2007-'08
PRE-RESIDENCY PLANNING GUIDE

A FOURTH YEAR and RESIDENCY PREPARATION MANUAL for 2008 MATCH PARTICIPANTS
INTRODUCTION

The *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* is your reference for the yearlong residency application process. The purpose of the *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* is to provide assistance in fulfilling the requirements necessary to obtain a residency and to assist you through what will be one of the most challenging years of your education. The process outlined in this manual begins in late March 2007 (after the 2007 Match concludes). It explains the requirements you must fulfill to be eligible for the NRMP (National Resident Matching Program) Match, and guides you through the matching process until the beginning of residency in 2008 (most residencies will begin July 1, 2008).

The guide outlines the components necessary to apply for your Dean’s Letter/MSPE, issues concerning the USMLE, applying to ERAS and the NRMP Match, requirements for graduation, and licensure issues, to name a few of the larger topics addressed.

It is important that the Department of Graduate Affairs has a current e-mail address on file. In June, Graduate Affairs will begin issuing updates and reminders containing important information. If you have not received an e-mail from Graduate Affairs by July, we likely do not have a current or working e-mail address for you. If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Graduate Affairs at graduateaffairs@rossu.edu or call (732) 978-5300, ext. 2776.

DISCLAIMER:

Changes in policy, deadlines, fees, etc. occurring after the finalized version of the guide is posted on the University’s web site are not the responsibility of the University. The University cannot be held liable, as any changes originate at ERAS, ECFMG, FSMB, USMLE, etc. The Department of Graduate Affairs will alert you via e-mail, as much as possible, with changes, reminders, etc, which is why it is important to keep your e-mail accounts active, that you notify us of e-mail account changes, and ensure that inboxes are available to receive e-mail.
Timeline/Table of Contents

The following is a chronological listing of the steps you will be completing over the course of the next twelve to sixteen months. It guides you through the residency process up until you are completing the licensure paperwork that will allow you to begin practice in the state of your residency program.

This Table of Contents is designed to let you know exactly what you should be doing and when you should be completing all pre-residency processes, as it is arranged according to the time of year you should be completing each step. If you follow the timetable by reading and completing all the corresponding information and steps at the appropriate time of year, it should make for a smooth progression toward residency.

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Terminology

As you read, it will be helpful to familiarize yourself with the following terms used throughout the guide:

**Dean’s Letter/MSPE** – The Dean’s Letter is the comprehensive evaluative letter documenting your medical school performance and experience. The MSPE is the Medical School Performance Evaluation. For Ross University, the Dean’s Letter and the MSPE are the same document, the Dean’s Letter.

**ECFMG** – Education Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates. The certification program originated to maintain a standardized assessment of foreign medical students’ credentials, in order to be eligible for post-graduate work in the United States.

**ERAS** – Electronic Residency Application Service – The central application service used by the majority of residency programs in order to access your application materials for residency electronically.

**NRMP** – National Resident Matching Program – The program that will “match” you with your residency program of interest in accordance with their interest in having you in the program.

**PGY-1** – Post-Graduate Year 1, or your internship year/first year of residency.

**PGY-2** – Post-Graduate Year 2, or your second year of residency.

**USMLE CK** – United States Medical Licensing Examination, Clinical Knowledge

**USMLE CS** – United States Medical Licensing Examination, Clinical Skills

Determining Eligibility for Residency (March 2007)

In order to begin a residency on July 1st 2008, you must begin the pre-application process in late March – early April 2007. This means you must answer two questions: 1) Am I eligible for residency and for participation in the Match? And 2) What do I want to do?

In order to answer the first question, you need to know what the Match is.

*What is the Match?*

The NRMP, or National Resident Matching Program, is a program giving medical students the best chance of attaining a job in a first-year post-graduate residency program (PGY 1), the goal of almost all medical students. The purpose of the NRMP is to literally “match” all medical students and other applicants with hospitals offering internships and residencies. One may obtain a residency in a different way, but almost all medical students initially participate in the Match.

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) oversees the Match. It is not an application or placement service. The NRMP matches students with residency programs, but the students apply for the majority of residency positions through ERAS, the Electronic Residency Application Service. Programs then contact applicants for interviews. Once applicants have been interviewed, residency programs provide a list of their chosen applicants in order of preference to the NRMP. Applicants also submit a list of the programs where they were interviewed, in order of preference. The role of the NRMP is to match a program with an applicant based on both rank order lists.

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Rules and Requirements

The NRMP imposes strict regulations and deadlines for participation. These restrictions provide programs security that applicants will be eligible to begin residency on July 1, 2008.

In essence, “to participate in the NRMP, graduates/students of foreign medical schools must have passed all exams required for certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates/ECFMG and the results must be available by the Rank Order List deadline. The NRMP contacts ECFMG periodically before the Rank Order List deadline to verify whether graduates/students of foreign medical schools...have passed required exams. Applicants who are not confirmed by ECFMG will be withdrawn automatically from the Match immediately following the Rank Order List deadline.”

How do I know if I am eligible for the 2008 Match?

Simply put, if you are scheduled or anticipate completing your clinical requirements by the end of May 2008 and have an anticipated graduation date of May 31, 2008 or earlier, you are very likely eligible to participate in the March 2008 Match.

Why before May 31, 2008?

The majority of residency positions participating in the March 2008 Match will begin on July 1, 2008, just over four weeks after the May 31 graduation date. Therefore, graduating after May 31, 2008 will not afford Ross University enough time to process your final audit, initiate your ECFMG certification, and process your state licensure material. All of these processes must be completed before you begin residency and cannot begin until your graduation date. The audit may take a few days and ECFMG certification arrives at your home address no sooner than two weeks (and more typically three-to-four weeks) after graduation. Depending on the state in which you obtained a residency position, processing time can vary from a few weeks to several weeks for your licensure to be approved. Yet all state boards restrict Ross from completing our portion of your licensure application until you have graduated.

If you apply for a residency to begin July 1st 2008, you are committing to that date and must be ready to begin on that day. If you finish your clinical rotations any time after May 31st, there is no guarantee that you will be ECFMG certified and/or licensed by July 1st. In past years some students have applied for July 1st positions with a June 30th graduation date. However, these students informed all programs to which they applied that they could not begin on the traditional July 1st day and made acceptable special arrangements with those programs.

If you expect to graduate on June 30th 2008 and wish to apply through ERAS and participate in The Match, you must inform all programs that you will need to start at least a month late and that your start date will be in August. Proper disclosure of your start date is imperative, otherwise you risk misrepresenting yourself and Ross University.
I’ve determined I’m eligible, now what do I do?

Do Now!

Stop, print out this guide, and keep it with you for the next year!

You are now ready to begin understanding the Match as an Independent Applicant.

What is an Independent Applicant?

You, when you register with the NRMP Match in August 2008. There are two general groups of Match applicants: United States Medical School Seniors and Independent Applicants. You fall under the latter. There are six categories of Independent Applicants. Ross University students fall under one of the last two categories.

1. Previous graduate of a U.S. medical school (someone who graduated earlier than September 1 in the year before the match)
2. Student/graduate of a U.S. osteopathic medical school
3. Student/graduate of a Canadian medical school
4. Student/graduate of a Fifth Pathway program
5. U.S. citizen student/graduate of an international medical school
6. Non-U.S. citizen (including permanent residents) student/graduate of an international medical school.

Do Now!

- Go to the NRMP/Match web site at www.nrmp.org to familiarize yourself with the Match.
- Print out an Applicant User Guide and read the FAQs (frequently asked questions) posed by Independent Applicants. Here’s how:
  - On the main page, click on “Residency Match.” On the left, you will see a link to Participant Groups, where they define “Independent Applicant.” You will also find a link to User Guides, where you will find instructions for all applicants, including Independent Applicants. You will also find a link of applicant FAQs, with a link specifically for Independent Applicants.

Again, you won’t register for the Match until mid-August. But when you do, you will register as an “Independent Applicant.” But there are several things you must do in the meantime. And if you don’t know already, the first is to answer the question, “What do I want to do?”

What do I want to do?

Many medical students have known since baby steps exactly what kind of doctor they wanted to be. We all know this person: “Since I can remember, I’ve always wanted to be a pediatrician. I just love kids!” Other students make it almost all the way through their clinical training knowing they want to be a doctor, but not knowing what field.

No worries! Although at some point you will have to determine what field you want to practice in most, the Match allows you to apply to different programs in different specialties.
Identifying Prospective Programs (March – April 2007)

In the next two months or so, you will want to determine what kind of programs you will be applying to. You may already be set on applying to, for example, only psychiatry programs. Or you may be considering keeping your options open and are thinking about programs in internal medicine or family practice. Allow your clinical experiences to dictate your interests.

Some of the criteria by which you might identify prospective programs, in addition to specialty are: geographic location, desired program type (university, community, rural, etc.), sub-specialties and possible fellowship opportunities, to name a few.

You will also want to make note of program deadlines and verify their participation in ERAS.

**Future note:** Research a wide variety of programs, competitive programs as well as less competitive ones, and expand your geographic location as much as you can. The less you limit yourself and your choices, the better chance you have of obtaining a residency position. It is also helpful to join specialty/professional organizations and to read specialty journals and newsletters of professional organizations. You also will have to be honest with yourself and your academic performance as you consider the reputed competitiveness of the program.

In addition to the list of resources in the back of the guide (i.e.: web sites, telephone numbers, and addresses of various professional organizations), the following are some suggestions for finding and researching both program and specialty information:

- Most residency programs’ web sites provide useful program information/statistics for applicants.
- The *American Medical Association Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access*, known as *AMA-FREIDA*, can be found at [www.ama-assn.org/freida](http://www.ama-assn.org/freida).
- Articles of general interest and advice are available from [www.careermd.com](http://www.careermd.com).
- Access information on urology as a specialty at [www.auanet.org](http://www.auanet.org).
- Information on neurology, neurological surgery, otolaryngology, and ophthalmology programs is available from the San Francisco Match at [www.sfmatch.org](http://www.sfmatch.org).
- The AMA’s *Graduate Medical Education Directory*, or the “Green Book,” includes contact information for all ACGME-accredited programs at [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org).
- The *GMED Companion: Supplemental Data for Choosing Your Residency Program* features program data such as salary, start dates, curricula, and articles on obtaining residency.
- The *Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH) Directory* and *The COTH Survey of Housestaff Stipends, Benefits and Funding* are good reference books.
- Information produced by specialty professional organizations include *Directory of Family Practice Residency Programs* and the *Directory of Psychiatry Residency Training Programs*.
- Residency Match statistical information is available on the NRMP web site as well.

**Okay, So Now I Know a Little Bit About the Match, and I Have an Idea About What I Want to Pursue, What Do I Do Between Now and Then?**

Plenty! Before you can apply to the Match, there are several things you must take care of in the meantime, in addition to keeping on top of your studies. They are:

1. **Applying for your Dean’s Letter/MSPE – Deadline May 25, 2007**
2. **Obtaining Recommendation Letters**
4. Determining when you will sit for USMLE CK and CS board exams.

Applying for Your Dean’s Letter/MSPE (March – May 25, 2007 (Deadline))

An integral part of successfully matching will be determined by your performance, the professionalism of your work, and by recommendations of those who have observed your work. Who you are, your background experience, extracurricular work before and during medical school, and the thoughts you express through your personal statement (and eventual interview) will also have significant impact.

The Department of Graduate Affairs compiles all of this information (sans the interview) in one document called the **Dean’s Letter/MSPE** (Medial School Performance Evaluation). The Dean's Letter/MSPE is a personalized, detailed two-page letter of assessment and part of the residency application. It contains information drawn from your Dean’s Letter application materials. Other sources of information are your clinical evaluations, USMLE score reports, transcript, and sometimes your letters of recommendation. The Dean’s Letter is written only after you have submitted all four components of the request. Once written, a student copy is sent to you for review of factual information, as a courtesy – but not for your editorial feedback.

The Dean’s Letter/MSPE is an essential component to your Match application.

*How Do I Get a Dean’s Letter/MSPE?*

If you’ve already printed out this guide, you have completed step one in obtaining a Dean’s Letter, as the last ten pages of the *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* comprise the **Dean’s Letter/MSPE Application Packet**.

**Dean’s Letter/MSPE Application Overview**

A complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request consists of 4 items (see Dean’s Letter Application Packet at the end of guide) All four items are due in the Department of Graduate Affairs by **May 25, 2007**. They are:

- **Dean’s Letter/MSPE Request Form**
- **Dean's Letter/MSPE Questionnaire**
- **Curriculum Vitae or Résumé** (Preferred format example on page ?)
- **Personal Statement** (Helpful suggestions on page ?)

**Dean’s Letter/MSPE Request Form and Questionnaire**

Please complete these forms thoughtfully and in their entirety. We do not have the chance to meet each of you, but we still must compose a letter that best reflects who you are in relation to your medical school performance.

**Note:** Make sure to include your email address, as all communications will be through e-mail. If you don’t hear from us with an update by July, please email us, as we may not have your correct/current email address.

