



B r o w n U n i v e r s i t y

- A c c e p t e d C o l l e g e E s s a y -

FROM FLAUBERT TO FRISBEE

This summer, I went to the governor's Honors Program, also known as GHP, a six-week intensive college-like experience where the best and brightest students in Georgia gather to learn and grow as individuals. It was the best thing that has ever happened to me. That is something of a hackneyed phrase; people cheapen the extremes of language by constantly using superlatives for everyday occurrences, making it harder and harder to actually describe the few subtle and transcendent moments of life. In *Madame Bovary*, Flaubert claims that language is but a cracked kettle on which we play music for the bears to dance, while we dream of making the stars weep. The experiences we have never fit within the too-close confines of language; but I will try anyway. The classes that I attended were nothing like the classes that I would take normally. Nowhere else would the teachers encourage sixteen and seventeen year-olds to look for sexual imagery in Shakespeare, and then find even more than they did, without the exercise being sordid instead of literary. I attended classes named anything from *Dirty Words: Clean Thoughts* (a class on Profanity; the only course in which the use of profane or vulgar language was prohibited) to *Teenage Female Angst: Beyond Holden Caulfield to Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. All of them opened my mind to a brand-new way of looking at the world, and processing information. Thanks to the varying education that I received, I know that valuable information about life is not only in the "classics," but even appears in seemingly mindless and trashy zombie films.

While I learned a lot in the classrooms of GHP, I feel that most of my growth occurred outside of the classroom. I met the sort of people who will change the world, who will go forth into the world and, without making a big name, will do the things that make the world a better place. My best friends there were people that I would never have met; people I would never have known existed; people that I can now not imagine life without. One was a math major, an excellent athlete in every sport, and an accomplished singer; the running joke was that the only thing that he was bad at was failing. The other was a phenomenal writer, always ready to play an endearing trick on somebody, and the former's girl-friend. Both of them were fairly conservative Christians, and yet totally accepting of me for whom I was, despite any of my clashes with their beliefs. I did not limit myself though, and made it almost a mission to find and talk to as many of the people there, because I was sure that each and every one of them would have an interesting perspective on things. Once I was walking back from playing Frisbee, and was stopped to discuss what the ethical framework for life ought to be; just for fun. The experience that I had there has undeniably changed me forever.

ADDRESSING INJUSTICES

My reasons for wanting to be a doctor are very similar to why most people choose their career path: I want to make things fairer. People such as social workers are out to help make the world a little less unjust. It's not necessarily injustice from other people that I want to fight as these people do, but injustice from other factors. Many people who are close to me have been struck down from their future in ways that it's impossible for them to recover. My aunt was a great artist and loving mother before she developed severe schizophrenia. She now locks herself in her house for weeks at a time and remains isolated from her family. My friend Eric, who was once in his school's varsity basketball league, cannot play his senior season because a car accident left him nearly paralyzed. Finally, my friend Vince's depression has stripped him of his will to live, and despite attempts of over a dozen psychiatrists and medications he still spends most of his days aimlessly lying in bed. While I try very hard to cheer him up by talking to and entertaining him I am deeply concerned about his future. This trend is something that I'm seeing almost everywhere. More and more people are becoming depressed and hopeless, and I want to be able to put life and happiness back into them.

Not only do I see these injustices in my life, when I'm volunteering at my local hospital my desire to help become even more emboldened by the people I meet. A new grandmother I met recently had her spine shattered when she fell from a ladder back onto a table. As I talked to her, I remembered how many times I've seen pictures of my grandmother lifting me and my cousins and caring for us, and became overcome with emotion. While I don't believe her ability to care for her grandchildren will be destroyed, I know that she won't have the same opportunities as other grandparents and the inequality of the situation makes me extremely upset. I want nothing more than to give back her ability to walk and lift her grandkids. I believe being a doctor can allow me to bring this closer.

