

Class 2000

Frederick C. Robbins Student Fellowship for International Travel Proposal

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Country: London, England
Dates of travel: Feb 1 – March 1

Proposed activities:

- Work as an acting intern in the medicine department of St. Thomas's/Guy's Hospital in London, England
- Compare and contrast the management of patients in a socialized vs public health care system and incorporate advantages of both systems in medical practice
- Observe and treat a different set of epidemiological pathology based on cultural and environmental differences between the UK and the United States
- Enhance clinical skills which will be valuable in a future of increasing managed care

An elective in medicine at St. Thomas's/Guy's Hospital in London is a unique opportunity to be an acting intern (AI) in a foreign medical setting with exposure to a different medical approach to patient management.

My elective month would essentially serve as an acting internship in medicine at a highly reputable and long-established institution. I would actively participate in the full management of patients including rounds, conferences, and lectures. Of more importance, I would be exposed to a different style of patient management given the context of a more socialized approach to medical practice. In a system in which laboratory tests and radiological studies are more limited, the clinical history and physical exam are more heavily weighted in reaching a diagnosis. This greater emphasis on the clinical exam would not only strengthen my skills but also broaden my base in medicine by allowing me to compare/contrast the two different systems. Whereas a certain radiological study or laboratory test would be deemed an essential component of a patient's work-up in the United States, the British system may circumvent these studies via a specific clinical route to reach a diagnosis. As a student, this unique approach would be invaluable as part of medical education especially amidst a setting of increased managed care. As a result of this brief yet educational experience, I would return with an enhanced and refined approach to medical practice by incorporating the strongest aspects of both systems into my own clinical training.

At my current stage in medical school, I have two general interests. First, I am interested in orthopaedic surgery, with a focus on genetic therapy application to tissue engineering and regrowth. I have a strong background in molecular biology and gene therapy, and I feel that future technology in orthopaedics will be focused around harnessing key growth factors, bone morphogenic proteins, etc. which are involved in

tissue growth and regeneration. My second area of interest lies in the pharmaceutical and/or prosthetic industry, especially clinical trials of new devices/drugs. The private industry has a strong foothold in biotechnology and pharmaceuticals because of their strong financial positions amidst a competitive market, and I feel that any collaboration would exist on the leading forefront of current technology.

My experience as an AI at Guy's/St. Thomas's hospital has direct benefit on my future career because of the direct role of medicine in the management of surgical patients. Again, the experience gained overseas would provide a different perspective on medical disease and will impact my practice of surgery.

Given my current stage in medical education, my interests are subject to change. Nevertheless, the aforementioned career goals serve as a framework for a yet unrealized future in medicine.