**Curriculum Vitae or Résumé**
The CV or résumé is a required component of the Dean’s Letter Request and your application for residency. Putting together your CV for use in writing the Dean’s Letter accomplishes two tasks, as you also need to submit a CV as part of your ERAS materials.

In a clear and logical manner, the résumé or CV includes professional background, previous education and degrees, extracurricular activities, previous career(s), community involvement, volunteer participation, publications, and research. Make sure to list start and end dates, contact person and phone numbers, and city and state of listed experiences. The résumé or CV should be no longer than two pages, containing significant and pertinent information. Instructions and guidelines for preparing the CV are available at the end of this guide in the Dean’s Letter Application Packet.

**Personal Statement**

A personal statement is a one-page essay telling the reader who you are, why you are pursuing medicine, and what sets you apart from other residency applicants. The personal statement is not a narrative form of the résumé/c.v. The statement describes events and experiences that have shaped your personality, your values, and goals, and thus your pursuit of a medical degree.

Composing your personal statement for use in writing the Dean’s Letter also accomplishes two tasks. Like the CV, you also need to submit a personal statement as part of your ERAS materials. Allow ample time to prepare the statement. In order to assist you, we have provided some guidelines for writing personal statements at the end of this guide in the Dean’s Letter Application Packet. Publications providing advice on applying for residency also offer tips on writing personal statements.

In the personal statement, address why you have chosen medicine as a profession and why you are intent on a career in a specific specialty. If you plan on applying for positions in various specialties, you must prepare a personal statement for each specialty. However, for the Dean’s Letter/MSPE request, only one personal statement is required, as all Dean’s Letters/MSPEs are composed as general letters, not specifying a particular field. This affords application to multiple specialties.

**Critical Information! Please Read Carefully!**

Dean’s Letters/MSPEs are written in the order in which the requests are received. The earlier you submit the completed Dean’s Letter/MSPE request, the earlier you will receive the student copy. Your student copy can be delivered to you either via a pdf read-only e-mail or by regular mail.

Important: Your Dean’s Letter/MSPE file will not be considered complete until all application materials arrive. Once complete, your request will be filed according to the date all materials were received. Your Dean’s Letter/MSPE will then be written in order of the date received.

Do not fax or e-mail requests. Also, Graduate Affairs is not responsible for documents sent to other departments. Therefore, do not include your Dean’s Letter/MSPE request with documents submitted to another department. Mail your Dean’s Letter/MSPE request and documents to:

Department of Graduate Affairs  
Ross University School of Medicine  
499 Thornall Street, 10th floor  
Edison, NJ 08837-2235

To have the best chance for your Dean’s Letter/MSPE to be completed by the first ERAS Dean’s Letter/MSPE distribution date of November 1st, the Department of Graduate Affairs must have received the completed Dean’s Letter/MSPE request by May 25, 2007. If we receive the completed request on
or after the May 25 deadline, you can expect to receive a student copy of the finished letter at the end of October, or possibly even the beginning of November. You will receive a student copy of your Dean's Letter anywhere between one and five months after submitting your request. Again, the sooner we receive your request, the sooner you will get your Dean's Letter. But remember, ERAS will not send any Dean's Letters to residency programs until November 1st.

Confirmation of documents:

To confirm receipt of documents, either use certified mail or send a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the documents. If you are running close to the May 25 deadline, and you have not yet sent your request, use US Express Mail or Federal Express, as tracking procedures exist. Give your documents at least a week's processing time and then call the Department of Graduate Affairs at (732) 978-5300 x 2776 to confirm their arrival.

How Do I get My Dean’s Letter Updated?

An Update Request is for Repeat Applicants Only!

If you are a first-time applicant, you do not have to submit an Update Request.

If your Dean’s Letter/MSPE has already been written for a previous Match or Scramble, and you plan on participating in the 2008 Match or Scramble, you may request an update by submitting the Update Request Form by May 25, 2007. Updating your Dean’s Letter/MSPE will entail the addition of core clerkships not included at the time the original letter was composed. No other changes are made to the Dean’s Letter/MSPE, and we do not mention post-Ross graduation experiences.

Obtaining Letters of Recommendation (March – September 2007)

As part of the residency application, you will need at least four letters of recommendation from physicians at the institutions where you completed clinical clerkships. Begin to collect them as soon as possible and continue to do so throughout your clerkships. The ideal letters of recommendation are written by program directors and by attending physicians who supervised your rotation in your chosen specialty. The letters should not all originate from physicians who supervised the same rotation.

When requesting a letter of recommendation, ask the writer if he/she would kindly give you two originals. ERAS requires you to submit original, signed recommendation letters. You will want to have an original to send to ERAS and one to keep. Also, make copies and send them to your clinical advisor so that they may be included in your file and available for future use, perhaps even in writing your Dean’s Letter. Your clinical file should contain copies of all recommendation letters.

**Future Note**: You, not Ross, send recommendation letters to ERAS. If a physician chooses to send an original to Ross University only, and does not provide you with a copy, you must ask him/her for another original, as Ross cannot forward a recommendation letter originally sent to us.
Determining When to Sit for Step 2 CK/CS Exams (March – October 2007)

You must determine when you will sit for the Step 2 CK and CS exams. Consult your clinical advisor, the Registrar/Registrar materials, and ECFMG materials for detailed guidelines on scheduling, obtaining and submitting the proper forms, eligibility, fees, and applying for time off in order to study.

A General Overview…

As a Ross student, you must meet the following criteria to be certified to take the Step 2 exams:

Step 2 CK

In order to sit for the Step 2 CK, you must have completed 48 weeks of clinical clerkships (including internal medicine) by the first day of the USMLE window that applies. This includes the twelve-week Introduction to Clinical Medicine clerkship.

You are required to submit your application for Step 2 CK at least 6 weeks, and no more than 15 weeks, prior to your USMLE eligibility window. You may download the application from the ECFMG web site.

Step 2 CS

In order to sit for the Step 2 CS, you must have completed 36 weeks of core clinical rotations, including internal medicine.

Do not submit your Step 2 CS application to the Registrar’s Department until you have completed a minimum of 24 core clerkship weeks, including internal medicine.

Please also know that the Step 2 CK and the Step 2 CS are separate exams and can be taken at different times.

Okay, I’m eligible for Step 2. Now what?

Once eligible, we recommend that you apply to take these exams as soon as you feel you are completely prepared and have met University eligibility requirements. This should allow you time to re-take the exam should you not be successful in your first attempt. Keep in mind that ECFMG requires you to wait 60 days between the date you first took a particular exam and the beginning of the eligibility period in which you are applying to retake the exam.

Also, it is very difficult to schedule either exam toward the end of the year, and there is no guarantee that sufficient spaces will be available for all candidates.

In order to make the Match, you must take both the USMLE Step 2 CK and CS exams by the end of December 2007, and have passing scores by the NRMP Rank Order List deadline in February 2008.

Why?

Since exam results are mailed approximately 6 – 8 weeks after the assessment date, December is the latest you can sit and safely receive your results before the February Rank Order List deadline. The NRMP will contact ECFMG periodically until this day to verify that all exams have been passed. Applicants who do not have passing scores on both exams by the February Rank Order List Deadline will be withdrawn from The Match.
Collecting CA L6 forms, IL Af-Med forms, PA Certificates of Clinical Rotation, and GA Clerkship Verifications (March ’07 – Graduation ‘08)

If you plan on applying for residency in California, Illinois, Pennsylvania, or Georgia, you must collect clinical clerkship verification forms, verifying the completion of each clerkship, in each training institution. These forms are available when you obtain your licensure application for the particular state of interest. **These forms can only be completed by the hospital.** Ross cannot complete them, as boards will reject these particular forms if they come from us.

Collection is best completed as you progress through your rotations, rather than having to get back into contact with the hospital after you have moved on.

**California** – California’s clinical clerkship verification form is called the L6 form. It is required from each clerkship and each site. Send copies of the L6 form to each site and their Director of Medical Education asking that they be returned to you to include in your application.

**Illinois** – Illinois’ clinical verification form is called the Af-Med form and it is required from only your core clerkship sites.

**Pennsylvania** – Pennsylvania’s clinical clerkship verification is called the “Certificate of Clinical Rotation” and is required from all your clinical clerkships and each site.

**Georgia** – Georgia also requires a clinical clerkship verification to be completed by the training institution for each rotation.

Make sure to verify these practices are current in each state, as rules change periodically.

For more information on state licensure of the above states, other potential “problem” states, and general guidelines, see the section on licensure on page 25 and download the [State Licensure Guide](#) on the Ross University web site under “Forms and Handbooks.”

Introduction to ERAS (June 2007)

If you have followed the pre-application procedures outlined, you should have your **personal statement** and **CV** prepared, your **Dean's Letter/MSPE request completed and sent** to the Department of Graduate Affairs, have begun **collecting letters of recommendation**, as well as started the research and identification of prospective programs. If you have completed these steps, you are ready to begin the application process, which means enrolling with ERAS.

**What is ERAS?**

ERAS stands for Electronic Residency Application Service. In other words, it’s a service that will make your application and materials available electronically to residency programs you have applied to, and who also have interest in you.

**How Do I Know if I Will Need to Use ERAS?**

Almost everyone uses ERAS in order to apply for residency.

Participation in ERAS is required for students taking part in the 2008 Match, graduating by May 31, 2008, and planning on beginning residency on July $1^{st}$ 2008 in the following specialties or combined programs:
Note: If you are applying for a residency in any of the above specialties, you will also need to register for the NRMP Match. We will cover the NRMP Match in the next section of the guide, as you register with the NRMP Match after you register with ERAS.

To get started, you must:

First, download the ERAS Applicant Manual in June 2007
Second, obtain your “token” (login number) from ECFMG in June 2007
Third, register with MyERAS in July 2007
Fourth, register with the NRMP Match in August 2007

Detailed instructions for all steps are outlined below.

Download ERAS 2008 Applicant Manuals from the ERAS web site (June 2007)

In mid-June, ERAS posts their applicant manual for the following Match year. For an exact date, log on to their web site at [www.aamc.org/students/eras/](http://www.aamc.org/students/eras/). Once available, you will be able to print out a pdf copy for your reference. On the main page, go to “Resources to Download.” You will communicate with ERAS through a system known as MyERAS, which will require an admission “token.” You acquire this token from ECFMG.

Request your “Token” from Your “Dean’s Office” (June 2007)

For students/graduates of foreign medical schools, ERAS is administered by ECFMG; therefore ECFMG is considered your designated “Dean’s Office.” You obtain your ERAS Token from ECFMG. The token is a sixteen digit electronic code that allows you to access MyERAS and the Applicant Web Station. Get your token by going to [http://www.ecfmg.org/erasinfo.htm/](http://www.ecfmg.org/erasinfo.htm/). Print out the Request Form.

You should also find information on requirements, fees, and ECFMG’s role in the ERAS/residency application process, dates/schedule, and frequently asked questions/FAQs at: [http://www.ecfmg.org/eras/](http://www.ecfmg.org/eras/)

Submit the Request Form to ECFMG/ERAS

You must submit the Request Form for an ERAS 2008 Token along with required payment. The ERAS 2008 Token will be faxed or e-mailed to you.
Register with MyERAS (July 2007)

Once you have received your “token,” you may register with MyERAS to begin working on your application using the MyERAS login link on the ERAS homepage.

Complete the Common Application Form

You will complete one Common Application Form through ERAS and pay the required fees. When using a credit card, you will pay all necessary fees depending on the number of programs to which you are applying. If you pay by check or money order, your application will not be made available to programs until your payment has cleared.

You may download an Applicant User Guide to help you through the process.

ERAS will instruct you on how to submit your supporting documentation, such as your personal statement, letters of recommendation, and the Common Application Form. ERAS will then scan these documents, attach them electronically to your application, and transmit the complete application to the ERAS Post Office.

You are not permitted to select programs until September, and programs cannot view your profile until September.

If you run into any technical difficulties entering the applicant web station, or while completing your application, you must contact ERAS technical assistance at myeras@aamc.org.

To receive ERAS updates via e-mail throughout the application cycle, sign up with the following ECFMG-related listserves:

- ECFMG-ERAS Reporter: http://www.ecfmg.org/reporter
- ECFMG-ERAS Correspondent: http://www.ecfmg.org/correspondent

Determine Your Match (July 2007)

Although you will very likely be using ERAS regardless of specialty, your specialty of interest will determine which Match you participate in. The discipline you choose to pursue will also dictate which of the four types of positions you will be eligible for. The four types are:

A Categorical position is one which offers full residency training required for board certification in that specialty.

A Preliminary position, by contrast, is a position offering 1-2 years of training, often prior to entry into advanced specialty programs. Many surgery and internal medicine training programs offer preliminary positions in addition to categorical positions.

Transitional Year programs are also considered preliminary year training programs. The objective of the Transitional Year is to provide a well-balanced and broad-based clinical year program of graduate medical education in multiple clinical disciplines. A Transitional Year can be ideal training for many types of PGY-2 or Advanced training programs.
Advanced positions, which do not commence until one to two years after the match, are in specialty programs that require completion of 1 or more years of preliminary training. Applicants without prior graduate medical training (fourth-year students) may apply for these positions while also applying for preliminary positions that are compatible with their plans.

