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Medical School Admission Essay

As I started to think about my future, my older sister, who is a periodontist, was a great inspiration to me. I got the chance to visit her at college when she was a senior dental student. [This visit was an eye-opening experience with regard to dentistry as a career. I was enthralled by how it combines both science and art, all while being able to help people at the same time.] I decided to pursue a dental career also, so I applied to the King Abdulaziz University Faculty of Dentistry (KAUFD) in my hometown of Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, and I was accepted. I graduated in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in dental medicine and surgery.

Throughout the years I spent in dental school, I found myself interested in restorative dentistry. Restoring patients' dentition and smiles is a challenge that requires a strong artistic sense, and I believe that I have this sense of art. As a child I always observed my father drawing and painting. I would sit next to him trying to mimic his work in my sketchbook, and as I grew older I started to do my own work. Restorative dentistry is also about details and precision. My interest in drawing helped me learn to pay attention to small details and at the same time visualize the overall complexity of the restorative and esthetic procedures I am working on.

After graduating from dental school, I finished a one-year internship and training program. During this year I worked for five months as a general dentist at different government hospitals in Jeddah. I spent the rest of the year working in different departments at my dental school (KAUFD). The time I spent at KAUFD allowed me to closely observe the academic environment not just as a student but as an intern dentist. I found myself interacting with faculty members, helping junior students, working at the general dentist clinics, attending lectures, and assisting residents in the restorative residency program. I found the academic environment to be the perfect place for continuous professional growth, so I decided to pursue a dental academic career path that would enable me to pursue my interests in teaching, clinical practice, and research. I got a full-time job as a demonstrator in the [department of operative dentistry] at KAUFD.

As a clinical demonstrator, every day at work presents its own set of challenges. I supervise the restorative procedures of the undergraduate dental students in the primary and comprehensive care clinics. Each student has a different level of clinical knowledge and skills, which can make it difficult to anticipate their performance. Apart from my supervision duties, I work in the general dentist clinics at the university, treating patients with advanced restorative needs with the help of specialists from the other departments. [I love the process of treatment planning, discussing the cases with colleagues, and giving each other advice.]

The opportunity to be involved in research projects during my internship year enabled me to gain the basic skills needed to conduct a study and write a manuscript. I worked with a group of researchers at KAUFD on a project evaluating the efficacy of a computerized dental simulator in improving cavity preparation skills for students. I was a co-author on that study, and it was published in the Journal of King Abdulaziz University for Medical Science. I also participated in another retrospective study assessing the success and survival rates of crowns and bridges constructed at KAUFD. I was responsible for collecting and analyzing data on this project.

Today, the field of dentistry has expanded with new techniques and materials that require highly trained and knowledgeable dental specialists working as a team. Therefore, I am looking forward to joining an advanced training program in restorative dentistry. In a residency program, I want to improve my clinical skills and learn more about advanced restorative techniques and dental materials. The residency program will also expose me to a wide range of cases with complex needs requiring an interdisciplinary approach. Those kinds of cases will improve my skills in diagnosis and treatment planning.

As I write my personal statement, I just finished reading "Talent Is Overrated," a book written by Geoff Clovin. The author ends the book by saying, ["Great performance is not reserved for a preordained few. It is available to you and to every one,"] but only with deliberate practice.

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