Pre-Medicine Application Essay advice

As a general strategy, what you’re trying to do in the essays is the following:

Demonstrate your commitment to the field of medicine (and especially show that it's not just a momentary impulse or a desire to be rich and famous). How and when did you begin to be interested in medicine? How has your life up to this point demonstrated or nurtured that interest? (If you come from a family of doctors, of course you can talk about your observations of family members and how that has contributed to your commitment to the field, but you need to show that your interest is more than just a desire to emulate someone you admire.)

Show your prior experience with work in the medical community and related fields. This is a place to talk about volunteer service or paid employment in nursing homes, as an EMT, as a medical technician or orderly, as a nurse or nursing home aide, as a Red Cross or other first aid volunteer, as a home health aide, etc. If you've done any shadowing (observing a medical professional at work) include that, and explain how all these experiences have helped you become more certain of your commitment to the field of medicine. If you don't have any paid or volunteer experience and haven't spent any time shadowing, your first priority should be to go out and get some experience today.

Show that you have the "right stuff" to get through med school—essentially you need determination and the ability to overcome obstacles, high academic ability, problem-solving skills, the ability to think and act independently, and a willingness to put the rest of your life on hold for a few years while you make medicine your first (and to some extent only) priority. So in other words, well-roundedness is not as important as the ability to focus.

In the essay that asks you to talk about what your life will be like some years in the future, you’re trying to show that you have a realistic and practical understanding of the medical profession and a fairly concrete sense of the direction you hope your own career will take—both what you will gain from it and what you will contribute by it.

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