The following specialties offer advanced positions (some of these may also have programs which offer categorical positions): urology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, dermatology, neurosurgery, radiology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, emergency medicine, neurology, psychiatry, anesthesiology.

Now That I Know What Type of Residency I Want to Get, Which Match Do I Go Through?

The majority of students participate exclusively in the NRMP Match, as NRMP facilitates the matching process for the majority of disciplines. There are however a few other disciplines that require you to participate in a separate match in place of, or in addition to, the NRMP Match. Those are:

Urology, Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology, Plastic Surgery

San Francisco Match, Urology Match, Canadian Match (CaRMS)

Urology reserves its own Urology Match, sponsored by the AUA. Students interested in neurology, neurological surgery, child neurology & neurodevelopmental disabilities, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, and plastic surgery participate in the San Francisco Match.

Although you will begin the application process in 2007 and obtain the results in 2008, these matches are for PGY-2 positions beginning in 2009. Since all of these require you to perform a preliminary year, you will need to apply for a preliminary position through ERAS and register for the NRMP Match.

If you are interested in participating in the Urology Match, please read instructions for participation in specialty matches on page 27, and the Urology Match in particular on page 28.

If you are interested in participating in the San Francisco Match, please read instructions for participation in specialty matches on page 27, and the San Francisco Match in particular on page 29.

If you are interested in these programs, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the process now, as SPECIALTY MATCHES TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO THE NRMP MATCH, so as to allow participation in the main Match if necessary.

If you will be participating in the Canadian Match (CaRMS), please go to page 17.

Send Letters of Recommendation to ERAS (July – October 2007)

You are responsible for submitting your letters of recommendation to ERAS. Ross University will not forward them for you. You must mail your recommendation letters to ECFMG/ERAS at the Philadelphia P.O. Box mailing address listed on all ECFMG ERAS paperwork. You do not have to send all letters of recommendation at once. As long as you properly identify each letter with your name and USMLE/ECFMG number, you may send them separately.

Most programs expect to have access to your letters of recommendation by October 31, 2007, but you may submit them earlier. You must allow approximately 10 business days of processing time from the
day ECFMG/ERAS receives your letters of recommendation until the day they become available to programs. Attach a “Document Submission Sheet” with your AAMC# before submitting them to ERAS.

Register for the NRMP Match (August 2007)

Now that programs have access to your information through ERAS, you must make yourself available to “Match” with them should they decide to rank you on their list of desirable candidates.

As stated in the beginning of the guide, as a foreign medical student, NRMP considers you an “independent applicant”. The NRMP will open for applicant registration in the middle of August 2007. For the exact date, please check their web site at www.aamc.org/nrmp.

The NRMP has a web-based Registration, Ranking, and Results System (R3). In other words, you will first register with them. Later, you will use NRMP to submit a Rank Order List (ROL) of the programs with whom you would accept a position should you match with them. Then in March, you will learn the results of your efforts – whether or not you have matched, and where.

Registration consists of an application, agreeing to their very strict terms and conditions, and payment.

The application deadline is normally December 1 (consult web site in August for exact dates).

Register for the Canadian Match, or CaRMS (August 2007)

The Canadian Resident Matching Service, or CaRMS, provides an electronic application service and a computer match for entry into postgraduate medical training throughout Canada.

Students interested in participating in the Main Canadian Match (R-1, or first iteration) must go to their web site at www.carms.ca. Registration begins on August 1 for a potential match into one of Canada’s 17 medical schools/residency programs.

Although a similar process, with a similar timetable, as the NRMP Match, CaRMS procedure varies slightly. CaRMS does however utilize the ERAS program as well. Those guidelines can also be found on the CaRMS web site at www.carms.ca. Please consult CaRMS for their entire matching process, including their procedures for applying to residency if you first did not qualify for their main match. This process is known as the second iteration, or R-2, a process similar to the NRMP scramble.

Please also refer to the guidelines on page 34 and consult the Canadian Medical Council web site for information on some of the additional steps that must be taken by students anticipating practice in Canada, such as the Canadian Qualifying Examination, visa issues, and taking the USMLE Step 3.

Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to ERAS (August – October 2007)

Before submitting this request, you should carefully review a student copy of your transcript for mistakes. Mail or fax (732) 978-5306 your request to the Department of Graduate Affairs for a student copy of your transcript if you haven’t received the copy sent with your Dean’s Letter yet. On your request, be sure to state your social security number, that you want it sent to ERAS, and sign the request.

If you didn’t already submit payment with your original Dean’s Letter request, in order to have your official transcript sent to ERAS, you must mail a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs. Along with your request, you must send a check for $10 payable to Ross University or MO along with your ECFMG/USMLE number and your social security number.
Most programs expect to have access to your transcript by October 31, 2007. You must allow approximately 15 business days of processing time from the day Ross University receives your transcript request/payment until the day your transcript can be made available to residency programs by ERAS.

**Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to ERAS (Aug. – October 2007)**

Once you have received and reviewed a student copy of your Dean’s Letter/MSPE, you may request that the formal/official version, on university letterhead, be mailed to ERAS.

If you didn’t already submit payment with your original Dean’s Letter request, you must mail a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs, along with a check for $10 payable to Ross University, your ECFMG/USMLE number, and your social security number.

Ross University will send your Dean’s Letter/MSPE to ERAS usually within five business days of having received your request/payment. However, regardless of when your letter is sent to ERAS, ERAS will not transmit any letters to programs until November 1st, the first Dean's Letter/MSPE distribution date.

**Begin Selecting Programs (September 2007)**

In September, you may begin selecting the programs to which you would like ERAS to transmit your application. The more programs you select, the higher the cost. You may add or change supporting documents, such as letters of recommendation, personal statement(s), and your CV, at any time.

Once the ERAS Post Office is open, ECFMG’s tracking system (ADTS) will allow you to check the status and progress of your application. While specific deadlines vary, most residency programs expect your application, with the exception of your Dean’s Letter/MSPE and your Step 2 CK and CS scores, to be complete by October 31, 2007.

**Programs May Begin Contacting the ERAS Post Office to Download Your MyERAS Profile (September 2007)**

The ECFMG/ERAS Post Office will open on a date in early September (consult site in August for exact date). At this time, programs may begin looking at your profile to consider you for an interview at the same time you begin selecting programs yourself.

**Note:** Availability of step scores varies depending on when you took the exam. Whether or not your Dean’s Letter/MSPE has been sent to ERAS, it will not be available for download to programs until November 1.

**Schedule and Attend Interviews (October 2007 – January 2008)**

Residency programs begin contacting applicants for interviews in November. Some programs begin interviewing in October. Regardless, the process continues until January. Since programs have a limited number of interview slots, you should schedule an interview as soon as they contact you. Books giving advice on applying for residency and going through the Match offer tips on the interview process. Refer to the resource list for titles. You will find contradicting advice on the best time to schedule an interview. While some sources state that interviewing in November gives you an advantage, others suggest interviewing in January. If you are still rotating, it is more important to plan your interview schedule according to what is most practical for you, while continuing to fulfill your clinical responsibilities.
You should possess some knowledge of the programs with which you will interview. The interview itself provides the best opportunity for you to learn about the program, and you are encouraged to ask questions. Afterward, you should ask for feedback to ensure a better performance with each subsequent interview.

What if I am Offered a Position Prior to Match?

Being offered and accepting a position prior to submitting your rank order list is known as having Pre-Matched.

**Interesting Note:** Of all the hurdles and disadvantages inherent in pursuing your degree as a foreign medical student hoping to obtain residency in the United States, the Pre-Match is an opportunity that ONLY exists for foreign medical students.

In the past, many Ross students have been offered pre-match positions during or shortly after an interview. If you anticipate accepting an offer from a particular program, do not withdraw from the Match until you have received a written, signed offer and have returned a signed acceptance. You then must withdraw through the NRMP web site.

**Last Month to Sit Step 2 and Receive Scores on Time (December 2007)**

If you haven’t scheduled the date you will sit for the Step II CK or CS by at least the end of December, it is very possible you will not receive the scores before the Rank Order List Deadline. If this is the case, you will be withdrawn from the Match and will have to try to find a position through the Scramble. In other words, schedule these tests immediately!

**Submit and Certify Your Rank Order List (February 2008)**

If you registered for the NRMP Match, you must submit a rank order list between mid-January 2008 and their established deadline in late February. You must also certify this list, alerting the NRMP that this is your final version of the list. The rank order list should be comprised of the programs with which you interviewed and from whom you would accept an offer. When composing the list, you must not consider whether you think the program will rank you or not. The order of the programs must depend strictly on your preference. It is in your best interest to list as many programs as possible (above 15 is recommended), as NRMP statistics show a consistent pattern of matched applicants having longer ROL’s. However, do not rank any programs from which you would not accept an offer, as matching to a program establishes a commitment to accept an appointment. After the deadline, you may not change your rank order list.

We advise not to wait until the last minute to submit and certify your Rank Order List, as the NRMP web site is quite busy at that time and you may not be able to enter it.

If you have unpaid NRMP fees by the Rank Order List deadline, you will be withdrawn from the Match.

**If your Step 2 CK and CS results are not available by the deadline, you will also be withdrawn.**

What if I don’t Think I Will Match?
Declare Your Intent to Scramble - if applicable (February 2008)

An email will be issued in February to all students who anticipate participating in the 2008 Match suggesting that if you have not pre-matched or have any doubt about the possibility of matching, that you should prepare to scramble. When you receive the e-mail, complete the attached form and fax or mail it to the Department of Graduate Affairs by March 2, 2008. The form will ask you to provide your social security number, phone number, and allow you to request scramble copies of your Dean’s Letter and updated transcript.

Please refer to Post-Match/Scramble after Obtain Match Results below.

Obtain Match Results (March 2008)

Match results become available on the NRMP web site in mid-March over a four day period:

On the first day, applicants find out whether or not they have matched at all.

Typically, three days later, at 1:00 pm, results for applicants are posted on the NRMP web site.

As the time draws near, the Department of Graduate Affairs will e-mail you an attachment for reporting your match results information.

What if I Didn’t Match?

Don’t worry yet. You still have options.

Post-Match/Scramble (March 2008)

The Scramble is the common name for the process of seeking a residency between mid-March and July 1st, as it is an option for 3 types of applicants:

1) those who registered for the NRMP and/or specialty matches but did not obtain a position.

2) those who were withdrawn from The Match for not having passing scores on all exams by the Rank Order List deadline.

3) those who did not previously apply for a position or participate in any match, but who will be ready to begin residency by July 1, 2008.

At noon the day after the Match, a list will become available of the programs with unfilled positions. If you were once registered with the NRMP Match, even if you withdrew or were withdrawn, you will have access to this list on the NRMP web site. If you were never registered for The Match, please know that Ross University is not able to provide the NRMP’s list of available Scramble positions. In order to get the list, you must register with NRMP, and some/many positions may require an application through ERAS.

If you are eligible to participate in The Match, it is in your best interest to participate in The Match rather than to look for a position through the Scramble. The Scramble should be considered a “Plan B” in your residency search. During the Scramble, positions are limited, the number of applicants is large, and the positions are filled quickly.

What Will I Need to Scramble?
Requirements for Participation in the Scramble

To participate in the Scramble you must:

- have access to a fax machine, since many residency programs prefer you to submit your application via fax. Have in your possession student copies of your Dean’s Letter/MSPE and transcript; have your test scores, recommendation letters, CV and personal statement ready for faxing.
- register with ERAS and submit a Common Application Form by early March 2008, as some programs prefer to receive your scramble application via ERAS.
- be scheduled to complete clinical rotations by May 31, 2008 to begin residency on July 1st.

The positions available during the Scramble are normally for residencies beginning on July 1, 2008. If you do not graduate by May 31, you will not be ECFMG certified and licensed in time to begin on July 1. In past years, some June 30 graduates have been able to obtain positions during the Scramble. If you are graduating on June 30th you may seek a position, but you must inform program directors that you will not be able to begin on time.

Procedures for Scrambling

1. Declare Your Intent to Scramble - if applicable

An email will be issued in February to all students who anticipate participating in the 2008 Match, suggesting that if you have not pre-matched or have any question about the possibility of your matching, that you should prepare to scramble. Complete the form sent with the email and fax or mail it to the Department of Graduate Affairs by March 3, 2008. The form will ask you to provide your social security number, phone number, and allow you to request scramble copies of your Dean's Letter and updated transcript.

2. Prepare to Scramble

(a) To scramble by fax, you need to have the following documents ready to fax to programs:

- Dean's Letter/MSPE (student copy)
- Transcript (student copy)
- 3 letters of recommendation
- Step 1 and Step 2 scores, (if available).
- Personal Statement
- A print out of the ERAS Common Application Form or a Universal Application Form.

(b) To scramble via ERAS, you must:

- Have requested an ERAS 2008 Token
- Submit your request form to ECFMG/ERAS
- Complete the Common Application Form
- Send letters of recommendation to ERAS
- Request Ross to send your transcript to ERAS (must be done by the end of February 2008)
- Request Ross to send your Dean’s Letter/MSPE to ERAS (must be completed by the end of February 2008)
3. Obtain List of Programs with Unfilled Positions

(a) If you were registered for the NRMP Match, simply log-on to the NRMP web site on the day after match day in March at 11:30 EST for Filled and Unfilled results of individual programs and 12 noon EST for locations of unfilled positions.

