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Medical School Personal Statement

At the age of thirteen, I groundlessly decided that I wanted to be a doctor. My Middle-Eastern parents were thrilled to hear this. However, it would be many years until I fully understood the journey that I had signed up for. In the summer of 2008, I was enrolled in “Camp Scrubs” at Schoolcraft College, and was exposed to the healthcare profession. The camp’s activities ranged from hands-on lab work, such as simulating kidney dialysis, to field trips to St. Mary’s Hospital. I enjoyed the program and continued to show an interest in medicine. That same year, I spent New Year’s Eve in Garden City Hospital shadowing my brother-in-law, Dr. XXX, to better see what the reality of being a physician entailed. From that point on, I considered myself a future doctor.

My decision to attend Michigan State University was substantial, as very few people in my community left home for college at that time. In my graduating class high school class, thirteen out of about 250 students attended MSU. This small size of this percentage has a lot to do with where I’m from. Dearborn and Dearborn Heights are suburbs of Detroit with predominately Muslim communities. With the rise of post-9/11 Islamophobia, many Arabs stayed in Dearborn to form what I like to think of as an immense and comforting safe zone. I intuitively knew that I needed to escape that safe zone. My freshman year at MSU was a tremendous culture shock. The transition from being a part of the majority to landing in a diverse melting pot filled me with a mixture of emotions. I enjoyed the change, yet couldn’t help feeling that I faced some discrimination based off of my name and appearance. The more time I spent in East Lansing, the more I saw the city of Dearborn as a bubble, distinct from the rest of society. I was tired of feeling judged before having the chance to be seen for my true self, and prior to entering my sophomore year of college, I made a decision that would altogether change my life.

In the summer of 2014, I decided to legally change my name from XXX to XXX. At the time, I felt that changing my name to something “more American” would eliminate any prejudgments. However, I was absolutely oblivious to the repercussions. The name change sparked an identity crisis that would ultimately lead to my downfall. Members of my family, and some of my closest friends, shamed me for “turning my back” on the Arab community. All areas of my life were affected. I became depressed, and struggled to accomplish anything. Concurrently, my best friend and roommate became increasingly hostile as he began to show signs of schizophrenia. I am empathetic by nature, which caused me to ignore the signs of mental illness and offer help when he spontaneously dropped all of his classes. He lashed out at me, and eventually I was forced to obtain legal documents requiring him to keep his distance. With the loss of my best friend, I had finally hit rock bottom, and had no choice but to face myself brutally, and honestly. The gems of self-knowledge that I mined in my darkest moments gave me a courage, wisdom, and richness that I could not have found anywhere else. With my new sense of clarity, I discovered a fresh perspective, and was ready to re-build myself from the ground up.

It was time for me to rise from the ashes. I knew that within me lay infinite potential. I decided from that day forward I would never again allow myself to become the victim of my life’s misfortunes. The heavy pain I had felt inspired me to become a healer, and that is where my personal growth began.

In the summer of 2015, I became a certified personal trainer through the American College of Sports Medicine. I instructed boot camp classes, mainly for middle aged, over-weight men and women. It was here that I found my vocational calling as a doctor. The ability to cure had given my life a feeling of fulfillment. I am a firm believer in holistic medicine, and consider exercise to be the best preventative drug. My good fortune of serving others on their journey to better health lit a fire in my soul. I found affirmation in my decision to become a doctor at thirteen years old, and I discovered an unstoppable drive within myself that would last a lifetime. I was ready to fulfill my destiny.

I scrubbed into a stent procedure at the Phoenix Heart Center in Arizona and was astonished to see heroes at work. My motivations for pursuing medicine were confirmed. The small-scale differences I made in a person’s health through physical training gave me a profound appreciation for a physician’s work. I now had a real desire to gain the wisdom that would make me into an excellent physician. As a bonus, my grades showed a dramatic increase. Never before had I envisioned myself as the student who received 105% on a Biochemistry exam. I developed an eagerness to learn new things, and a vast appreciation for education.

The story of my personal journey is essentially this: I decided who I wanted to be, and ultimately became that person. I am a man of indomitable hunger. I have an unfathomable certainty that my purpose in life is to heal others, and I do not envision myself taking any other path. I want to experience the challenges of a medical education and enjoy the satisfaction of its completion. I want to make a difference through my actions, and a Doctorate in Osteopathic Medicine from [Insert University] is the perfect way for me to continue on my path to achieving these goals.

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