



CSR

Committee of Student Representatives

Leadership and Professionalism: A Open Refelection

I began to write about these two ideas in April, but I felt that it would be interesting to edit this work as the year went on. Now, at the end of my term, I'm glad that I held off because I've learned so much since the beginning of the year, met many new people, and experienced more successes *and* failures that have influenced my perceptions. **It is my hope that by using this platform to openly share this personal reflection, you, my fellow classmate, will also have a self-dialogue about what these words mean to you and grow from them.**

I began to think about leadership, and my lack of it, when applying to medical school. As an undergraduate, I just didn't see the point. Why take on more tasks than the minimum to graduate? In the work force I kept the same mentality and was satisfied going through the daily motions just to collect a paycheck at the end of the week. Mind you, I did get a great education at the University of Connecticut and earned good money working as a pharmacist; but there was emptiness to my being. While my peers at the time seemed delighted every day, I couldn't wait to clock out and go home. It took me about one year after college to figure out what many of my peers have already so long ago. ***They cared about their profession.*** How do I know that the happy students cared? I know because when AMCAS and every interviewer asked about my leadership experiences, I thought of the president of my pharmacy fraternity, the student leader of the yearly 5k race around campus to raise money for people who can't afford medications and the many other students who organized fairs, conference trips and other initiatives to promote the profession of pharmacy. They were becoming pioneers of their craft. They all took pride in their pursuits and found happiness through leadership. **It may be a shock to read, but my reasons to pursue pharmacy were *wealth and status.*** Still a mystery to me is how my past self came to equate those values with happiness because ironically, it led to anything but.

I've since found my true purpose within medicine and have pledged my professional life to it. I care about the future of medicine. Some reading this may be in the mindset that I was in back in undergrad. Some may be in medicine for the money, or the status, or because of compelling external forces, but from my experience those reasons lead to an unsatisfying life. I had all of the above and subsequently gave it all up. Starting at Case, I did not want to repeat

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[CSR WEBPAGE](#)

Upcoming Birthdays

December 14 - Alexander Vu '17
December 14 - Yukun Gao '17
December 16 - Dave Lowry '16
December 16 - Paul Park '16
December 20 - Drisana Henry '14
December 23 - Damarys Hernandez '16
December 31 - Alok Harwani '17
January 1 - Anisha Noble '16
January 4 - Melody Martin '16
January 5 - Andrea Pannunzio '16
January 5 - Anisha Rastogi '??
January 6 - Rebecca Parad '17
January 11 - Sara Polito '17
January 12 - Zach Hedges '16
January 15 - James Palmer '16
January 15 - Roozbeh Ahmadi '16
January 15 - Ryan FitzGerald '17
January 20 - Swetha Sundar '16
January 24 - Kylie Kang '17
January 24 - Kyle Rismiller '17
January 26 - David Jung '14
January 28 - William Carrera '17
January 29 - Amanda Wojahn '17

[Add a birthday!](#)

CSR Board Members

President - Abraham Feshazion
Vice President - Nischay Rege
Secretary - Sara Zakem
Treasurer - Camille Huwyler
Social Chair - Anand Kaul
Social Chair - Sydney Yee
Class Officer - Kathryn Kreicher
Class Officer - Scott Brigeman
Tech Rep - Vivek Pamulapati

the same mistakes again. **I wanted to be happy. I wanted to be a part of shaping medicine for the benefit of mankind. So I thought the best way to begin doing that, as an M1, was to run for CSR president.** Yes, it was difficult at times to balance personal matters, school and extracurricular activities, but the rewards for accomplishment surpass all sacrifice. **The last CSR president Katie Farhang told me as I took her place, "Don't be afraid of a little responsibility."** I'm not sure if she even remembers telling me this, but I've been feeding from that mantra all year. Setting up book sales, inviting vendors to campus, restarting the Relay for Life team, revamping the CSR website, holding meetings, listening to classmates concerns about rotation scheduling and anatomy tutoring, building ties with the Graduate Professional Counsel, writing newsletters and doing many other initiatives were extremely taxing on my schedule and sleep cycle, but were all totally worth it in the end. Leading anything is a learn-as-you-go process. In service learned how to compromise, learned to speak in public, improved my writing, and built relationships that would have never otherwise existed. These skills cannot be attained out of a text book. Plus, to have your initiatives come to life with the rallied support of your own peers feels pretty darn good. I'm sure the leaders of Doc Opera, the Peru Trip, Student Run Free Clinic, CSR Social Chairs and every other student group leader would agree.