(b) If you were not registered with the NRMP, you will not have access to the list of programs online. You must register/be registered with NRMP in order to receive the list. Programs may also require you to apply through ERAS.

(c) Some additional unfilled/open positions may be obtained via the hotlines below:

1) Family Practice - (800) 288-2668
2) Ob/Gyn - (800) 673-8444 ext. 2559

(d) For positions in urology, consult the AUA web site at www.auanet.org.

(e) For positions in neurology, neurological surgery, otolaryngology and ophthalmology, consult the Vacancy Information System at www.sfmatch.org.

(f) Specialty professional organizations may post openings on their web sites.

4. Contact Programs and Submit Applications

(a) The list of unfilled positions will provide the phone number of each program. You must call each program to receive information on how to apply. If you are told to apply by fax, you must fax all the documents as listed.

(b) If you are told to submit your application via ERAS, you may go to your ERAS file and request that your application be forwarded to that program. You must also give the program your applicant ID.

(c) The Scramble continues until all positions are filled. If you are having trouble finding a position, it is recommended that you continue to contact the programs you are interested in periodically for any unexpected openings.

5. Schedule and Attend Interviews

(a) Programs that are interested in you will contact you directly.

(b) During Scramble, some of the programs may conduct telephone interviews.

6. Report on Your Position

As the time approaches, the Department of Graduate Affairs will e-mail you an attachment regarding information about your position. It is important to inform the Department of Graduate Affairs regarding your status/position.

Section E: Non-Traditional Start Dates
If you cannot graduate in time to begin a residency on July 1st, you can seek “midyear residencies”, as many non-traditional start dates begin in January. Some programs have the flexibility to negotiate a specific, mutually convenient start date. These residencies are harder to identify, since they are atypical and sometimes only available as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

Students interested in this option should simply contact the programs of interest and inquire if they offer midyear positions. In previous years, the supplement to the “Green Book” listed positions with multiple start dates. As of the 2001-02 edition, the GMED Companion: Supplemental Data for Choosing Your Residency Program is the AMA source. The GMED Companion contains general articles on obtaining a residency, information on thousands of residency programs, and information on alternate start dates. You may also check the previously mentioned telephone hotlines for openings throughout the year.

Consult the following as additional resources for finding a residency outside the Match or those programs with non-traditional start dates:

- FindAResident (associated with AAMC.org)
- Freida Online (associated with AAMC.org)
- www.careermd.com

All residency programs require a personal statement, transcript, letters of recommendation and a Dean's Letter as part of the application. If you plan on applying for a January start date, you need to follow the same Dean's Letter/MSPE guidelines and deadline as those applying for July 1st residencies.

We suggest that even if you are applying for positions beginning in January, you should also apply through ERAS for positions beginning the following July, since January positions are limited.

If you obtain a position beginning on a non-traditional date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date. Please see the appropriate section for special graduation dates on page 32.

Are There Other Options if I Don't Obtain a Residency?

Yes. It is important that you keep working even if you don’t obtain a residency right away. Whether your credentials were not competitive enough, or your timing with the Match made it difficult for you to obtain a position, you cannot let the fact that you didn’t Match get you down and hurt your confidence. Instead, you must find a way to make your situation work for you.

Remember, now that you have additional time, you can take advantage of it in several ways:

1) Get an update to your Dean’s Letter. You will benefit greatly if you have to go through the Match the following year if your Dean’s Letter is complete, meaning that any other evaluations that couldn’t be included at the time of its original writing, can now be included. A more comprehensive Dean's Letter will always work for you. If you have strong Step II scores, they can now be included, as they likely were not a part of the original composition. Also remember, you will now be working with a complete transcript.

2) Take the time to get more recommendation letters that you may not have been able to get prior. Gather as many recommendation letters as you can, so that you have a choice of using the best of all of them, rather than just hoping you can get the requisite number to go through the Match.

3) Some people elect to use the time to pursue another advanced degree, such as a Master in Public Health or a Master of Public Health Administration. Remember, every credential helps, and the more educated you are, the more likely program directors are going to want to consider you in the future.

4) If you didn’t Match because of possibly having less competitive credentials, it is important that you obtain work, even if it is volunteer work, within the hospital setting. You have to earn a reputation in the clinical setting. By working in the hospital and earning a reputation for your work, you are networking...
and making connections that could lead you to a spot, pre-Match, or some other future opportunity. If your credentials aren’t showing your strengths, you’ll have to take it into your own hands. Nobody is guaranteed a residency, particularly students who have struggled, but it is never too late to build a reputation as a solid worker, who programs would want to have in their unit in the future.

5) Remember, you now have an M.D. degree, which makes you a desirable prospect for physicians needing assistance as technicians or in research. By canvassing your local hospitals and their Human Resources departments, you may be able to find paid positions simply due to your availability and stature as a physician.

6) Go back to Dominica! Every semester, Ross is now looking for Problem-Based Learning Instructors to conduct group review and discussion sessions and to proctor and tutor for current students on campus. Ross takes care of most of your expenses, and the pay is typically in line with what you would receive as a first-year resident during a three-month period. Contact the Ross University Department of Human Resources at hr@rossu.edu to inquire about openings. Positions are limited.

7) Don’t give up. The vast majority of our students place in residencies within the first couple years after graduation. But for those who didn’t Match right away, it is because they were willing to do the extra work to make themselves a better candidate the second or third time around.

Report Pre-Match, Match, or Scramble Results (March – Graduation 2008)

Once you know where you will be practicing next year, it is important to report those results to the Department of Graduate Affairs at graduateaffairs@rossu.edu for our records. We will not publish your name with your residency appointment without first having asked your permission. However, we do like to create a list of residency programs to assist future Ross students in knowing where we are having success.

Please report:

- Name of Program/Hospital
- Location of Program/Hospital
- Specialty
- Type of Program (preliminary, categorical, advanced)

Your assistance in reporting your results is greatly appreciated.

Begin Collecting State Licensure Forms (Match – Graduation 2008)

Now that you know where you are going to practice, you must obtain at least a temporary licensure permit to begin practicing in that state. It is important that you collect your licensure documentation as soon as you know your Match results, as some state requirements can be extensive and time consuming. Many of them ask you to complete voluminous paperwork, and all of them ask you to send/collect information from certain third parties, such as Ross University and depending on the state, your clinical clerkship sites.

You may be able to complete a significant portion of your licensure application prior to your graduation. However, there will be portions, such as the forms you send to Ross University that simply CANNOT be completed until you have officially graduated.

Note: For a comprehensive state-by-state guide to licensure, please refer to our State Licensure Guide, also under “Forms and Handbooks.”

Complete Your State Licensure (Graduation 2008 – Residency 2008)
State licensing boards and statutes have become more and more stringent. Additionally, the rate of change and the types of changes are a direct result of the resources and Medical Practice Act of the individual state, as each state is the imprimatur. Regardless of the different regulations, keep in mind:

1. Pennsylvania and California, two popular states in which many Ross graduates want to obtain and do obtain licensure, are particular about requirements, as are Illinois, Massachusetts, Texas, and Virginia. These states often require many supporting documents from Ross University or your clinical training site. (Note: Ross University cannot complete California L6 forms or Illinois Af-Med forms. These forms must be completed by physicians/administrators at your clinical hospital sites.)
2. If you are seeking licensure in Florida, please see the instructions on the following page.
3. When seeking licensure for the first time or in another state, you should anticipate delays, as the state boards must fully investigate all submitted documents and credentials.
4. Never omit or hide negative and/or derogatory information, as any misrepresentation on a licensing application will result in either denial or future restrictions.
5. The peak workload of licensing boards and medical universities occurs between April and September, as everyone in medical education wants to be licensed between June and August.
6. Be patient with all administrative offices, as we at Ross University must research and evaluate your records and compose the appropriate supporting documentation to submit to the licensing boards.
7. The purpose of licensing boards is to be the watchdog, as the boards must protect the public from unprofessional and/or incompetent physicians. Such scrutiny is regulated by “recognized standards of professional conduct.”
8. All IMG’s (international/foreign medical graduates) must be ECFMG certified before starting residency, gaining licensure, and sitting for Step 3 [Oklahoma does not require ECFMG certification for licensure.]
9. Some state medical board web sites provide downloadable regulation(s) information and licensing application forms. Make sure you access the forms for students of foreign medical schools.
10. Students who are not U.S. Citizens or permanent residents must secure a visa for residency.
11. Before filing your application with any state, make sure you have confirmed your leaves of absence with the University. Remember: time taken in order to study or attend board reviews is considered a leave of absence for independent study. If Ross University reports them to a particular licensure board and you do not, you could be subject to a penalty for nondisclosure.

Particulars

Any forms that are to be verified or completed by the University must be directed to the Department of Graduate Affairs. If the form states that a transcript must be included, send a check for $10 payable to Ross University, along with the licensing form.

Again, Ross University cannot complete California L6 forms or Illinois Af-Med forms. They must be completed by a(n) physician/administrator at the hospital in which you conducted your clinical training.

Pennsylvania Licensing Issues:

The Pennsylvania State Board of Medicine requires 72 weeks of clinical rotations to be performed at ACGME approved institutions; this excludes all DO hospitals or programs. If you have performed less than 72 weeks in ACGME-approved hospitals, there are two choices: Either do not apply to programs in Pennsylvania or repeat weeks in ACGME-approved hospitals to fulfill the 72-week requirement. However, the 72 approved weeks must be completed by May 31, 2008 in order to begin residency on July 1, 2008. If re-mediation is needed, contact your clinical advisor.

Florida Licensure Issues:
Recently, the Florida Board has become very stringent with inconsistencies in reporting leaves of absence. If Ross University reports a leave, and the applicant fails to report the same leave (even if you merely forgot you had taken one), the Florida Board will subject you to a monetary penalty for nondisclosure, and the offense will become a part of your permanent record. It is important to verify breaks in your education with Ross, realizing that time taken to study/prepare for board exams is considered a leave of absence. Also, time away from classroom or clinical training over 30 days may be categorized as a break.

California Licensing Issues:

The California State Board of Medicine requires 54 weeks (including cores) of clinical clerkships to be performed through ACGME-approved programs or in hospitals with ACGME approved family practice residency programs. California will accept weeks in DO/unapproved rotations for electives only, provided they were completed in facilities outside California and at institutions with which Ross has a contract.

If...

(a) You have completed core rotations in DO hospitals or in hospitals that do not have ACGME-approved programs in family practice or in the area of specialty of choice.

or

(b) You have completed less than 54 weeks of clerkships in ACGME-approved teaching institutions.

…then you cannot apply for California licensure without making up those requirements. If re-mediation is needed, contact your clinical advisor.

Additionally, the procedure for obtaining a license in California makes it difficult to do a residency in California the same year of graduation. Many residency program directors do not interview, rank or offer residencies to foreign students/graduates who have not yet obtained the "status letter" from the Medical Board of California. The letter verifies eligibility for licensure in California and is issued only to graduated students and only after a review process of at least 45 days. Even if a program granted you an interview and stated that they would take you without the letter, if your anticipated graduation date is April 30 or May 31, 2008, you may not have enough time to acquire the status letter regardless.

There are three options for students who want to do a residency in California:

1) Complete a transitional or preliminary year elsewhere and go through the Match again the following year to look for a position in California.
2) Sit out a year.
3) Apply only to California hospitals from the list below or programs that inform you that they will consider the application even without a status letter.

The list below consists of hospitals that have granted interviews in previous years to students who did not yet have a status letter from the California Board. If applying to any in the list below, be sure to contact the institutions to see if the option still exists. All options, particularly those necessitating interruption of medical training, must be considered carefully. This is not a finite list. If you are interested in a California program, inquire if they will grant you an interview without the letter, as policies change every year.

- Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, Oakland
- California Pacific Medical Center, San Francisco
- San Joaquin General Hospital, Stockton
- Kern Medical Center, Bakersfield
- West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, Los Angeles
University of Southern California, Los Angeles
LAC-King/Drew Medical Center, Los Angeles
University of California San Francisco, Fresno

It is your responsibility to make sure that the Form L6 is completed for each rotation by the institutions where the clerkships were performed (i.e.: the hospital, not Ross University).

If you are a California resident and are scheduled to complete clinical rotations considerably prior to a scheduled graduation date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date that will allow you to obtain the status letter as early as possible. You will have to submit a written request and provide reason/evidence to the Registrar regarding why you will need the special date.

Texas Licensing Issues:
The Texas Medical Board recognizes Ross University as “substantially equivalent” to a Texas medical school, and Ross graduates are eligible for licensure there. Feel free to email Graduate Affairs at graduateaffairs@rossmed.edu if you have any questions. If you plan on applying for Texas licensure in the future, you may want to schedule and complete a rotation in neurology. Even though neurology is no longer a TX requirement, they have required clinical training in neurology for licensure in the past.

