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# College Scholarship Essay

I can trace my career path as an Obstetrician/Gynecologist to my discovery in childhood of a tiny embryo, in a textbook. I remember my awe as a 12-year-old, tracing the diagram with my finger and comprehending slowly that everyone I knew had once been that small, and that I had the same miraculous architecture inside my own body. That fascination with reproduction developed quickly into an interest in genetics and led me in high school to take an undergraduate-level course on human genetics. I was astonished by the revelation that a simple construct of four letters could develop such complexity as that found in the human body. I have since worked continuously to deepen my study of human genetics, embryology, and perinatal medicine.

In the course of my medical education, I have been drawn to Obstetrics and Gynecology in particular out of an affinity for hands-on procedures and the care of women. I was attracted as well to the Internal Medicine specialty, enjoying the diagnostic aspect and continuity of care that it offered, but my experiences allowed me to become certain in my choice. Soon after earning my undergraduate degree, I spent three months in Peru as an intern for Medicine, Education and Development for Low-Income Families Everywhere, a non-profit organization that provides free primary care services to indigenous women and children in the underserved Pampuna Alta region of Lima, Peru. I shadowed physicians completing Pap smear examinations and helped to deliver test results to women in the community, accompanying them to the local hospital for follow-up treatment. Working with women in this intimate, informal environment led me to my present career as it allowed me to appreciate the meaning of advocating for women continually and supporting their needs over their lifetimes. More recently, I have been intrigued by the applications of genetics in the field and interested to tackle the high level of specialized knowledge that this requires.

Throughout my residency training, I have been drawn to the care of high-risk, underserved patients throughout the antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum periods. This has made clear not only my passion for the work, but also my determination to pursue fellowship training in genetics. I have had the unique opportunity to care for women carrying fetuses with multiple anomalies. Due to my residency program's affiliation with XXX Hospital, a comprehensive pediatric healthcare system that provides services to a vast catchment area in both Missouri and Kansas, I saw patients a wide spectrum of congenital syndromes from DiGeorge syndrome to thoracopagus conjoined twins. Even as I benefitted from exceptional training in managing these patients throughout pregnancy and delivery, I noticed that my education did not address directly how to answer these patients' questions regarding the molecular and genetic basis of their children's syndromes. The questions as they relate to preconception counseling, prenatal screening, advanced maternal age, and fetal ultrasound abnormalities became the topics I desired to explore in depth.

Through my unique set of experiences, including several leadership positions I have held, I have been able to develop qualities essential for success as a Geneticist. I have juggled multiple tasks, solved challenging problems, and learned to collaborate effectively with others. In my research experience for the Hospitalist Project at the University XXX, XXX University's Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease program, and as a fellow of the NIDDK Diabetes Research Program, I have put to use my inquisitive, analytical, and detail-oriented nature as well as working to deepen these personal attributes. My quick promotions at the Hospitalist Project and XXX University reflect the pride I take in my work as well as my determination in learning new skills. Committed to excellence, I am always working to build on these traits and do better.

Through training in genetics, I will pursue my intellectual curiosity as well as acquire the tools I will need to provide comprehensive care to high-risk obstetric patients. My intent is to care deeply for the most fragile patients, while scientifically grasping the factors that lead to congenital syndromes. I am eager to join a fellowship program that challenges me to meet my full potential as a clinician in genetics. As evidenced by my experience, I relish the chance to work with underserved populations and value, in a program, a diverse patient population and well-established community outreach efforts. I am excited to one day meaningfully impact the lives of a wide variety of patients thanks to further training in genetics.

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