

SAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT #1

When I first interested in medicine, I was attracted by the potential to blend clinical experiences with research. My research to-date has focused on space medicine and the adaptations that occur on the exposure to a micro gravity environment. I find the challenge of resolving unanswered questions an important part of medicine, but my appreciation for the clinical aspects has grown as well. I like to work with my hands but need the intellectual stimulation that comes from doing research and addressing complex clinical problems. My goal is to pursue a career in academia with a research emphasis in critical care and space medicine. I feel that training in anesthesia will provide the background in applied physiology, pharmacology, and clinical medicine that is necessary to meet such an objective. A specialization with critical care will provide a foundation for understanding the most intense, complex aspects of medicine, as well as many of the clinical principles associated with space adaptation.

I am goal-oriented and enjoy the immediate gratification that is achieved through the process of clinically assessing the patient, physically taking action to correct a potential problem, and then observing the results. The fast paced atmosphere of the operating room provides the type of environment that I thrive on. The technology is fascinating. I like the sense of accomplishment associated with mastery over complicated equipment, knowing it is a means to provide better patient care. The vast array of pharmacological agents provides a challenging opportunity to maintain homeostasis as the physiological and clinical status of the patient fluctuates in response to surgical stimuli. Advanced training in critical care will provide an understanding of many pathophysiological processes, appropriate therapeutic approaches to complex medical problems, and exposure to an increasing array of interventional procedures. Additionally, it will provide for an in-depth understanding of many complex processes that are directly applicable to research in space medicine, such as fluid and electrolyte imbalances, cardiovascular instability, neurological dysfunction, musculoskeletal deconditioning, and fluctuations in intracranial pressure.

I am well liked by my patients and peers and have the ability to earn their trust and confidence. I am empathetic and work well with people—a team atmosphere has always been my preferred environment. I am intelligent, serious, and very capable. I have never been afraid of hard work and enjoy a challenge. My motivations have always been to be the best that I can. A sense of accomplishment and self-satisfaction has always been my reward. While I am focused and goal directed, I also have an open mind and enjoy the learning process. It is very important for me to enjoy life, at work and play. I participate in a variety of athletic activities and many of my favorite times have been spent traveling and perfecting my photography skills. My most recent penchant is flying. My short-term goal is to find an internship program, which will provide a strong foundation in the medical specialties such as pulmonary, renal, cardiology, and intensive care. I hope to then find an anesthesia program that is team oriented, will challenge me to learn, and will provide me the skills necessary to become an outstanding anesthesiologist. It must be a program that will help me continue to develop as both a clinician and researcher, while providing a strong foundation in critical care as a platform for fellowship work and an eventual career in academic medicine.

SAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT #2

JOHN DOE

My quest to become a pediatrician began when I was a junior high school student enrolled in a class called Occupational Investigation. Choosing the proper classes in high school facilitated my entry into the college that would best prepare me for medical school.

Another early "pediatric" influence was my family. Being raised in close contact with a large number of my relatives exposed me at a young age to a fair number of children. I am comfortable around children and enjoy interacting with them because they have a fresh and uninhibited nature and can spread that feeling to those around them.

The basic science years of medical school had influence on my decision to enter pediatrics. My faculty advisor, Dr. Virginia Moyer, is a pediatrician and was thrilled to learn of my intended path. During the summer following my first year of medical school, Dr. Moyer introduced me to Dr. Lynette Mazur who arranged a four-week preceptorship that provided me with my first real glimpse of what it means to be a pediatrician. I thoroughly enjoyed that month. The physicians I met were all outgoing and friendly, had good rapport with their patients and parents, seemed to enjoy what they were doing, and even had time to spend with their families. This experience heightened my desire to pursue pediatrics as a medical career.

My third-year pediatric rotation reinforced my decision to follow pediatrics and also set in motion my decision to steer my fourth year in the direction of as much pediatric education as was allowed. My fourth year has been enjoyable and rewarding in being surrounded by pediatricians who are a fun, happy group of people that revel in taking care of children and interacting with caring and concerned parents. This particular area of the medical profession is upbeat and I would welcome an opportunity to make contribution to pediatrics.

I plan to go into practice after residency as a general pediatrician in a small to medium sized city and would like to join a group practice after residency as a general pediatrician in a small to medium sized city and would like to join a group practice or health maintenance organization which would allow me time to plan a family of my own.