Texas also requires that all clinical rotations be completed in hospitals with ACGME or AOA-accreditation in the specific specialty. If you anticipate practice in Texas prior to Board Certification, please arrange appropriate rotations through your clinical advisor.

Idaho Licensing Issues:
Idaho will consider a Ross graduate on a case-by-case basis. Obtaining a license to practice in Idaho is not a guarantee.

Specialty Matches

The AUA Residency Matching Program oversees the Urology Match. The San Francisco Matching Program oversees separate matches for neurology, neurological surgery, ophthalmology, and otolaryngology. The scheduling of these specialty matches is designed to allow you to coordinate the application for PGY-2 positions in these specialties with the application for preliminary positions. These matches are timed to give you the result of the specialty match a month before you need to submit your rank order list to the NRMP. You can then determine your NRMP ranking based on your PGY-2 specialty match results.

Most urology programs and some neurology programs are integrated, meaning that they include a PGY-1 year within their training. However, many of them still require you to register for the NRMP Match and to rank the preliminary year of the program as your first choice. Refer to the section on NRMP and the Match for more information, for instructions on registering with the NRMP and applying through ERAS.

The Neurology Match, unlike the other specialty matches is a "two-tiered match." This means that two thirds of the positions available during the 2007 Match are for 2nd year positions beginning in July 2009. The other third is comprised of 2nd year positions beginning in July 2008. You may only apply for these latter positions if you graduated in 2006 or earlier and will be completing a preliminary year by July 2007.

Urology Match
Application Procedures for the AUA Residency Matching Program for Urology

1. Register for the Urology Match

You may register for the Urology Match as early as Spring 2007. There is no central application or electronic residency application system for urology positions. On the Urology Match web site (www.auanet.org), you will find a list of the participating programs and contact information. You must contact each program to request application materials.

In some cases, applicants must also go through the NRMP as a formality for the surgery training required before urology training. Applicants should check with each program to determine their requirements relative to the NRMP Match.

You can register on their web site using a credit card to pay the registration fee.

You will then receive your I.D. registration number, which you will make available to the programs you are applying to.

2. Request an ERAS 2008 Token (if necessary)

3. Submit the Request Form to ECFMG ERAS (if necessary)

4. Register for the NRMP Match

5. Contact Prospective Urology Programs

6. Complete Applications:
   a) Make sure to take note of the deadline for each urology program on the application and do not wait until the last minute. Include your I.D. registration number in each application.
   b) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

7. Send Letters of Recommendation to Urology Programs
   a) As discussed earlier, you are responsible for sending your letters of recommendation to each urology residency program. It is perfectly acceptable to send copies in the urology match. They may be sent along with the application or separately.
   b) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

8. Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to Urology Programs
   (a) Before submitting this request, you should carefully review a student copy of your transcript for mistakes. If you indicate that you want your student copy of your Dean's Letter/MSPE sent through the mail, you will receive a student copy of your transcript at that time. But if you have not received this mailing, and you want to submit your transcript to urology programs, you may fax a request for a student copy to (732) 978-5306. On your request, be sure to indicate your social security number, where you want your transcript to be faxed or sent, and sign the request.
(b) To request that your official transcript be sent to programs, send a typed list of the programs to the Department of Graduate Affairs. The fee to have your transcript sent to programs is $10 per transcript. Be sure to include a check with your request.

(c) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

9. Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to Urology Programs

(a) If you submitted a complete Dean’s Letter/MSPE request, a student copy will be mailed to you once it is written. Please keep in mind that Dean's Letters/MSPEs are written in the order the requests are received. The earlier you submit your complete Dean’s Letter/MSPE request, the earlier you will receive your student copy. If you submit your complete request on, or a few days prior to, the May 25 deadline, you can expect to receive your student copy around the end of October or beginning of November.

(b) After having reviewed the student copy of your Dean’s Letter/MSPE, you may request that it be mailed to Urology programs, by sending a typed list of the programs to the Department of Graduate Affairs. The fee to have your Dean's Letter/MSPE sent is $10 per letter.

(c) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

10. Schedule and Attend Interviews

11. Submit Your Rank Order List to the AUA

The AUA must receive your ROL via mail by their deadline in mid-January, 2008.

12. Obtain Urology Match Results

(a) In late January, the Department of Graduate Affairs at Ross will receive a fax with the results of the Urology Match. You may call for your results at that time.

(b) If you matched to a combined program and no longer need to participate in the NRMP Match, log-on to the NRMP web site to withdraw from the match.

(c) If you did not match, continue following the instructions for ERAS and the NRMP Match. Also, Urology openings after the Match can be obtained by logging on to the AUA web site at www.auanet.org.

San Francisco Match

Application Procedures for the Neurology, Neurological Surgery, Child Neurology & Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, Ophthalmology, and Plastic Surgery Matches through the San Francisco Matching Program (SFMP)

1. Register for Your Chosen Specialty Match

Visit the San Francisco Match web site (www.sfmatch.org) to print the registration form and submit it with the required fee. You will then receive your registration number via mail.

2. Request an ERAS 2008 Token (if necessary)
3. Submit the Request Form to ECFMG/ERAS

4. Register for the NRMP Match (if necessary)

5. Download the SFMP Central Application and Instructions
   (a) All specialties overseen by the San Francisco Matching Program use the Central Application Service/CAS, which will distribute your application to your selected programs.
   (b) Download the application from the web site (www.sfmatch.org), which also lists participating programs.

6. Complete Application
   (a) Make sure to note the deadline for each program and do not wait until the last minute to submit your application. Check the San Francisco Matching Program web site for deadline information for each program.
   (b) The application must be sent to the San Francisco Matching Program via mail. Include your registration number in your central application.
   (c) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

7. Send Letters of Recommendation
   (a) Send your letters of recommendation to the San Francisco Matching Program.
   (b) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

8. Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to the SFMP
   (a) Before submitting this request, you should carefully review a student copy of your transcript for mistakes. If you request that a student copy of your Dean's Letter be sent to you through the mail, a student copy of your transcript will be included. But if you want to submit your transcript to the SFMP programs prior, you may fax a request for a student copy to the Department of Graduate Affairs at (732) 978-5306. On your request, be sure to include your social security number, where we are to fax or send it, and your signature.
   (b) To request that your official transcript be sent to the SFMP, send a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs. With your written request, you must include a check for $10 made out to Ross University. We cannot accept a fax for this request.
   (c) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

9. Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to the SFMP
   (a) If you submitted a complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, a student copy will be mailed to you once it is written. Please keep in mind that Dean's Letters/MSPEs are written in the order the requests are received. The earlier you submit your complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, the earlier you will receive your student copy. If you submit your complete request before the May 25 deadline, you can expect to receive your student copy by the end of October or early November. Please go to Page 10 for critical information on Dean’s Letters.
(b) After having reviewed the student copy of your Dean’s Letter, you may request that it be mailed to SFMP by sending a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs. With your written request, you must include a check for $10 made out to Ross University.

(c) Ross University will send your Dean's Letter/MSPE to the San Francisco Matching Program usually within five working days of having received your request and payment. Dean's Letters/MSPEs will begin to be transmitted to all residency programs by the San Francisco Matching Program on November 1st, the first Dean's Letter distribution date.

(d) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

10. Schedule and Attend Interviews

11. Submit Your Rank Order List

   (a) Download the ROL form from the San Francisco Matching Program web site.

   (b) Rank the list of programs in order of matching preference and submit via mail.

   (c) Access http://www.sfmp.org/general/reg.html to obtain specialty submission deadlines, as each specialty has different dates.

12. Obtain Specialty Match Results

   (a) You must call the San Francisco Matching Program for your match results, which become available approximately 2 weeks after the deadline for submitting your rank order list.

   (b) If you matched with a combined program and no longer need to participate in the NRMP Match, log-on to the NRMP web site to withdraw from the match.

   (c) If you did not match, continue following the instructions for ERAS and the NRMP.

   (d) Openings available after the specialty matches can be obtained through the Vacancy Information System on the San Francisco Matching Program web site.

Graduation Related Information

Requirements for graduation:

- **To receive a diploma**, you must fulfill all requirements:

  - all official clinical evaluations must be received.
  
  - all accounts with Bursar and Financial Aid must be settled.
  
  - Exit Interview forms from the Registrar’s Department [and from the Financial Aid Department, if applicable] must be submitted.
  
  - Graduation application must be completed by deadline
  
  - All other paperwork must be completed as determined by a degree audit
• You must:
  • (a) complete clinical rotations on or before your scheduled graduation date.
  • (b) sit for and pass the Step 2 CK and CS

Please note that 2008 graduation dates may be subject to change, so check with the Office of the Registrar for information on these dates. At this printing, upcoming scheduled graduation dates are:

3/31/08; 5/31/08; 6/30/08 and 11/30/08
Commencement Ceremony 6/8/08

NOTE: Aside from 6/8/08, the above are not graduation ceremony dates; however, these are official dates of degree conferral for the purposes of issuing you a diploma and processing your ECFMG certification and state licensure (if applicable) paperwork. November 30th graduates walk in June of the following year.

Also, the graduation packages will be e-mailed to you about 3 months prior to the anticipated graduation date.

You should make sure that the Office of the Registrar has the correct permanent address on file for you. If you do not receive a graduation information packet at least one month before the ceremony, please e-mail the Office of the Registrar (www.registrar@rossu.edu) and include your e-mail address.

If you complete your clinical rotations considerably prior to one of the scheduled dates and need an earlier graduation date, check below to see if you are eligible to receive a special graduation date.

Special Graduation Dates

A special graduation date may be approved for the following reasons:

• You are a Canadian Citizen and are required to take Step 3 to obtain a Visa. You must submit proof of citizenship with request. [copy of passport]

• You are applying for California licensing. You must submit L2 and L5 of California licensure application, along with $10 for transcripts with request for special graduation date. If you are applying for a special graduation date between 7/31 and 10/31, submit supporting documentation from the program you are applying to, which states that the program will not offer you an interview without the ECFMG certificate. Otherwise, a special graduation date will only be approved between 12/31 - 4/30 to afford the 45 - 60 days required for California to issue the Status Letter.

• You have received a residency position, which is scheduled to begin more than one month before your scheduled graduation date. With your special graduation date request, you must submit a copy of a signed contract or letter from the program director indicating that they are offering you a position to begin before your scheduled graduation date.

Under no circumstances will a special graduation date be given for a day other than the last day of the month in which you complete the clinical curriculum and pass the required boards.

To apply: Submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar, requesting a special graduation date and the anticipated date you will complete all requirements. Attach the above-listed required
documentation applicable to your situation with the graduation application, which is available at <http://www.rossu.edu>. Choose the School of Medicine, then I am a...Current student from the lower right tab. On the current student page, click into the Registrar link and then onto the graduation materials.

**ECFMG Eligibility for Certification**

(a) you must have passed Step 1 and Step 2 CK and CS to graduate.

(b) On the day of your graduation, certified copies of your diploma will be sent to ECFMG, provided you have cleared the degree audit, which includes the clinical department having received the originals of all your evaluations.

(c) The diploma copies are then returned to the University for verification and are again mailed to ECFMG. The certificate is then issued to you and mailed to the address ECFMG has on file for you. The process, in its entirety, takes 3-4 weeks from the graduation date.

(d) If you change your address after you graduate, but before you receive your certificate, you must notify ECFMG. Fax all changes of address to Caroline Alesiani at (215) 386-9767. The change of address should include: your full name, ECFMG number, old address, new address, a home phone number where you can be reached and your signature.

**Visa Issues**

If you are neither a U.S. Citizen nor a permanent resident and you are planning to apply to residency programs in the United States, you must secure a visa (either J -1 Visa or an H -1 Visa). **Furthermore, you are obligated to inform the program directors of your immigration status.**

**J - 1 Visa**

The J - 1 Visa, the more common of the two, is a sponsorship through ECFMG. To initiate the process for acquiring a J -1 Visa, contact ECFMG to obtain the appropriate paperwork (MF-1/Application for Initial Sponsorship). You may contact the Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program by phone at (215) 662-1445 or via <http://www.ecfmg.org/evsp/index.html>.

ECFMG has United States Department of Education authority to sponsor “foreign national physicians as Exchange Visitors in accredited programs of graduate medical education or training or advanced research programs. Exchange Visitors sponsored by ECFMG receive a Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J -1 Visa) Status (Form IAP-66). This document is used to apply for the J -1 Visa.”

In order to be sponsored, you must have secured a valid ECFMG certificate. ECFMG will issue form IAP-66 to those who have the following: a) proof of acceptance into an ACGME accredited residency program and b) receipt of completed application for initial J -1 Visa sponsorship. You must see to it that the J -1 Visa is renewed each year - you make this renewal request in conjunction with the training institution (i.e.: the hospital of residency). The length of time allowable to use the J -1 Visa is “limited to the time typically required to complete the advanced medical education program”. Additionally, it is your responsibility to alert ECFMG of any changes in your status while you are training.

The J-1 visa has two requirements:

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1) You must have a copy of your contract with a residency program.
2) You must have a letter issued to you by the Ministry of Health of the country where you are a legal permanent resident. (If you are a citizen of one country but maintain a permanent residency in another country, the letter should come from the latter). The letter must state the country’s need for this type of physician and that you have an intent to return to your home country after you receive your training.

