

A favorite quote of mine by Sir William Osler reads, "The good physician treats the disease; the great physician treats the patient who has the disease." It was not until my father underwent life-saving open heart surgery that I encountered the true meaning of this quote. Seeing the strongest person I knew in such a vulnerable position was an awful experience, but my entire family felt reassured by the knowledge and empathy shown by his doctor. In that moment my passion for a career in medicine began. Now that I am near the end of medical school, the field of obstetrics and gynecology has ignited my passion once again. My fascination with obstetrics and gynecology began three years ago during my first shift on labor and delivery. The relationship each laboring mother shares with her physician is something I immediately knew I wanted to experience and have since decided to commit my career to serving women's health. The miracle is not only in the birth of the child, but the unique capability of a woman's body to endure such a thing. This population has an eagerness for good health that I find admirable, and it would be very rewarding to participate in managing their health as they go through various stages of life. The beauty of this field is not only providing primary care to women of all ages, but having the skills and knowledge to manage their health surgically as well. This career will offer me time in the office in order to get to know each woman and hear their story, as well as the thrill of an operating room and excitement of high-risk situations. It has the best of both worlds, providing surgical skills while still allowing doctor-patient relationships to develop.

The strong work ethic, passion and perseverance seen in obstetrician-gynecologists is another reason I chose this field, and they are certainly traits I am looking for in a residency program. Growing up participating in competitive sports, I respect being pushed by others to exceed expectations. I also believe in an environment conducive to team effort in order to reach a shared goal. My experience participating in a student-run free clinic in Tulsa, Oklahoma has shown me the importance of sharing the workload and knowing when to step in and help fellow colleagues. In order to be fully prepared for my career, I seek a program with plenty of exposure to complicated cases so that I am ready for anything and everything. Work ethic, teamwork and gaining strong experience with challenging situations are values I seek in a program so that when I graduate and patients' lives are in my hands, I am fully capable of providing quality care.

After completing a residency program, my goal is to practice as a generalist as I pay back my Indian Health Service scholarship. Before choosing from all the enticing fellowship options, I want to gain more experience strengthening my skills in general women's healthcare and becoming integrated into the community. The Indian Health Service offers an opportunity to serve a population with a higher prevalence of diseases, such as diabetes, that put women at risk for complications throughout pregnancy. In my second year of medical school I participated in a diabetes outreach program for women, which provided patients with a series of lectures educating them on their disease and ways to improve their health. By the end of eight weeks the group as a whole had lowered their HgbA1C levels, blood pressure and total body weight. Experiencing the success of these women motivates me to integrate similar outreach programs in my own community to empower those with limited access to resources. One step towards this integration is the creation of the Women's Health Interest Group at the OU-Tulsa School of Community Medicine. My goal for this group is a multidisciplinary approach to educate and motivate the advancement of women's health.

A good friend of mine with three beautiful children of her own once shared a quote with me that read, "There is a secret in our culture, and it's not that birth is painful. It's that women are strong." The strength of a woman throughout pregnancy and throughout life is incredible, but there are times these brave women need a little help to continue leading healthy lives. Becoming an obstetrician-gynecologist provides a unique opportunity to be the primary provider for women across many generations and helping bring new life into the world. In my career as an obstetrician-gynecologist I want to combine my training with the innate strength inside every woman to give them the best chance at a healthy life and a healthy family.