

From an early childhood, my parents instilled in me the values of honesty, self respect and respect for others. As far back as I remember the concept of exploring my curiosities, whether dissecting my toys or building electronic robots, seemed to be infinitely fascinating. My parents continually encouraged me to be active and to explore all that was around me. I surrounded myself with automobile magazines, books, and scientific kits always looking for new ways to entertain myself.

xxxx Military Academy served as the stepping stone that has shaped in many words my academic discipline and “no quitter” work ethic. This high school located in Alabama had a dynamic student body and the structured curriculum that shaped me in to adulthood. It was during these years in which I realized my passion of working with my hands as a means to hide my speech problems. Anything that kept me physically active seemed to be a solution to my short comings as a speaker.

The next chapter in my life was filled with hard work and challenging times. I was considered an out of state student at xxxx forcing me to work and help support my mother and I while paying for tuition and expenses. Even worse I was confused and scattered in determining what major to pursue. In the fall of 2000 I received my first break allowing me to receive an instate waiver from xxxx of Technology saving me thousands. As a result I was capable of reducing my work hours and focusing more on my studies. Bachelor of Science in Building Construction was the major that I started under at xxxx that offered but a promising and secure future allowing me to have an interesting and hands on career.

In the summer of 2001, I decided it was time to sharpen my skills in the real world. I applied and was hired as an intern in a consulting firm by the name of xxxx and Associates. This was the first time that I felt accomplished through the usage of my formal education in my work environment. Through my experiences at xxxx and Associates I worked with the xxxx and helped re-develop xxxx project housing in to a well established community for lower income households. As my work at xxxx and Associates progressed, I learned the importance of helping disadvantaged people and really showed me the value of making a difference in these areas. As a result, I soon realized that construction was not what I loved—a difficult conclusion that I reached while busily studying and experiencing the construction industry. Suddenly, construction, as an end unto itself seemed a rather empty proposition. I was unsure of my direction, drifting unfulfilled, looking for a meaningful niche of my own. In this haze of personal uncertainty, I knew what I wanted out of life, which was to make a change by providing a better opportunity for lower income households, but did not what medium to use. During these times a good friend introduced me to the possibility of dentistry. I knew I needed to spend time in the clinical setting to determine if this was a career opportunity for me. I arranged to follow Dr. xxxx, both of whom patiently explained each procedure to me, no matter how routine or rudimentary. It could not be any clearer for me than at during those moments: dentistry was an avenue for me to help people; make a difference in there lives, and build relationships of trust and care. Although the skill set would be wholly different, I would be able to apply much of what I learned through my own endeavors with my undergraduate studies to help my profession move forward.

The curriculum shift needed to seriously pursue dentistry, was ambitious to say the least. I knew it would require great effort with no procrastination. As I progressed in this era of change, I encountered the greatest hardship of my life when an incident was brought upon my father. An automobile accident left him with two fractured legs and a broken jaw limiting his daily function at the age of 68. Through the first semester of preparing myself for dental school I scheduled my time in a way so that during the days I would take care of my father and in the evenings I was focusing

on classes and studying. My father's accident forced me to become extremely disciplined in time management, and made me realize the real value of life. Experiencing this hardship and seeing my father's struggle through late night pain and being on a liquid diet, I realized the best way to care was through love and knowledge. It was a no-brainer at that point that healthcare gives experience a high level of intrinsic rewards. As a result, I have settled to withstand all challenges in successfully achieving a doctorate in Dental Medicine and pursuing a specialty in Oral Surgery. More than even today we need people to care and love and as a person I am ready to do my part in society. I plan on playing an active role in oral health in lower income communities that have traditionally been ignored. I will harness my experiences and my business savvy to make these "untraditional" areas make sense as a practitioner. Thank you for your consideration.