For Canadians Wanting to Practice in Canada

The minimum examination requirement for a graduate of a medical school outside Canada/U.S. is the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination. Medical students may apply to write the examination in their final year of medical school if they intend to apply for a Statement of Need from the Government of Canada in support of a J-1 Visa application. Contact the Medical Council of Canada for information on schedules and fees. It is recommended that the medical student write the MCC EE in January before the beginning of the residency.

There is no requirement to obtain a contract or return-in-service agreement in any province or territory prior to applying for a Statement of Need. The provinces and territories provide a projected need for medical specialties on an annual basis and Health Canada administers the program on their behalf.

Contact Information at Health Canada:

Program Administrator
Statement of Need / J-1 Visa Program
Health Human Resource Strategies Division
Health Care Policy Directorate
Health Policy and Communications Branch
HEALTH CANADA
Address Locator 1918C, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B4
Telephone: (613) 952-1912, Facsimile: (613) 948-8081


H - 1B Visa

To obtain the H -1B Visa, which is a temporary worker visa, you must contact the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service at 800-375-5283. Because ECFMG has no role in the H - 1B Visa, the arrangements are made between you and the residency program; thus, the training institution sponsors you as the H -1B Visa holder. Securing this visa is dependent upon the efforts made by both you and the training institution. Be aware that residency programs are granted a certain number of H -1B Visas yearly; therefore, program directors must know of your need for a visa in order to hold one for you.

Students must take the USMLE Step 3 in order to qualify for the H -1B. In order to take Step 3, you must be a graduate and you must apply to take the exam in one of the few states that allow you to take the exam prior to starting residency. If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and are scheduled to complete your clinical rotations considerably prior to a scheduled graduation date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date that will allow you to take Step 3 as early as possible. You will have to submit a written request and provide reason/evidence to the Registrar regarding why you will need the special date.

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For information on Step 3, contact the Federation of State Medical Boards at (817) 571-2949 or (817) 868-4041 or access www.fsmb.org.

Another source for e-mail immigration and visa law information is available via Visalaw.com Health Care Immigration Newsletter at http://www.visalas.com/IMG/email.htm.

**Resident Profiles**

Read the following profiles of Ross graduates who began residencies between July 2002 and July 2005. These experiences will be of interest to you, as they may be similar to your own.

**Syed Ahmed**

Ross University graduate Syed Ahmed recently obtained a residency at Ohio State University Hospital, which boasts one of the most respected neurology departments in the United States. However, Dr. Ahmed contends that he did not achieve this position based solely on academic performance. In fact, Dr. Ahmed strongly suggests that students should give equal attention to academics, discipline, and personality. Academics, Dr. Ahmed maintains, are very important, and he did perform well during his time at Ross. However, upon entering the highly competitive medical field, he needed to compensate in order to vie with those students with better GPA’s who may have been competing for the same residencies. He did so in two ways: staying focused and building a reputation.

Dr. Ahmed, like many medical students, was inspired to enter the field at an early age. Having first been introduced to the profession by his mother (also a physician), Dr. Ahmed’s interest grew as he immersed himself in the study and practice of medicine. Throughout his undergraduate studies, he participated in a number of programs, including volunteer work at the University of Virginia Pharmacy and Johnston Willis Hospital. However, according to Dr. Ahmed, “It was my time working as an emergency medical technician in college that led me to chose medicine as a career path.” Upon matriculating to Ross University School of Medicine, Dr. Ahmed performed very well during his basic sciences, and at an outstanding level during his clinical rotations. Admittedly, though, his “Step I and Step II exam scores were just average.” How, then, did a student who was not at the top of his class, and who was a foreign medical graduate, attain a much-sought-after position in one of the nation’s top neurology departments?

In order to earn interviews at the hospitals of his choice, Dr. Ahmed made sure to remain diligent and pay close attention to deadlines. In preparation to participate in the Match, Dr. Ahmed realized that he not only had to request letters of recommendation early, but he had to request them from the right people. He advises students to be aware that programs are most influenced by “recommendations from professors in your area,” and that recommendations are looked at very closely. In his experience, Dr. Ahmed noticed just how heavily these letters weighed on a hospital’s decision to grant an interview. “Programs,” he says, “really do look at the whole portfolio.” He emphasizes that students’ grades on the Step I or Step II exams, for example, will not necessarily make or break their chances of obtaining interviews, and eventually, residencies. If students fall behind in one aspect of their performance, they can still make good impressions by obtaining appropriate letters of recommendation, and preparing all documents required to participate in the Match “on time, if not earlier.” By wisely submitting his materials as early as he could, Dr. Ahmed was able to match at Prince George’s Hospital Center, where he will spend his preliminary year before starting his residency in Ohio State University’s Department of Neurology.

While all of Dr. Ahmed’s strategies for obtaining a residency proved useful, the most effective, in his opinion, was building a reputation. Dr. Ahmed describes himself as “very professional, easy to get along with, and willing to work on a team.” This self-description of his personality was confirmed by Dr.
Ahmed’s attending physician at Prince George’s, who stated, “His interaction with patients is exemplary and he never hesitated to make sacrifices or take initiative when assigned patients to manage.” One thing to keep in mind, says Dr. Ahmed, is that “once you get the interview, it matters less and less where you went to school. It matters who you are and what your personality is.” This attitude proved beneficial to Dr. Ahmed, who will not only be the first Ross University graduate in Ohio State University’s neurology program, but also the first foreign medical graduate in that program. Still, his success at Ross and in the Match has only strengthened Dr. Ahmed’s philosophy on success in the medical field. When asked about his thoughts on starting at Ohio State, Dr. Ahmed said that he was “ecstatic,” but added, “I’ll have to make sure that I’m well-prepared and go the extra mile to gain the faculty and patients’ respect.”

Rob Alexander

Dr. Rob Alexander’s education in chiropractic medicine, which he completed with honors, and his three and a half years of private practice as a chiropractor proved to have been assets to his training as a medical physician. He made the transition easily, earning nearly straight A’s throughout his basic science education on Dominica, then impressing his clinical preceptors during his clerkships with both his medical knowledge and his high standards of ethics. He served as a mentor to his fellow basic science students, and was most appreciated by his professors for his obvious dedication to achieving his goal, as well as for his giving and caring personality. “He handled situations with aplomb,” stated a professor who noted that a patient had informed him that Dr. Alexander provided him with some of the best service he ever had. The evaluating physicians of his rotations, all of which were performed at the Chicago Medical School affiliated Jackson Park Hospital, recognized Dr. Alexander for the knowledge he accumulated and utilized in diagnosing and treating his patients, but particularly praised him for his bedside manner. Many commented that he would make an outstanding physician.

Although the move to pursue an MD was a natural one for Dr. Alexander, and his grades were high, his medical education was not without complications. After earning A’s in all his first semester classes, and continuing to do as well during the next semester, he had to withdraw from school. “It was the most difficult decision I had ever faced,” he said. “In the middle of my second semester, I received a phone call from home that my grandfather had become gravely ill. If I were to go home and see him it would mean withdrawing from medical school for the semester.” He was close with his grandfather, who had been encouraging and supportive of Dr. Alexander’s dreams and pursuits. “I decided I would be there for him in his final days.” So Dr. Alexander temporarily withdrew from Ross University with more than half of the semester’s examinations behind him, and when he came back the following semester, he had to repeat those courses.

Of course, he received A’s in all of these courses, and continued to excel as he fulfilled the academic portion of his medical education, but a big piece of his education was achieved in that time he was not on the island. “I spent several days at the hospital where my grandfather was being treated. His prognosis was poor as he was in advanced stages of malignancy. His pain was constant.” Witnessing his grandfather’s terminal illness and meeting the anesthesia pain management specialist who would be treating him enlightened Dr. Alexander and influenced the decisions he would then make. “I had not been aware that there were specialists in the treatment of pain, and I soon became fascinated with this particular area of medicine,” he said. “As the days passed, my grandfather’s physical condition deteriorated; however, he remained free of pain and discomfort.” So his grandfather, who gave Dr. Alexander the support he needed to return to school with certainty and confidence at age thirty, was once again a motivating factor, as Dr. Alexander knew what specialty he would pursue. “I like to think his passing gave new direction to my life, and I am forever grateful to the doctor that helped to alleviate his pain during his final days. I returned to medical school the subsequent semester with a new sense of purpose and mission.”
As a chiropractor, he treated lower back pain. “However, I felt limited by what I could accomplish for my patients with only spinal manipulative therapy,” says Dr. Alexander. “The field of pain management, which is a one-year fellowship following an anesthesiology residency, was just the approach to treating the patient for which I was looking. A pain management specialist can treat conservatively as well as offer more invasive measures for treating pain.” The Match process worked very well for Dr. Alexander. He applied to 40 anesthesia, university-based, residency programs, was invited to interview at 21, and chose 13 with which to interview, including Tufts University, The Cleveland Clinic, the University of Miami, the University of Florida, and Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. “Most programs tried to sell me on their program, and interview questions were mainly things like ‘Why did you choose Anesthesiology?’ One program director actually gave me an ECG to read on the spot. I felt that was done to see how I would respond under pressure rather than give an accurate interpretation of the electrocardiogram. I must have done well because that turned out to be the program with which I matched! I obtained my surgery preliminary year through the ‘Scramble’ at the same program I will be doing my anesthesiology residency, which is Baystate Medical Center/Tufts University School of Medicine Program.” His new residency director helped arrange the preliminary year. “On the morning of the ‘Scramble,’ I only had to make one phone call, which was to the Surgery Department at Baystate to verbally accept the offer.”

“Overall, I had a positive experience with the Match,” Dr. Alexander says. “The Tufts University Program at Baystate Medical Center had 5 positions available. They received over one thousand applications, and interviewed approximately 150 applicants. I am very fortunate to have obtained a position there and hope to do my Pain Management fellowship at Baystate as well.”

**Anh Nguyen**

That statement that Anh Nguyen “really likes being a doctor” – made by one of her supervising physicians at the UCLA affiliated Kern Medical center in Bakersfield, California – may be an understatement. She earned the honor of attending this noted teaching hospital by achieving an excellent ranking in the basic sciences, placement on Ross University's Dean’s List, and a high score on her USMLE Step I exam. Throughout her medical education, Dr. Nguyen took advantage of every opportunity available to her, demonstrating an interest in all the subjects she was taught and an eagerness to absorb all the medical knowledge she could. Her professors and preceptors were highly impressed and appreciative of her ambition, which was heightened by her strong sense of reliability and compassionate patient care.

Dr. Nguyen's drive and enthusiasm, plus her positive outlook on life, come from a deep appreciation of the opportunities she has had, the strength of her family, the kindness of others, and her inherent need to give back to the community. Although life has not been easy for her and her family, the events that unfolded served to build her character and reinforce her family's bond. “My family escaped from Saigon in the final days of the Vietnam War in 1975,” says Dr. Nguyen. “I was three years old at the time.” Her father, a lawyer; her mother, a homemaker; and their seven children left everything behind and fled to a refugee camp in Malaysia. After six months there, they came to the United States and made a home in San Francisco. Her mother, who spoke very little English, got a job with the city's social service agency and worked hard to support her family. With the example of diligence, perseverance, and caring set by her family, and the compassion and benevolence of a whole community of people that helped them, it was inevitable that she would not only pursue a career that would allow her to help others, but that she would excel in her studies as she did so.

While a sociology and chemistry student, she worked her way through college assisting in a dentist's office, and served as a hospital volunteer and as public outreach educator for the American Heart Association. As these experiences helped shape her choice to enter medical school to become a physician, it was her clinical clerkship in obstetrics and gynecology that led her to discover her true
calling. “It was my first rotation,” she says, “and I loved it.” Afterward, she explains, she found herself comparing every rotation to that one. “But OB encompasses every aspect of medicine. Clinic, surgery, procedures, interaction with my peers from other services…a little bit of everything.” So, as she entered the 2002 Match, she applied to many ob/gyn programs countrywide, and several internal medicine programs in California as a back-up. But “Plan B” was not necessary. Her impressive grades and Board scores gained Dr. Nguyen invitations to interview with the obstetrics and gynecology programs at Georgetown, Yale, and LSU, among others. Although she prepared to scramble, her interviews had gone well and she matched with Georgetown University Hospital in DC. She recalls the interview process at Georgetown: a round table discussion with seven other interviewees, many from top schools. Given her out-going personality and her confidence level, Dr. Nguyen was very comfortable relating to the program director, and to her fellow applicants. A sincere believer in cooperation and collaboration, she was able to demonstrate that her strong sense of teamwork is a most valuable and valued asset through this forum. Also notable is her enthusiasm about being a doctor, and about the field she will specialize in. “The one thing that my good test scores, Dean’s honors and recommendations don’t portray well is how I feel about my chosen path,” she says. “For me, the pleasure and honor of helping a mother bring a new life into this world is not found in test scores and written opinions—no matter how positive they are.”

