Careers in healthcare simulation often begin in a different discipline, such as nursing, anesthesia, or emergency departments.

But for Andrew Cross, Director of Simulation Technology at the Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) | Sentara Center for Simulation and Immersive Learning, a career in healthcare simulation took root in the engineering school at Vanderbilt University.

As an undergraduate engineering student, Andrew began a part-time job on campus in the school’s nascent simulation center. Upon graduating, he worked at the center full time and eventually moved to become the assistant director and later the director at EVMS.

“Engineering is a different lens, just the way that I think and approach things is different than my colleagues,” he said. “It’s hard for me to divorce myself from thinking about efficiencies and processes.” He is now pursuing an MBA degree as well.

And, he has taken on leadership positions at SSH, now serving as the chair of the technology committee.

“From my perspective, having a place to collect all these different people, a community of simulation practitioners, moving the simulation industry forward and providing leadership, that’s the value that I see. I hope to help bring it to the next level.”

Cross said that he is very interested and hopeful that the industry solidifies the business case for simulation.

“I think we’ve done a good job educationally, but from a dollars and cents perspective, there’s still some work to be done – incorporating simulation more into how hospitals and clinical services facilities train their people.”
And he is enthusiastic about the prospects of technology.

“Money and resources can only get you so far. Developments in augmented reality and virtual reality are really making simulation more accessible to more people. I’m excited about that growth.”