HEALING BEYOND BORDERS

While healing people will be my main priority as a doctor, I don't want to only help individuals overcome disease after disease. For true change I must work on a much larger scale. I plan on being involved in research, and drawing ideas and information from my patients and sharing it with researchers to find answers about the ailments that plague the human mind. By being a voice from the front lines I hope that I can catalyze the development of treatments and cures. Additionally, I want to become an advocate for public health. If a government is doing something that is detrimental to the health of its citizens, someone needs to point it out, and fight for a better alternative. Unless I do this then the people I help will continue to get sick regardless of how much I help.

Still, my main task as a doctor is to help patients, and I want to help as many of them as I can. Seeing the reality of the health of the world is very important to me if I am going to properly improve it. I have been so fortunate to live in a place where medicine is so refined, and I am even more blessed to know that I have the chance to help spread this refinement. While issues such as world hunger are constantly being improved, doctors in other countries are scarce and locals are still being trained in ancient ways and often hurting their patients more than helping. I want to give back my blessings a hundred-fold and spread better medicine. First, I want to see the health of our world as I help it by joining Medicines Sans Frontieres as soon as I can. Only after I help things first hand can I make a mature decision on how I should try to help the world as a whole. I feel the experiences that I get from my education and the experiences helping people across the world will give me a very strong ability to know how to help to the best of my abilities. Today I am already planning for this journey by teaching myself foreign languages. I hope that by the time I am ready to help people, knowing many languages will help me bond with my patients and truly make me a doctor without borders. I plan on fighting for health for as long as I can, and I want to help every person I can regardless of background, money or stigma.

THE COMPUTER DOCTOR

Every time I drive into a client's driveway, there's always that moment. That moment where I must shed any doubt I have and become adamant. That moment where I realize that, people are depending on me, and I must do my best to help them. And that moment where, with tool bag to my side, I must prepare to face whatever problem is waiting for me in their house. This time is no different. As with the hundreds of other problems I've faced, I must remember that every problem has a solution, and I can find it.

When I am greeted by a middle-aged woman as I approach the house, my remaining doubts evaporate. Once I see the individual I am about to help I become saturated with resolve. However, all she will see from me is a smile as I ask her how she is. I then ask her what the problem is, and she leads me to her computer. She tells me that her computer is shutting down randomly, and then leaves as I begin to work.

With a simple push of the power button, the process begins. Unfortunately, for this case, just as quickly as it starts—the computer shuts off. never discouraged, I dismantle it to look for obvious signs of damage. However, everything here appears normal: wires secure, circuits shining.

But there's another test that may work. Eyes focused on the inside of the computer, I turn it on again. I have only a moment before it succumbs to its ailment again. Additionally, each time it starts could be damaging, so I have to make this count. When the sound of electricity surging through the computer begins, I immediately notice a vital fan failing to twirl: the computer is simply overheating. With a quick pull of the power I anesthetize the computer and operate. Using a replacement and screwdriver from my bag, I give the computer a new fan. Then, I start the computer nervously, but it starts perfectly.

My confidence and determination sweat off as accomplishment. I quickly look for the woman. She can tell I solved her problem as I walk towards her with a grin, and she smiles too.

This case is one of the hundreds I've solved over the past few years, all without a single failure to find a practical solution. I started my business because after seeing how grossly overcharged the community was by corporate technicians, I believed it would be a practical and great way for me to help the community and have a job. After fixing computers for my school for a year, school officials quickly noticed and spread word of my work, allowing my business to spread like wildfire throughout the local communities. With determination (and some creativity) I've solved some very unordinary and strange problems. I'd like to use this same willpower to help people in even better ways. no matter how impossible the problems I encounter may seem I will always remember what I tell myself when I fix computers: every problem must have a solution, and I can find it.

EXPLORING LIFE'S INTRICACIES

Because I find life's intricacy so amazing, biology and its related subjects are the most enjoyable topics for me. Within biology our brains interest me the most, which—with their countless neurons and chemicals—give us unmatched emotion, uniqueness, and potential. Due to the possibilities of understanding emotions and mental problems from their source, I'd like to develop a great understanding of neuroscience, and use it to help people overcome diseases and mental barriers as a doctor, allowing them to achieve the highest possible quality of life.

