

I jumped up from my chair. "Say it one more time", my voice quivered as I tried to contain myself. Mother spoke slowly as my excitement grew with every syllable. "The letter came in. You've been accepted into medical school!" Amidst the emotion, countless scenarios started to rush through my head as I envisioned my future. With the same enthusiasm, I entered medical school, seeking what field would fit best. Between a biomedical engineering and physiology background, I sought a field involving the intricate knowledge of physiology with a hands-on role in patient care.

I was first drawn toward anesthesia during my first rotation, Ob-Gyn. As a new mother left the C-section room, she looked directly into my eyes. "Thank you," she said earnestly. I was taken aback. I had not seen this patient before that day, nor had I delivered her child. What I had done was help prepare her for an epidural, and provide gentle reassurance during the block. "It's ok, we're almost done. It won't hurt soon. The pain will go away." This made me realize the profound importance of one of the cornerstones of anesthesia: to stop or prevent pain. From there, I started to see my place in the field of anesthesia. I recalled being fascinated in my undergraduate lectures with how anesthesia monitors were developed. I marveled at how clever the machines were. Even simple things like changing the intonation of the heart monitor to indicate oxygen saturation struck a note with my experience playing the violin and piano. During my rotations, I would help with ultrasound guided nerve blocks, showing the nerve fascicles as the needle injected Marcaine. Right before my eyes I had the opportunity to observe my knowledge of pharmacology, anatomy, and biomedical imaging entwine into a hands-on field I can envision myself becoming a part of.

Some qualities common among the anesthesiologists I have worked with are keen observational skills, unrelenting vigilance, and the ability to keep a level head during times of need while working efficiently. These qualities are reminiscent of volunteering in emergency patient transport, the experience that originally directed me down the road of medicine. I would arrive on scene, quickly assess a patient and formulate a plan to quickly deliver that patient to a hospital, while making any adjustments necessary to keep him or her alive. There was no room for hesitation or wavering concentration when dealing with these situations. I also noticed that anesthesiologists have a brief timeframe to make a positive impression on patients before procedures. First impressions become crucial. As social chair of multiple organizations, that skill has been necessary in networking, negotiating and forming plans. I have found that the basic recipe of a warm smile, enthusiastic greeting and showing genuine interest are essential when trying to build a quick rapport. As an anesthesiologist, I would bring the same interpersonal skills to comfort and reassure patients

I hope to enter a program that will make me a well rounded physician, developing the technical skills needed, while keeping a focus on academics. I also hope to be involved in research, as this has been an ongoing interest stemming from my inquisitive nature.

Further down the road, I plan to be involved in academia. From the teaching experience I have had with Kaplan and anatomy, I have seen how rewarding working with students can be, while maintaining my own knowledge. With an engineering background, I also hope to one day participate in the design and development of new innovations in anesthesia. The experiences I face have molded me into an individual with focus, determination and the ability to connect with others. Armed with these qualities, I aim to be a valuable asset as a resident, and future anesthesiologist.