

## July Lee

UC San Diego School of Medicine c/o 2017, MD candidate  
Stanford University c/o 2012, BA in Human Biology  
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I have wanted to pursue medicine for as long as I can remember, but I don't recall "the" life-changing moment. However, there were many instances along my journey that gradually inspired me to pursue medicine. Having born and lived in Mexicali and later moving to Calexico, I noticed the differences in health outcomes. Having frequented the clinics and hospitals of Calexico and El Centro often, I saw a shortage and a need. Once I started volunteering as a pre-clinician at Stanford's student-run free clinic and traveling to different parts of the world for missions, I knew for a fact I wanted to become a doctor.

Becoming a doctor doesn't require a perfect SAT or ACT score, nor does it require a valedictorian title. However, I should point out that students who aspire to become doctors are very self-driven and these are the people you will compete against to get into medical school. Preparing the basics for the rigors of medical school starts in high school, and it will definitely help you along the way through college. MESA is a great program to learn and put into practice the principles of leadership, initiative, and innovation. You are at a prime time of your life, so make sure to enjoy doing what you love and spend your time wisely and purposefully.

### ***I'm interested in medicine, what is the process like?***

You are in a great position to start considering medical school right now. Ultimately, you want to complete the pre-med requirements in college, graduate with a bachelor's degree, take the MCAT (medical entrance exam), and apply to medical schools. If your GPA and SAT scores are high enough as a high school student, you can also apply to medical scholars programs and receive provisional acceptances to medical schools. Above all, remember to enjoy your college years and try new things. Shadow physicians, volunteer, and explore your interests! Don't be tricked into thinking you have to major in biology or in the sciences to get into medical school. Many of my medical friends majored in History, English, and the arts. Medical schools love diversity!

### ***I may be interested in medicine, but I am not sure. What should I do?***

Many of my classmates did not decide to go to medical school until college where they gained life experiences that set them on the medical track. Whether you are certain you want to go to medical school now or still considering, I encourage everyone to shadow physicians, volunteer at free clinics, and try doing research. All these experiences will help you determine whether you in fact really want to pursue medicine. Medicine is not for everyone, just as other career fields are not for everyone either, but one never realizes it until they try. Take your time to explore, seek mentorship, and never be afraid to ask questions.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me!

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