TIBBS Career Blitz Career Profile Questionnaire

Career Profile: Jason Doherty

What is your current title and how long have you worked in your current job?
Director, Concierge Service for Entrepreneurs, Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise,

Where did you get your PhD and what discipline was it in?
UNC – Chapel Hill, Cellular and Molecular Pathology

Did you do a postdoc?
I did a short postdoc at LSU – Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA

What are your main daily responsibilities?
I work closely with university researchers, faculty, students, and postdocs who are developing novel technologies and business ideas to help them understand potential pathways to commercializing and bringing their ideas to market. I oversee graduate- and professional- student teams who help to develop business models and commercialization plans for these new startup ventures.

What are the keys to success in your career field?
One critical element to success in my career field is an understanding of entrepreneurship and the innovation ecosystem. Given the high-risk, delicate nature of startups, it is important to understand the factors that contribute to startup success/failure so that I can help new companies navigate the process of commercializing new technologies.

What were the most important factors in choosing your career path?
I was interested in finding career opportunities away from the bench that would leverage my scientific training but were more focused on business and entrepreneurship.

What activities (if any) did you participate in that helped you be successful in obtaining your job?
During my graduate training, I did an internship in technology transfer at the UNC Office of Technology Development. I also received a Certificate in Entrepreneurship while in graduate school where I met a university faculty member who was starting a new company. Through the certificate program, I was involved in the drafting of the first commercialization plan for the startup company. These activities positioned me for a Technology Commercialization Fellowship opportunity at a life science-focused technology incubator where I worked closely with a number of biomedical startup companies and learned more about how to launch and run a startup company.

What 1 or 2 pieces of advice do you have for people who want to land a job like yours?
Find ways to differentiate yourself from your peers through extracurricular activities or internships that can provide you with the necessary skills that your graduate
training may not provide. You might also find MOOCs, other online training opportunities, workshops, or conferences that would provide you with new skills and expertise. Also, find ways to develop and nurture a robust network of individuals who can help provide guidance, mentorship, and job leads.