

My pre-med school years were beguiled by all the activities most students partake—sports, summer vacations, and occasionally measuring out sodium chloride percentages in honeydew. But my greatest inspirations came from my years of shadowing a gastroenterologist, as well as blackening my often-calloused hands under the hoods of vehicles at a garage for which we earned the community's gold standard. Though it may sound farfetched, in some ways, a physician is very much like an autobody technician. Every day, I'd set out my toolbox, and depending on the diagnoses and plans for management, I'd retrieve the tools I believed would contribute to the solution. In the office, the gastroenterologist was astute yet comprehensive, deciphering the disturbance before advancing to both standard and innovative treatments. While the tools at the shop may have seemed more primitive to the endoscopes, the precision in both fields required creativity and a mastery of procedural knowledge in order to use those tools for a successful outcome. That is just the first of many steps involved in achieving a gold standard, in medicine or anything else.

Medicine relies on evidence and universal truths of how the body and world behave; but its reputation is concerned with its application, and its value depends primarily on converting those truths into particular applications. That is the next component of the gold standard, and it means ensuring every patient is treated with the utmost regard. Still, even as we shift towards new research and clinical practices, we sometimes miss basic protocols that are easily remedied. Even with issues as concrete as spontaneous bacterial peritonitis occurring in hospitalized patients with cirrhosis and ascites, we found nearly 80% of patients experienced delayed paracentesis. Consequently, the next step is geared towards achieving the gold standard for our community. We now plan to maximize the application of our knowledge and skills in order to provide our patients with the most valuable care.

However, sometimes refining our practice is a tortuous path, in which we must immerse ourselves in the literature, like a colonoscope in water, in order to facilitate our advancements and be cognizant of the innovative developments around us. As a member of the simulation lab committee and one of the chief residents of our Internal Medicine program, I've dedicated myself to both literature appraisal and enhancing procedural skills, and I intend to bring that same passion and commitment to my gastroenterology fellowship. What's more, I plan to be an active member of ASGE with participation in ASGE's first year fellows' course as well as attend skills workshops to further enhance my training in advanced endoscopic procedures. Such is crucial to treating acute complications ranging from acute bleeds to food boluses. The immediate difference made in these life-threatening scenarios is equally fulfilling as the effective long-term management in preventing and decreasing symptoms, morbidity and mortality. On a more altruistic note, I look forward to sharing meaningful contributions in regional and national conferences such as DDW and ACG, as well as teaching the next generation of physicians and gastroenterologists, as both a student and clinical educator.

Without my teachers and mentors, my growth as an aspiring gastroenterologist would have stalled. Without my experiences in the garage, my perspective on patient care and personal interaction would have swayed. And without my little brother, who passed away at the age of nine, I never would have had the drive to study medicine. Every person and situation have led me to this fellowship application, and I hope to pay tribute to those individuals and places that have shaped my medical journey. It is my desire to leave a positive contribution to society. It is my hope to work in a program that provides opportunity full of mentorship, passion and genuine interaction in every exchange. And it would be an honor to work alongside other physicians and contribute to the gold standard of gastroenterology.