In April I attended a lecture entitled, "Have We Forgotten the Meaning of Professionalism?" given by guest speaker Dr. Richard B. Gunderman, Professor of Pediatrics & Radiology and Vice Chairperson of the Department of Radiology at Indiana University. He began his talk with a question to the audience: *"Is Lance Armstrong, a disgraced seven-time Tour de France winner, a professional?"* In that hour, he demonstrated justifications in support of and in opposition to the argument, but eventually revealed his own definition of professionalism. Dr. Gunderman said,

'...it is not what we avoid such as detection or punishment as in Armstrong's case, it is what we seek. It is what we love.' He further related his definition to medicine by further stating:

"Medicine is not technical, not a business. Medicine is a calling and one must work in the missionary spirit. Are we just going thru the motions when we take the oath? Do we just swear on our paycheck and license? We should be on a mission in service for something better. Otherwise it is an act every time we go to work."

His words greatly resonated with me at that time because I've still been pondering about **why I've chosen to become a medical student.** It isn't typical of me to spend precious daylight hours in idle thought, but I felt compelled to do so for many days at that time. I'm not exactly sure what had me fixated on that question for so long, or at all, considering it should have been answered and put to rest well

Community Service Rep - Paul Park
AAMC-OSC Rep - Bryan Zuniga
SCME Chair - Nelroy Jones
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Bona Ko
Nischay Rege
Sarah Gael
Shira Lerner
Mansi Shah

For the LOLs

Two men are hot air ballooning when clouds come up and they realize they're lost. They go lower, and suddenly the clouds part and they see that they're passing over a mountain where a man is hiking.

One of the men in the balloon leans out and yells, "Hey! Where are we?"

The man hiking looks up and shouts back, "In a balloon!"

Then the clouds swallow them up again. The second man in the balloon says, "That hiker must be a neurologist."

"What makes you say he's a neurologist?" interjects his friend.

"Well, what he said was 100% true, but didn't help us one bit."

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before even applying to Case. Admittedly, I did feel very silly repeatedly asking myself that same question. Why did it even matter anymore? At one point in time, I had a perfectly honest and acceptable answer; an answer I've written on many applications and verbalized dozens of times on interviews. This answer even got me accepted into one of the world's top medical education programs. **But it took until this lecture, deep into M1 year, to finally discover why the reasons I want to be a doctor *still matter*.** Although I *had* an answer, it was primitive. Until that evening, thanks to Dr. Gunderman's talk, I have finally formulated an answer acceptable to my own standards. Dr. Gunderman proved to me that Lance Armstrong although a great cyclist, wasn't a professional. He didn't love cycling. He used cycling to promote his own personal agenda. Likewise, I used to treat pharmacy as means to a personal end. I felt like phony everyday; a man without a purpose greater than himself. That isn't who I wanted to be, ever, but it just took me until end of M1 year realize this. In medicine, I found redemption in serving others. If you are ever bogged down and frustrated by your workload, stop and remind yourself why you're doing it. **If your reason for choosing medicine gives you peace as mine does, it won't seem so burdensome. If it doesn't, you might want to take some time to figure out what you truly seek; what you truly love.**

This is my last newsletter as your CSR president. It has been a blast serving you all this year. I hope that my final piece, sharing my personal revelations with you, no matter where you are in your academic career, help you find your own.

See you in 2014,

-Abe, CSR President, M2

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Saturday, December 14th, 6pm - [Doc Opera: The Healing Games](#) @ Masonic Auditorium 3615 Euclid Ave

Saturday January 11th - Hippocrates Ball @ the First Energy Stadium

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