

Use the space provided to explain why you want to go to medical school. (5,300 character limit)

My pursuit of a career path through my undergraduate years has led me through a unique and diverse set of activities and relationships as an undergraduate student, each of which has played an important role in shaping my desire to attend medical school. I knew from a young age that I sought a career with personal interaction and an ability to give back to my community, which motivated me to pursue opportunities in the fields of global health and medicine. Consequently, I begin the final chapter of my undergraduate education able to draw on a plethora of experiences when asked to justify my future plans, confident in both my desire and ability to attend medical school.

My interest in designing medical devices inspired me to pursue a degree in bioengineering. Upon admission to the department, I found myself stimulated by the coursework, which led to the strong upward trend in my GPA. The rigorous curriculum prompted me to improve my organizational abilities and allocate time to the activities that interest me most. I used these skills to organize a group of peers to design a medical device for low resource settings. We proposed and built a device to measure the temperature of infants and our first prototype has been successful in global health design competitions. As a result of these experiences, I was elected to leadership roles in the UW Biomedical Engineering Society and Bioengineering Without Borders. In both organizations, I aim to encourage partnerships with other departments. I believe that my collaborative experiences will allow me to encourage diversity within the medical community. My experiences designing and operating medical devices as an engineering student have provided confidence in my technical capabilities, augmenting my desire to attend medical school. My success dealing with a demanding curriculum leads to anticipation for the academic demands of medical school, where I look forward to applying and strengthening my organizational skills.

Outside of the classroom, I dedicated time to medical research, working with both the Gardner lab at UW, investigating the mechanism of various biochemical pathways in yeast; and the Pennesi lab at the Casey Eye Institute in Portland, OR, conducting ophthalmic research and shadowing ophthalmologists. Involvement in research provides an opportunity to reinforce and apply concepts learned in my courses, skills that I will bring to medical school. In addition, my long-term commitment to scientific research has given me countless opportunities to present my work at conferences and in lab meetings. As a medical student, I plan to continue improving my communication skills to prepare for future interactions with patients and other medical professionals. My experiences as an undergraduate researcher continue to be incredibly rewarding, teaching me many skills that have enhanced my education and appreciation for the scientific process both inside and outside the classroom.

My previous experience interacting with various cultures and my desire to understand a multitude of perspectives in healthcare motivated me to participate in a one-month University of Washington seminar on public and mental health care in Chile during the summer of 2010. During this trip, I shadowed physicians, including general practitioners, otolaryngologists, and psychologists in urban and rural settings while also learning about the political climate

surrounding health care in Chile. The experience strengthened my ability to interact with people from other cultures while also fueling my passion for global health. After returning from Chile, I committed to volunteer in Ghana with Unite for Sight during the summer of 2011, eager to work on the front lines of health care in the developing world. The most important part of my experience in Ghana was my direct interaction with patients, as it taught me the emotional strength necessary to handle a career as a physician. In many situations, I worked with patients as soon as they were diagnosed or immediately before or after they underwent surgery. This opportunity taught me of how powerful personal interactions with patients can be, as I found myself able to greatly improve their mental outlook with a simple joke or genuine sympathy. Seeing and experiencing the emotional component to the inspiring and unending dedication of physicians in Ghana towards helping patients cemented my aspiration to attend medical school.

Throughout my undergraduate education, I have been fortunate to study and volunteer abroad, which has given rise to several unique experiences exploring varying cultures and lifestyles. My experiences abroad have also augmented my appreciation for cultural diversity, amplifying my desire to attend medical school in anticipation of the range of both patients and situations faced in the medical field. Throughout all of my experiences, I am grateful to have had countless mentors who have openly discussed their roles within the field of medicine while also providing their advice and encouragement. Based upon my experiences shadowing physicians and interacting with patients, I firmly believe that I have the ability to provide emotional support to patients while also having the technical expertise to improve their condition.