## Working Culture

19. We know there are lots of different platforms to find corporate and industry jobs, but any recommendations for folks about where they might look for similar corporate research positions?
20. Were there some benefits you could negotiate with Walgreens? And, were other benefits off the table?
21. What did the interview process look like for this role?
22. Were you required to give any sort of research presentation while interviewing for your position at Walgreens? Other positions you applied for in other industry and/or non-profit/advocacy spaces? How did you orient your job talk/research presentation to focus less on subject matter and more on things like processes, research methods, translation of findings?
23. Can you walk us through the timeline? What can folks expect from submission of an application to receiving an offer in terms of timeline?
24. Is the start date negotiable?
25. How would you describe the corporate culture? Or, perhaps Walgreens specifically? How is it different from academia?

## Making the Journey Personal

26. The first myth we hear a lot is that industry spaces are not prestigious, or you’re less smart or scholarly, or the general vibe that those positions are “less than.” What’s your take on this coming from a corporate space?
27. What would you say to students who are experiencing these pressures to select places over prestige versus lifestyle, proximity to family, or other living factors? Or, even to faculty who are creating these pressures?

28. We know that there are similarities and differences between University-academic and AltAc/industry spaces but that seems like a false dichotomy. Do you think that there are some things that industry can teach academia and vice versa?