Brown University would also give me the greatest ability to help people. With their deep community involvement and famous neuroscience department, I would have an outstanding opportunity to help people as I develop the utmost understanding of neurology. The open curriculum will also bring me more benefits. The ability to study multiple languages and social sciences will help me interact and exchange ideas with fewer limits. Moreover, the curriculum will allow me to become an outstanding scientist. The way in which this could help me scientifically is best summarized in the words of my biology professor at Kent State University: "One of our major inhibiting factors in addressing more complicated issues of science is that scientists need to have a sweeping grasp of multiple disciplines such as psychology, biology, convention physics, and quantum physics. And if that wasn't bad enough, you're going to need amazing writing skills to convey your ideas to other people and seem credible." I don't necessarily expect to achieve full mastery in the four or five years I spend as an undergraduate, but I believe Brown is where I'll have the best opportunity to advance in these areas. To expand even more, the open curriculum would allow me to surround myself with individuals that are just as passionate about languages and sciences as I am. With these classmates I would love to have great conversations and even participate in research. Attending Brown University will bring me all of these things, which will aid me in becoming the best doctor and scientist I can possibly be.

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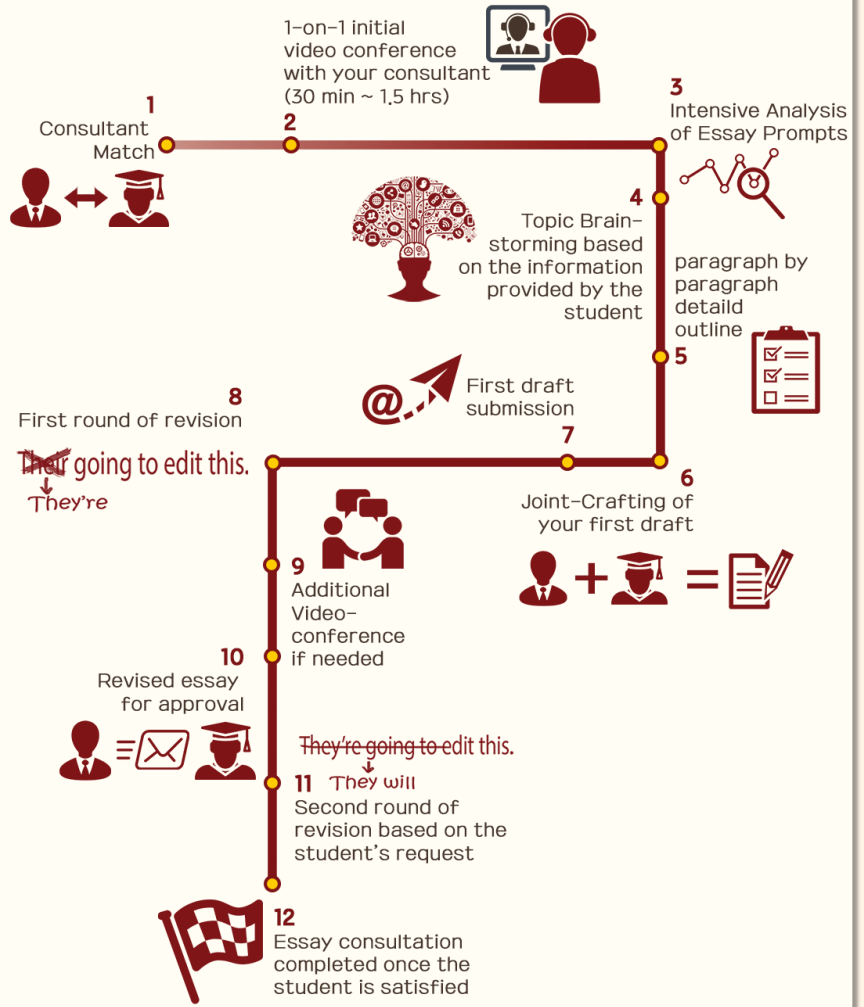
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