

### Personal statement

It was another busy Saturday afternoon for the trauma surgery service. Between assessing motor vehicle crash victims, I was asked to go see a patient in ER. Mrs. Z was a previously healthy 75 y/o female presenting with a one day history of abdominal pain and coffee-ground emesis. After completing my history and exam, and reviewing her CT scan with my resident and attending, she was diagnosed with right-sided morgagni hernia. Moments later, I was in the OR, scrubbed, assisting the surgeons with suctioning, holding and retracting, and observing in awe as they meticulously worked to repair the hernia. She had a slightly complicated hospital course but made a remarkable recovery prior to discharge. My experience caring for Mrs. Z, and other surgical patients, motivates me to go into general surgery. Surgical procedures absolutely fascinate me, and I truly appreciate the efficient team approach of the OR. Also, working with my hands, participating in the postoperative management of patients, and seeing immediate results provide fulfilling experiences. After a long day on my feet, curiosity and interest energized me to study about the diseases and treatments I had observed that day.

General surgery is a humbling, intellectually and physically challenging specialty, and several events in my life have instilled me with the qualities to surmount this challenge. My educational achievement to this point has been as a result of self-motivation, efficient time management, and curiosity. After high school, I won a United States diversity visa and moved to the U.S., leaving my parents and sibling behind in Nigeria. Without much support here at that time, there was the pressure to quit school, get a job, and "make money." But I was determined to further my education and impact the lives of others as a physician. This future goal spurred me to work hard, multitasking with going to school full-time, working almost full-time, and performing basic science research in college. During this time, I learned efficient time management; this skill is helping me withstand the rigors of medical school.

In addition to being self-motivated, I have always been very inquisitive. Curiosity about the functioning of the human body propelled me to attend medical school and to participate in research activities both in college and medical school. During my clerkships, I dedicated myself to looking up information and presenting articles to my residents and attendings, translating to better patient care. On the other spectrum, I enjoy sharing my knowledge with others. I seek opportunities to teach both my classmates and junior medical students, and to explain disease process to patients. I embrace this challenge as it presses me to be more inquisitive and to expand my medical knowledge.

Since moving to the U.S., I have lived in different cities including Boston, Washington, DC, and Milwaukee. From living in different countries and cities, I have gained tremendous experience in adapting to new environments, tackling new challenges, and interacting with people from different backgrounds. I have also gained invaluable people skills from serving as an usher at my local churches since the age of 15, helping to maintain orderliness and ensure the comfort of worshippers during service. Through these experiences, I have learned to be comfortable in any situation I find myself, and to address challenging situations with composure and humor. As a result, I received complements from several patients about my positive attitude and smile during my clerkships.

I am very appreciative for how much I have learned through education and life experiences. But I am more enthusiastic looking forward to my future as a general surgeon, with a great sense of endowment, fulfillment, and an obligation to provide exceptional patient care. To this end, I seek a rigorous program with a strong curriculum and a supportive environment for developing sound clinicians. I want a program that will make me competitive for fellowship and prepare me for a career in either academic or community practice.