

Faces of Residency



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**Medical School
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**Residency
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**Specialty
Psychiatry**

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WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO MEDICINE?

I'm not the typical case of being a pre-med right from the womb. I dabbled in a lot of majors in undergrad, from psychology to astrophysics! After realizing that my math skills were not going to cut it for calculus equations or for the pursuit of dark matter, I seriously considered a Masters in Neurosciences, while also applying to medicine. Getting accepted into medicine felt like a fluke until we started to receive lectures by renowned people who had done all kinds of things with their degree—teaching, research, politics and most appealing to me, advocacy work. It was learning about all of the avenues to help the marginalized in society that really drew me to medicine and I figured I would end up in a specialty dedicated to such.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO YOUR SPECIALTY?

I find mental illness fascinating in its complexities, variations and the fact that such debilitating conditions can sometimes be invisible from the outside. In certain cultures and parts of the world, mental illness is still not recognized, despite the fact that it can have such drastic effects on one's life, thinking patterns, and understanding of reality! There is so much work to be done in correcting the stigma around mental illness, while we humbly approach this field that scientists are only beginning to understand. Psychiatry provides a perfect blend of the intriguing aspects of neuroscience with the people-based advocacy work I want to pursue.

WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR RESIDENCY TRAINING?

Working with staff psychiatrists who exemplify excellent teaching abilities, incredible patient centred care, consultant level knowledge, all while striking a great work-life balance has been the biggest inspiration for me. I feel refreshed being around these future colleagues of mine knowing that I can attain that perfect combination too!

WHAT DO YOU FIND THE MOST CHALLENGING IN YOUR RESIDENCY TRAINING?

I never expected to find myself more exhausted after a night on call in Psychiatry than on Internal Med or the like. After all, it's technically home call; you're sitting down for most of it and there's generally time for eating and bathroom breaks. But after seeing case after case of young people whose lives are starting to be affected by mental illness, I realized that the emotional exhaustion weighing on me was far greater than the physical burden of call on other specialties. I certainly see others' reservations when it comes to psychiatry and the chronicity of mental illness; yet, at the same time, I am hopeful that being in this field long enough will expose me to success stories that will allow me to keep optimistic during those long call shifts.

WHAT ENERGIZES YOU OUTSIDE OF RESIDENCY?

Baking! I am set on becoming the world's first part-time psychiatrist, part-time pastry chef. I love to journal and write, make it to the gym a few times a week, and settle down to a good boardgame night with friends.