

# Medical School Personal Statement

“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand (Confucius).” A simple statement, yet an important message my father taught me early on in life. When I enrolled at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in the fall of 1994, I was sure of two things immediately: I wanted to reach a career in medicine, and I wasn't going to spend all of my undergraduate years inside a book. Throughout the past several years, I have taken a lot of time aside from my science classes to venture out into society and become involved with an array of activities.

As a freshman, I quickly learned the extreme importance of time management. My first two years at Southern I was a full-scholarship athlete with the football program. A student-athlete requires a great deal of commitment, responsibility, determination, and motivation. Each of these qualities contributed to a solid foundation of my character and, furthermore, qualities I deem necessary to be successful in medical school and beyond. Only when I was not allowed to miss a practice for a chemistry lab, did I decide it was time to hang up my football shoes and put my time and energy elsewhere. However, sports still remain a vital part of my life for recreation and stress relief.

Excellent communication skills is just one of the essential attributes of a good physician. I am a person who thrives on being involved with others, especially children, and assuming a leadership role whenever possible. I joined the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity my second semester freshman year and within two semesters, ascended quickly to the rank of president. While involved with the fraternity, I became an active part of numerous volunteer activities in the community. During these times, I interacted with and learned to communicate with a wide variety of people. From helping organize blood drives, to babysitting for single mothers, I learned much about myself and what drives me in life.

My decision to pursue a career in medicine was not one made on a whim. Although, it seems I have always had at least one foot in that direction. At the early age of five, missing two front teeth, I informed my parents of my plans to be a “pedi-chicken”. Of course, a lifelong career choice can't be made at that age, especially one concerning medicine. Although, as I grew older and learned more about the noble profession, my path never varied from my early desires.

After high school, I explored this passion by volunteering at local hospitals during summer breaks from college. I saw up close the excitement and appealing qualities of medicine. I have always felt a strong interest in the sciences. Medicine offers the continuing exploration of science and the need to approach constantly changing situations while interacting with all types of people and personalities. I was reassured of my path in life during the spring of my junior year. It was then I was able to shadow an amazing pediatrician, Dr. Renato Katubig. Through my time with him I was able to learn the importance of the physician-patient relationship and the trust involved. The problem solving skills medicine stresses along with the requirement of a continuing education for life offers a constantly changing environment.

Most recently, I have been working in the emergency department of Presbyterian Hospital in downtown Charlotte N.C.. This experience has opened my eyes to many aspects of the medical community I never experienced or saw before. There have been times when I have gone home and my thoughts were with the patients I saw and interacted with. Now, I am even more determined to succeed in medical school and to contribute in many ways to the medical profession and to the lives of so many people.

I am fully aware that the path I have chosen is a very long and excruciatingly difficult process. However, I know no other way to live life than to put 110 percent of my passion and heart into everything I do, and medical school will be no different. My various activities have taught me to face adversity with a firm jaw. I know there will be times in medical school that are tough, and I will be pushed to the edge of collapse. There are some individuals that cannot deal with these hardships and fail. On the other hand, I am positive that with my motivation and the loving support of my family, supplemented with all the skills I have acquired thus far in life, I will become an excellent, caring physician. As our society moves into a new century and medicine continues to grow, I have a lot to offer the medical community and am anxious to be a positive part of so many lives.