As she completes her final rotation and as her medical education comes to fruition, Dr. Nguyen describes a myriad of feelings about beginning her career as a physician and working in obstetrics and gynecology —“scared, excited, ecstatic, …but I really feel honored and blessed.” Above all, she feels truly grateful for the people who have inspired her. “A great person once told me that extraordinary acts are achieved by ordinary lives tempered with a singular focus,” said Anh, in reference to her mother. “These are, she said, not God-given rights, but rather gifts only we can give ourselves.”

**Brett Richards**

Dr. Brett Richards remembers having an interest in the biological sciences from the time he was a child. Events and influences throughout his childhood constantly reinforced that interest. By the time he was in high school he had decided he would become a doctor, and watched The Learning Channel program “Operation.” “At that time I knew that I wanted to go to medical school, but that program sparked my interest in surgery.” He went to college at Texas A&M University and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in biomedical science, while volunteering in hospital emergency medicine departments and training as an emergency medical technician. But he was also attracted to the field of orthopedics, and had the opportunity to explore that discipline further working as a scrub tech at a hospital in Dallas that is home to the Texas Back Institute and the Texas Institute for Joint Replacement. “This is where I received a real understanding of the magnitude that an orthopedist can [have] in affecting a patient’s ability to regain their independence through various surgical procedures that allow these individuals a return of function,” he says.

And so, Dr. Richards attended medical school with a specific objective in mind and an idea of how to achieve it. “I truly believe that students who are interested in the more competitive residencies have to formulate a plan and set goals from the first day of medical school.” Completing his basic science education on Dominica with an excellent rating and a score of over 200 on his Step I exam, he went on to perform at an outstanding level throughout his clinical clerkships and earned a 243 on his Step II exam. He received A’s in the vast majority of his rotations, including his surgery core and three surgery electives. The chief of surgery at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore, where he completed his core, “strongly” recommended him for internship, and his orthopedic surgery evaluator found that “he displayed a fund of knowledge far more advanced than his level of training.” “He was extremely interested and eager to assist other members of the team,” the evaluator added. “Brett will make an excellent physician.”
“I come to all clinical rotations prepared, having studied numerous hours for any given rotation,” Dr. Richards said of his dedication to his medical education, which is evidenced by its own results. He finished his clerkships in mid-August of 2001, too late to participate in the 2001 Match, but not too late for him to use his time wisely and garner valuable experience. The preceptor of his hand surgery rotation, who is the Director and Chief of Hand Surgery at the Curtis National Hand Center in Baltimore, was impressed with Dr. Richard’s performance that he offered him a research position after his clinical requirements were complete. “I truly feel that research is an integral part of medical education, and my time there was well spent,” Dr. Richards says of the eight-month experience.

He was following through on his plan, and continued to do so as he entered the Match. Dr. Richards applied to roughly 100 programs – about 90% in orthopedics, the rest in categorical general surgery, his back-up. “The interview process was enjoyable and often frustrating at the same time,” he says. Discrimination against foreign medical school graduates in this field is rampant. I always made every effort to steer the conversation away from ‘Brett the Ross student,’ to ‘Brett the qualified orthopedic candidate.’ I felt the key to my success during the interview process was remaining calm, confident, and above all, just being myself and allowing my personality to come through. If you just try to tell them what they want to hear they will see straight through the façade.” Determined not to allow any stumbling blocks to keep him from his goal, Dr. Richards found persistence and perseverance to be key, “but so is maintaining a realistic idea of where you stand amongst the field of qualified applicants,” he says. “At every interview there was always a least one resident who would ask me upon finding out I was an FMG, ‘Why do you think you got an interview here?’ My answer was always, ‘Because I am just as qualified as anyone here.’”

Dr. Richards received interviews for orthopedics from Loyola University in Chicago, the University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas, West Virginia University in Morgantown, and Louisiana State University in Shreveport, and interviewed at most of the surgery programs he applied to. He Matched in orthopedic surgery at LSU. “Like they say,” says Dr. Richards, “it only takes one program.”
Resources

There are several books available on the residency application process. Additionally, the home pages, web sites, newsletters and publications of professional/specialty organizations are all good resources. Below, find a list of publications, organizations and their web sites, contact information and other helpful web sites.

(A) Publications

Tucson, Arizona: Galen Press, (2003);
This book is an excellent source for information covering every phase of the residency search, from choosing a specialty to writing your personal statement to interviewing. Provides advice for students on looking for a residency both in and out of the Match. The annotated bibliography is extremely useful.

A guide to looking for a residency and navigating the matching process. This book includes tips about applying to residencies in each specialty, the odds of obtaining a residency in a particular specialty and suggests resources to reference and which specialty organizations to contact. A more recent edition of this book may be available.

Tysinger, James, *Résumés and Personal Statements for Health Professionals*, 2nd Ed.
As the title suggests, this book provides information on writing personal statements and putting your résumé together. The majority of the book is comprised of sample résumés and personal statements. It is a relatively inexpensive and useful source.

AMA, *State Medical Licensure Requirements and Statistics*.
AMA, (2006):
As the title suggests, this book provides valuable information and does so in a very direct manner.

(B) Publications by professional organizations

[Note: Contact information for each of these is listed in the organization list.]

**COTH Directory**:
Lists all hospitals that are members of the Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH) and gives descriptions of each institution. It is published by the American Association of Medical Colleges.

**COTH Survey of Housestaff Stipends, Benefits and Funding**:
Describes the salaries and benefits offered to residents by type of institution and region of the country. It is published by the American Association of Medical Colleges.

**Directory of Family Practice Residency Programs**:
Lists all currently approved family practice residencies and a variety of details about the program, such as number of spots, the number obtained by U.S. and foreign graduates, level of responsibility by post-graduate year, salaries, benefits, faculty to student ratio, etc. It is published by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

**Directory of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Training Programs**:
Lists accredited programs and details about each. It is published by the Association of Academic Physiatrists.
Directory of Preventive Medicine Residency Programs in the United States and Canada:
Lists approved programs (its publication date is 1991, so ask for a separate current list) in preventive medicine, aerospace medicine, occupational medicine and public health, as well as other specialty-specific information. It is published by the American College of Preventive Medicine.

Directory of Psychiatric Residency Training Programs:
Lists all accredited programs and many details about each program, such as: who's filling them, how many are available through the Match, how many are available outside of the Match, demographics of patients, salaries and benefits, etc.

Emergency Medicine in Focus:
A good resource for students who are interested in doing residency in emergency medicine published by the Emergency Medicine Residents Association. Other useful publications from this organization are the Job Catalog and Career Planning Guide.

Exchange Section 1: USMLE and M.D. Licensing Requirements:
Summarizes the licensure requirements to obtain initial licenses, licensure by endorsement and licensure for postgraduate training in each state, including eligibility requirements to sit for USMLE Step 3. This book is published by the Federation of State Medical Boards.

Graduate Medical Education Directory (The Green Book):
Lists all ACGME-accredited residency programs by specialty and state, with information on the number of positions offered by each program, university affiliations, etc. It is published by the American Medical Association.

GMED Companion: Supplemental Data for Choosing Your Residency Program, 2005-2006:
Features information on 4,200 residency programs, including salary, start dates, hours of duty, and curricula. Also includes articles on obtaining a residency, international medical graduates, and growth of specialization in GME. It is published by the American Medical Association.

State-Level Data for Accredited Graduate Medical Education Programs in the U.S.:
Gives valuable information on the number of residency positions offered in each specialty by state and the number of those positions that are held by foreign medical students/graduates. It is published by the American Medical Association.

The New Physician:
A monthly publication of the American Medical Student Association that deals with topics of general interest to medical students, such as medical specialties and The Match.

Transitional-Year Program Directory:
Lists available transitional-year programs and details about each; has much hard-to-come-by information. It is published by the Association for Hospital Medical Education.

US Medical Licensure Statistics and Current Licensure Requirements:
Outlines the number of licenses given out by each state board and to whom, as well as summarizing the licensure requirements of each state. This book is published by, and can be ordered from, the American Medical Association.
Helpful Web Sites

www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2997.html:

This is the web site for the Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA). It provides a listing of all residency programs and useful information about each. You should use this site often as you research prospective programs.

www.amsa.org:

This is the web site for the American Medical Student Association, which sponsors an annual convention for medical students. The web site has a wide range of topics of interest to medical students, and gives you access to the AMSA Resource Center and legislative news.

www.careermd.com:

This web site contains articles that deal with topics of general interest to medical students, such as going through The Match, advice on choosing a specialty and writing a personal statement, information on residency programs, and personal accounts from residents of their postgraduate training experiences.

www.studentdoc.com:

This is the web site for the Medical Student Resource Guide, which offers on-line resources for medical students, including information on preparing to obtain a residency.

www.studentdoctor.net:

This is the link/resource page for the Student Doctor Network, which contains resources for medical students and residents, presents articles, and provides message boards, as well as other useful web sites not listed here.
Organizations

American Hospital Association: www.aha.org
One North Franklin
Chicago, IL  60606-3421
312-422-3000

American Academy of Family Physicians: www.aafp.org
11400 Tomahawk Creek Pkwy
Leawood, KS  66211-2672
913-906-6000
Residency Information: 800-288-2668
Keeps a list of open residency positions (updated the 1st and 15th of each month)

American Academy of Neurological and Orthopaedic Surgeons: www.aanos.org
2300 S. Ranch Dr., Suite 202
Las Vegas, NV  89102
702-388-7390; FAX: 702-871-4728

American Academy of Ophthalmology: www.aao.org
P.O. Box 7424
San Francisco, CA  94120-7424
415-561-8500; FAX: 415-561-8533

American Academy of Otolaryngology: www.entnet.org
1 Prince St.
Alexandria, VA  22314-3357
703-836-4444

American Academy of Pediatrics: www.aap.org
141 Northwest Point Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL  60007-1098
847-434-4000; FAX: 847-434-8000

American College of Emergency Physicians: www.acep.org
1125 Executive Circle
Dallas, TX  75038-2522
800-798-1822; FAX: 972-580-2816
[Note: Offers information on residency and on the Emergency Medicine Resident Association.]

American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists: www.acog.org
409 12th St. S.W., P.O. Box 96920
Washington, DC  20090-6920
202-638-5577

American College of Physicians/American Society of Internal Medicine: www.acponline.org
190 N. Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA  19106-1572
American College of Preventive Medicine: www.acpm.org
1307 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC  20005
202-466-2044; FAX: 202-466-2662

American College of Radiology: www.acr.org
1891 Preston White Dr.
Reston, VA  22091-4397
703-648-8900

American Medical Association: www.ama-assn.org
515 N. State St.
Chicago, IL  60610
800-621-8335

American Medical Student Association: www.amsa.org
1902 Association Dr.
Reston, VA  20191
703-620-6600; FAX: 703-620-5873

American Neurological Association: www.aneuroa.org
5841 Cedar Lake Rd., Suite 204
Minneapolis, MN  55416
952-545-6284; FAX: 952-545-6073

American Psychiatric Association: www.psych.org
1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1825
Arlington, VA  22209-3901
703-907-7300

American Urological Association Residency Match Program
Office of Education, American Urological Association: www.auanet.org
1000 Corporate Blvd.
Linthicum, MD  21090
1-866-746-4282, ext. 3913; FAX: 410-689-3939

Association for Hospital Medical Education: http://www.ahme.org/
205 Sixth Street
Irwin, PA  15642
724-864-7321; FAX: 724-864-6153

Association of Academic Physiatrists: www.physiatry.org
Department of PM & R
1106 N. Charles Street, Suite 201
Baltimore, MD  21201
410-637-8300; FAX: 410-637-8399

Association of American Medical Colleges: www.aamc.org
2450 N Street, NW
Washington, DC  20037-1127
202-828-0400; FAX: 202-828-1125
College of American Pathologists: www.cap.org
325 Waukegan Road
Northfield, IL 60093
800-323-4040 or 847-832-7000; FAX: 847-832-8000

Council, Teaching Hospitals & Health Systems (COTH): www.aamc.org/members/coth
Association of American Medical Colleges
2450 N St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20037-1126
202-828-0541

Educational Council for Foreign Medical Graduates/ECFMG: www.ecfmg.org or www.ecfmg.org/eras
3624 Market St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215-386-5900; FAX: 212-386-9196

Emergency Medicine Residents’ Association: www.emra.org
1125 Executive Circle
Irving, TX 75038
972-550-0920; FAX: 972-580-2829

Federation of State Medical Boards of the U.S.: www.fsmb.org
PO Box 619850
Dallas, TX 75261-9850
817-868-4000; FAX: 817-868-4099
[NOTE: USMLE Step 3 application and administration (for some states)].

National Association of Residents and Interns: www.nari-assn.com
Hillsboro Executive Center North
350 Fairway Drive, Suite 200
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441-1834
1-800-221-2168; FAX: 954-571-8582

National Resident Matching Program: www.nrmp.org
2450 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037-1127
202-828-0566 or 1-866-617-5838; FAX: 202-828-4797

Ross University School of Medicine
499 Thornall Street, 10th floor
Edison, NJ 08837
732-978-5300

(a) Department of Graduate Affairs: General Information x 2676 or graduateaffairs@rossu.edu

(b) Office of the Registrar: registrar@rossu.edu

(a) Clinical Department: clinical@rossu.edu

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Society of Academic Emergency Medicine: www.saem.org
901 N. Washington Avenue
Lansing, MI 48906-5137
517-485-5484; FAX: 517-485-0801

San Francisco Matching Program: www.sfmatch.org
P.O. Box 45161
San Francisco, CA 94145-0161
415-447-0350
Fax: 415-561-8535
Dean’s Letter Application Packet

The following pages contain important information necessary for submitting your Dean’s Letter/MSPE application. Please follow the guidelines carefully in order to ensure the timely writing, processing, and transmission of your letter.