My ability to empathize with my patients and their parents, sense of humor, self-motivation, and desire to become an excellent physician will provide me with the foundation to build an enjoyable and satisfying career in pediatrics. I hope that you will grant me the opportunity to continue my medical education and become a quality health care provider for the young people of the future.

SAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT #3

Lawrence J. Stanley

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a lawyer. Then why am I in medical school applying for an Internal Medicine residency, you may ask. I can only answer that I saw the error of my ways. I decided my life should be spent helping, rather than hindering, others.

When I entered undergraduate school, my goal was still to study law. As part of a required physical education course, I learned CPR. Little did I realize that less than a week later I would use it to save a child who nearly drowned in a neighbor's swimming pool. That got me to thinking. What did I really want out of a career? The answer was to help others in need by practicing medicine. My enjoyment of medical school, especially the clinical years, has proven that to be true.

Not that I was a star in medical school. Having basically a non-science orientation throughout high school and my early years of college, I found it somewhat difficult to catch up in my pre-clinical years. My grades reflect that. Yet, in my clinical rotations, I began to shine and received excellent comments from all of my preceptors.

Why Internal Medicine? I love the idea of caring for people over the long haul. The diagnoses and treatments encompassed by Internal Medicine fascinate me, especially some of the so-called "routine" problems, such as hypertension and diabetes. Enough advances seem to be occurring in these areas to make them exciting.

What am I looking for in a program? Since I am single, geography is really not a barrier. My ideal program will have a strong clinical base, in both the primary care and the specialty aspects of Internal Medicine. The faculty should be readily available for on-site instruction and there should be good esprit-de-corps among the house staff. Since my goal is to get out there and practice good medicine, the bottom line is to get training that will prepare me to do this. Going to clinic will be so much better than going to court.

SAMPLE PERSONAL STATEMENT #4

Mary Frances Smith

My family and friends were not surprised when I told them that I wanted to become a pediatrician. While my interest in pediatrics emerged during college, my desire to work with children began many years before. Apart from babysitting and working with children in my church, I volunteered at the Very Special Arts Festival in high school, an annual event that provided educational activities for physically and mentally handicapped children. Kari, a young girl with Down syndrome and a family friend, taught me about perseverance and unconditional acceptance of others. Her winning smile and determination always inspired me. When I left for college, I knew I wanted a career that would allow me to work with children.

In college, I enjoyed the intellectual stimulation of my science courses and began to consider medicine as a career. Speaking with physicians gave me further insight into this field, and I had a unique opportunity to observe different specialists while participating in a study-abroad program in London. Following my decision to apply to medical school, I took extra science classes so that I would be able to graduate with my class. My undergraduate studies in psychology have helped me work with patients. I also pursued my interest in the liberal arts and obtained a minor in French.

My undergraduate experiences extended beyond the classroom. I gained leadership experience by serving on the Student Congress and as an officer in my sorority. I also worked closely with faculty and administrators to organize and plan an annual leadership retreat for students. These extracurricular interests helped me cultivate communication and time-management skills that have been invaluable to me in medical school.

A medical mission trip to Matamoros, Mexico, during my second year of medical school reinforced my desire to work with children. I saw many children in the neighborhood clinics: most had preventable infections and many simply needed vitamins. The crowded, unsanitary living conditions and limited access to health care made it easy to see why disease ran rampant. In spite of this, an experience following a particularly busy day at the clinic encouraged me immensely. A group of young children taught me some of their songs and games, and I can still hear their squeals of laughter as we played together. I knew then that improving children's health care had become one of my goals.

Much of the reason I have been able to achieve my goals is due to the support of my family. My parents instilled a strong work ethic and love learning in me, and they have always encouraged me in my endeavors. I married after my second year of medical school, and I feel extremely grateful to have a wonderful husband whose support has been immeasurable. Brian is a seminary student completing his master's degree in theology this year, and he has a long-term goal of teaching. Service is important to both of us, and we expect to help others through our work.

The field of pediatrics attracts me for many reasons. First, I enjoy being around children. I also am excited by the intellectual challenge of the vast range of childhood medical problems. Finally, I look forward to the opportunity to educate and provide guidance to parents.

Several factors are important to me in a pediatric residency. Most significantly, I desire a strong academic program that will provide a solid teaching foundation. I want to be exposed to a broad spectrum of patients in both inpatient and ambulatory settings. After my participation in clinical research and teaching during medical school, I hope to pursue those interests as well. Finally, I prefer a friendly atmosphere with fellow house staff who support one another and enjoy their work.