



"SOME OF THE COMPOUNDS I'VE WORKED ON HAVE EVEN SAVED LIVES..."

JAMIE MARSHALL | SENIOR SOLID STATE SCIENTIST | BLYTH

Having spent his childhood dreaming of becoming an actor, a career in pharmaceutical science developing life-saving compounds is about as far from what 29-year old, Jamie Marshall, thought he would end up doing as you can get!

Displaying a natural talent for Science and Art, Blyth-born Jamie always enjoyed school. Crediting his A level Chemistry teachers at Astley Community High School for his subsequent career choice, Jamie had previously aspired to a life of 'treading the boards'.

"When I was younger, I really wanted to be an actor, but as I found both Chemistry and Biology quite easy to grasp, I decided to keep acting as a hobby," Jamie said.

"During my studies, I actually funded and performed in two independent shows at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, allowing me to enjoy my hobby whilst studying towards qualifications that were more likely to provide me with job opportunities in the future.

"My A-level chemistry teachers were both fantastic, with an obvious passion for both chemistry and teaching that were palpable during their lessons. They were the ones who made chemistry so accessible, understandable and fun to learn. If it were not for them, I may not have gone on to study chemistry at University at all."

Leaving High School with A levels in Chemistry, Biology and Art, Jamie went on to Northumbria University in Newcastle, initially to study Forensic Science. However, after just one week on the course, he decided to switch paths.

"I realised after just a week how much more I enjoyed chemistry over biology and subsequently changed course to Applied Chemistry," Jamie explained.

"Even during the 4 years of my Masters Degree, I had no idea what I would end up doing until after graduation."



Having briefly considered becoming a chemistry teacher, Jamie instead decided to go down the research and development route and now works as a Senior Solid State Scientist at Sterling Pharma Solutions in Cramlington.

“Solid state chemistry involves the close examination of a material with X-rays, heat and humidity to understand its solid form properties to ensure that the active component of a medicine or compound is the most suitable and stable version for manufacture and administration,” Jamie said.

“It’s an aspect of chemistry that I was not fully aware of until after graduating, though it is one that I have fell in love with!

“Pharmaceutical research and development puts me at the final stage of new compounds, understanding their properties and developing processes for manufacture. Every project is unique; every compound is different; every process can offer new challenges.



“I have worked on multiple compounds, developing a range of crystallisations to improve their recovery, purge of impurities and solid form control. Some of the compounds I’ve worked on have even saved lives - an aspect of job satisfaction that I never anticipated, but that gives me an immense feeling of pride, knowing that my work had an impact on those in need.”

When asked what advice he would give to a young person now who was considering their career options for the future, Jamie said:

“Do not feel like you need to have your life mapped out so early. The right opportunities may present themselves when the time is right.”

We don’t think you can say fairer than that!

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