Four (4) items are necessary in order for your Dean’s Letter/MSPE application submission to be considered complete:

1. Dean’s Letter Request Form
2. Dean’s Letter Questionnaire
3. C.V. or Resume
4. Personal Statement

All must be submitted to Graduate Affairs by May 25, 2007 in order to receive the best chance of having a completed Dean’s Letter by the November 1 Universal Distribution Date, the first day ERAS transmits any Dean’s Letter/MSPE to any program.

It is strongly urged that you include a $20 check (made out to Ross University) with your Dean’s Letter application materials. Although we will not send out a transcript and Dean’s Letter to ERAS until you’ve read and given the ok on a student copy, the fee up front will minimize possible delays in sending your materials later. Remember, we cannot send out official documents without payment.

All four items must be mailed to:

Department of Graduate Affairs  
Ross University School of Medicine  
499 Thornall Street, 10th floor  
Edison, NJ 08837

**Mailing your materials to another department could possibly result in a delay in getting your Dean’s Letter written and submitted to ERAS on time.**

The Dean’s Letter Request Form and Dean’s Letter Questionnaire assist us in constructing your letter. However, both the c.v. and personal statement are requirements for participation in the Match.

The Dean’s Letter Questionnaire and Request Form can be found on pages 54 and 55.

Important: Although you may submit your c.v. and personal statement to NRMP in your own style, please follow the format in the below examples for composing the c.v. and personal statement you submit to Graduate Affairs for the purposes of your letter.

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The C.V./Resume

The C.V./resume is an important aspect of your Match application. It should be informative yet concise, easy to read and clear as to when and where your accomplishments took place. For example, listing an educational institution without the city of its location, or listing research experience without indicating where and for how long it took place, indicate a lazy approach to something considered important by others. It would be reasonable for a program to presume the same of the applicant and his/her work ethic.

C.V./Resume Dos and Don’ts

DO -

1. Limit your resume to between one and at the most, two pages. Be clear and concise.
2. List items relevant to medicine, education and healthcare such as volunteer work, teaching/tutoring, research experience, communication skills, etc.
3. Include the dates of ALL items listed - including year, month and/or season.
4. Differentiate between Ross and Pre-Ross experience using dates and identifying captions.

DON’T -

1. Write long descriptions defining your activities and research.
2. Pack your resume with too much information – stress greatest accomplishments followed, if necessary, by a brief summary.
3. List items that fail to support your career goals, such as work in a retail store or an appearance in a high school play.
4. List your clinical clerkships. They’re on your transcript; therefore, not necessary on your c.v.
5. Create or add information because you think your c.v. should be longer. If dishonest information from your c.v. makes it into your Dean’s Letter and is questioned by a potential program, it is both the program’s and Ross University’s responsibility to take the appropriate disciplinary action. In turn, if information is written in your Dean’s Letter that is untrue but favorable to you, you must apprise the University of the error, as the same disciplinary considerations apply.

Example

Begin with your prior education. Include all dates, awards and degrees. Follow with any special honors or awards. Then list applicable extracurricular involvement, research, and work experience. Use the following format for constructing the c.v. you submit to Graduate Affairs.
Johnny Physician  
79 Wistful Vista  
Shinbone, NJ, 08872  
(606) 555-0841  
DocDude@gnn.com

EDUCATION

Sept. 2003 – Present  
Ross University School of Medicine, Portsmouth, Dominica, West Indies  
Doctor of Medicine Degree anticipated May 2006

Sept 2001 – June 2003  
Empire State University, Pleasantville, NY  
Master of Science Degree: Biology

Sept. 1997 - May 2001  
Bixby College, Bixby, MN  
Bachelor of Science Degree: Biology  
GPA 3.68, Cum Laude, Dean’s List – six semesters

HONORS & AWARDS

2003  
Outstanding Student Award

2000  
Bixby College Summer Research Grant

1999- 2002  
Chemistry Honor Society

1999  
Victor F. Mackey Biology Scholarship

EXTRACURRICULAR

2004  
Ross University Health Fair, Dominica, West Indies  
Conducted physical examinations, hypertension screenings

2002 to Present  
American Way Meals, Silby, MN  
Provided food for the elderly
RESEARCH

Summer 2003  Research Assistant  Empire State University Science Lab  Developed optimal laser firing patterns

Summer 2001  Research Assistant  Bixby College Department of Dermatology  Performed testing on the mutant healing factor

EMPLOYMENT

April 1999-June 2000  Receptionist  Aching Back Chiropractic Center, Bixby, MN.  Aided in the day-to-day activities of a local doctor’s office

PERSONAL  Fluent in Spanish and Sign Language. Licensed lifeguard. Avid surfer, mountain climber and ballroom dancer.
The Personal Statement

Like the c.v./resume, the personal statement is another important piece of information from which program directors will draw conclusions regarding your character, motivation, and potential – through what you say and the care you put into saying it.

Personal Statement Dos and Don’ts

DO –

1. Be straightforward and to the point. Limit your statement to one page.
2. Focus on what inspired you to pursue a career in medicine and events related to that theme.
3. Edit and proofread your work carefully.
4. Try to set yourself apart with information unique to you.

DON’T –

1. Write your personal statement as a written form of your resume.
2. Be self-congratulatory or self-centered.
3. Attempt to be overly dramatic – let your story or experiences speak for themselves.
4. Use tired analogies or cliches.

Example

The following example of a personal statement is to aid you in writing your Dean’s Letter. The version you forward to programs should be longer and more in-depth and will not include the headings written in parentheses used in the example. Use the example only as a guide for composing your own statement.
Personal Statement for Johnny Physician

(Heading)

(Snappy introduction)
It all happened so fast. I thought it was either a dream or an excerpt from a television show. But it was real. The car in front of us had ignored a red light and crashed into the car that was half way through the intersection. I wanted to yell, “Stop!” before it was too late, but I didn’t. I also wanted to help, but I couldn’t.

(Brief background)
Having grown up in a house with three younger sisters, I was the sort of “second in command” after my father. My job was to look after my siblings and keep them out of trouble while my father spent long, hard hours working at the hospital. He often told me to “pass it on,” meaning I should help people on their way while encouraging them to do the same. He would usually impart this wisdom when attempting to persuade me to do something I did not want to do – it always worked.

(Reasons for entering medicine/Extracurricular activities)
It was this tendency to “pass it on” that also motivated my grandfather and great-grandfather as they devoted their lives to healthcare, and I have been inspired by their example. Much of my earlier years have been spent in a volunteer capacity working part time in homeless shelters and retirement villages. I thrive on interacting with people of different ages and backgrounds and eagerly anticipate the opportunity to care for a variety of patients, as others before me have.

(Memorable finish)
Regrettably, my father was not in the car with us that rain-swept night after the accident. It would be long, agonizing minutes before anyone arrived to assist the people in the crumpled car. We did what we could for them, but somehow it didn’t seem like enough. Everyone involved went on to drive another day, but should I ever be in a situation like that again, I want to do more than watch and wait.
Dean’s Letter Request Form

Please complete the Dean’s Letter Request Form (p.54) in its entirety. By signing the form you are giving consent for a Dean’s Letter to be written on your behalf and for us to send it with an official transcript to the ERAS program upon receipt of payment. **Once again, we strongly suggest you submit the $20 payment with your Dean’s Letter application to minimize the potential of future delays.**

Dean’s Letter Questionnaire

Please take some time to answer the questions on the Dean’s Letter Questionnaire (p.55) thoughtfully. Since we don’t have the opportunity to sit down and speak with each of you, the answers you give will be one of our only windows into your thoughts on medicine and how you plan to contribute to medicine and to the medical community. Please refrain from answering, “see personal statement.”

Update Request Form

The Update Request Form (p.56) is for students/graduates **who already had a Dean’s Letter** written for them in a prior year. If this is the first time you are going through the Match, the Update Request Form does not apply to you. **CURRENT STUDENTS DO NOT REQUIRE A DEAN’S LETTER/MSPE UPDATE.**
DEAN’S LETTER/(MSPE) REQUEST FORM

Please mail this form as part of your official request for your Dean’s Letter. **Faxed materials are not acceptable.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** For the best chance of having your Dean’s Letter completed by the November 1st ERAS Dean’s Letter distribution date, the Dept. of Graduate Affairs requires all 4 documents (the Request Form, the Dean’s Letter Questionnaire, your cv, and personal statement) to be in our office by **May 25th, 2007**. Dean’s letters are written in the order files are completed with all documents. **Partial submissions of one, two or three documents will not reserve your place in line.**

**FULL NAME:**
Last _____________________________________     First _______________________________      M.I. _________

**PREVIOUS NAME:** If you have legally changed your name during enrollment at Ross University, indicate former name:
Last _____________________________________ First _______________________________      M.I. _________

**SOCIAL SECURITY # ________________________  ECFMG # ______________________________**

**E-MAIL ADDRESS ________________________________________________________________**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**
Street _____________________________________________________________________   Apt # ______________
City  ___________________________________________________ State __________      Zip  ________________

Home phone # (______) ______-_________  Cell phone # (_____) ______-___________

**HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE A STUDENT COPY OF YOUR DEAN’S LETTER? PLEASE CHECK ONE:**

[ ] Read-only pdf file via e-mail [requires Adobe Acrobat; download from the web to your computer] to e-address above.

[ ] Regular mail to address above.

**Intended field(s) of specialty:** This will not affect how your Dean’s Letter is written, but it is helpful information for our writers. The letter is composed as a “general” letter, allowing application to multiple specialties.

• Anticipated graduation date is ___________________.
• Anticipated date of taking the Step 2 CK is __________
• Anticipated date of taking the Step 2 CS is __________

**Anticipated application for residency through NRMP ERAS?**

[ ] Yes ____ No ____

**Anticipated application through a specialty Match?**

[ ] Yes ____ No ____ If so, indicate which ______________________________

**Anticipated alternate plans for obtaining residency are __________________________________________**

By signing below, I grant Ross University permission to send a Dean’s Letter and transcript to the ERAS program on my behalf for purposes of applying to the Match.

**Signature:** ________________________________________            **Date:**    ____/_____/_____

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DEAN’S LETTER/MSPE QUESTIONNAIRE

Name ___________________________________________ Social Security #: __________________

Please dedicate ample time to completing this form, as it will be used as a vital component of your Dean’s Letter. When you have finished, mail it as part of your official request for a Dean’s Letter/MSPE. Faxed materials are not acceptable.

1) Please indicate any honors or activities not already included in your c.v., résumé or personal statement. Be sure to indicate dates, city and state. Please write/print clearly.

Basic Sciences _________________________________________________________________________________________

Clinical Sciences ________________________________________________________________________________________

2) If not already in your personal statement, what experiences or events influenced you to pursue a career in medicine?
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

3) Other than overcoming the USMLE, cite a specific obstacle you encountered in your medical education and how you overcame it.
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

4) Other than being a hardworking medical student and enjoying your interaction with patients, what do you consider to be your strongest personal/professional attribute, one that sets you apart on a clinical rotation? Explain.
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

5) What words would you use to describe yourself to a potential program director?
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

6) What are your plans for expanding your medical education as a practicing physician?
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

7) Is there anything else you would like us to know, information you have not included here, on your c.v. or on your personal statement?
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Signature: ________________________________________ Date: __/___/____

‘07 - ’08 Pre-Residency Planning Guide
UPDATE REQUEST FORM

If you had a Dean’s Letter written for you in a prior year, please mail this form to request an update of your letter to include information not yet available during its original composition. **Faxed materials are not acceptable.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Submit this form **only if you had your Dean’s Letter written for you for a previous Match.** The updated letter will include **only core clinical clerkships not included at the time of original writing.** You do not have to submit a personal statement, CV, or any additional information. Deadline for receipt of form: **May 25, 2007.**

FULL NAME:

Last _____________________________________    First ______________________________________   M.I. _______

PREVIOUS NAME:

If you have legally changed your name during enrollment at Ross University, indicate former name:

Last _____________________________________    First ______________________________________   M.I. _______

SOCIAL SECURITY # _____________________________   (b) ECFMG # _______________________________

E-MAIL ADDRESS __________________________________________________________________________

MAILING ADDRESS :

Street ________________________________________________________ Apt # ________

City _________________________________________________________ State _______ Zip _________

  Home phone # (______) ______-_________  Cell phone # (_____) ______-___________

+++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

Graduation date ___________________

For our records, are you currently in residency? _____ Yes      _____ No

  PGY1 _______   PGY2 _______   Other _______________________

If so, please list:

Program name: ________________________________________________

City _________________________________________________________ State_______ Specialty: _______________________

Signature: _______________________________  Date: ____/____/____