

Hello!

My name is Leslie LaPlante and I am a Métis born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. I am in my first year of medical school at the University of Alberta and enjoying every minute of it.

My work experience prior to medical school is as follows:

May – August 2005, 2006	Grounds Keeper for Ptarmigan Landscape Services
August 2003	Laboratory Assistant for Environment Canada
May 2003 – July 2003	Framer for Hi-Qual Steel Buildings
August 2001 – August 2002	Wash Plant Labourer for Inland Aggregates
May – August 2001	Can Crusher for Brewers Distributors LTD
August 1999 and August 2000	Group leader for the Siksika Hockey School
June 1998 – August 2000	Grounds Keeper for Earl Grey Golf and Country Club
August 2000 – December 2000	Repair Man for Art's Bakery Service
July 1995	Chef's Assistant for McNick & Ollies

My educational experience including medical school is as follows:

2006 – Present	University of Alberta	Edmonton, Alberta
	Medicine and Dentistry	
1998 - 2005	University of Calgary	Calgary, Alberta
	Bachelor of Science (BSc) Cellular Molecular and Microbial Biology	
1995 - 1998	Bowness High School	Calgary, Alberta
	High School Diploma	
	▪ Graduated with Honors	

The admission process into medical school can be a long and strenuous one, but unbelievably rewarding once you are accepted. My path into medical school started in 2004 when I applied to the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta. Upon first applying I considered a successful application to consist of receiving an admissions interview from either medical school. Upon receiving interviews from both schools my hopes and aspirations rose tremendously, as did the stress. I was ultimately rejected from both schools, which hurt a lot. After talking to the University of Alberta I found out what I needed to do in order to have a successful application. After recently graduating from the University of Calgary I found myself back there taking classes to meet the pre-requisites for the University of Alberta. This year really re-energized my interest in school and was ultimately a most exceptional experience and benefit for my journey. I reapplied to the University of Calgary and Alberta, but broadened my choices to the University of British Columbia. I once again received interviews at all three schools and felt more prepared and less nervous this time around. I was initially accepted into the University of British Columbia and initially accepted their offer. After about a month and

being informed that I was waitlisted at other two Universities, I was accepted into the University of Alberta. I now had a hard choice in front of me. Ultimately, staying close to my family swayed me in favour of the University of Alberta, but both medical schools are excellent in their own ways. Finally, I accepted the University of Alberta's invitation and had the great misfortune of having to notify the University of British Columbia of my decision. In the end, I was grateful to both schools for their offer and was ecstatic about my new journey.

The biggest challenge I have faced in my journey into medical school was being rejected in my first attempt of application. Rejection can be devastating and demoralizing. However, there are two ways of dealing with rejection; one, quit or two, learn what you can do to improve and do whatever it requires to be successful. I choose option two. I went back to university after graduating and took a full course load. I worked very hard to improve my marks and meet the pre-requisites the University of Alberta required. This test allowed me to find out more about myself, built up my scholastic confidence and allowed me to ultimately be accepted into two respectable medical schools.

The biggest surprise about medical school to date is the fact that there is too much information to learn. It took me a few months to learn this lesson, but I finally realized this when we started out Cardio-Pulmonary-Renal block. The way to be successful in medical school is to learn to understand what is going to be clinically important material that you will need to know in your career as a physician and not get bogged down in all the fine details. Once you are able to understand this and learn how to do this, medical school is one of the most rewarding experiences.

I guess I wish I would have known all the deadlines of all the medical schools across Canada in one convenient site. Furthermore, I wish I had realized all the pre-requisites each medical school required. This would have made my application process a lot less stressful. However, I did learn a lot from my experiences and am glad I had the troubles I did.

I did not always want to be a doctor, but my passion for medicine really flourished in my second or third year of my undergrad degree. After some soul searching and really thinking about what I wanted to do I came to a conclusion of medicine. A career in medicine offers the greatest variety of options in the medical field; it allows you to take it to the fullest. As a doctor, you have the ultimate ability to respond, to treat, diagnose, prescribe and ultimately, you are held accountable for your actions at every level. More importantly, I wanted to pursue a career in medicine, as I felt I would thrive in the situation that would allow me to help those who are in need of medical attention and interact with people on a daily basis. Additionally, I have always been constantly drawn into the medical field, more specifically to becoming a doctor, as I enjoy the study of science and especially how it relates to the human body. Furthermore, I have a passion for learning and it is vital that as a doctor you continue this pursuit of learning and I know that, as a doctor I will be able to maintain this life-long learning process and achieve my

fullest potential. I have always considered myself an overachiever, a quality that is much needed in medicine.

Follow your dreams! You can do anything you put your mind to, but be prepared to have set backs. It is from these set backs that you learn about yourself and allows yourself to grow spiritually, emotionally and physically. The final pieces of advice I can offer are to really consider your career choice of medicine. Medicine is probably the most rewarding career, but you must realize that medicine is a lifestyle. You have to be prepared for this and have to realize that there are a lot of sacrifices that you will have to make along the way and finally, make sure you maintain the relationships of your friends and family. After all, these are the people who are most important in your life and are the people who will always be there for you in the good times and the bad.