

Matthew Bergens

Born: Louisiana

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I was 25 and a paratrooper in the military when I was diagnosed with cancer. Jumping out of airplanes for a job, you have to face your mortality, but the phrase 'you have cancer' rocked my world completely.

I was on my heels until a doctor friend asked me what I was going to do with my life. I told him I had no frickin' clue. He said, 'well, have you ever thought about medicine?'

Now I'm starting a master's program at NC State before applying to med school. I love dancing, so I've even started a non-profit, BailaCura, where we have salsa dancing festivals to raise money for cancer research.

I joined the military to voluntarily stand in harm's way for the people I love. Now I've realized that serving in uniform and serving in a lab coat draw from the same principles.