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12th Grade
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New Mexico

What Drives Me

What drives me is the ever-growing desire for my medical passions and to serve others such as the underrepresented communities throughout New Mexico.

Medicine has always been my calling. Born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, a condition that makes my bones weaker and more prone to fractures than others. I've experienced more than thirty bone fractures and numerous major surgeries in the past. Going through so many medical procedures gave me a lot of first-hand experience and understanding in the medical field, which cultivated my desire to pursue medicine and serve others in need. In the recovery rooms, countless caring and compassionate hearts carried me through my painful path. Without them, I would not be the way I am today. I've always dreamed that one day I can also provide essential, top-quality care to others, like the doctors and other professionals who cared for me. My physical disabilities haven't stopped me from excelling in academics and community service, reaching my highest potential and pursuing my dreams. I took highly rigorous courses to challenge myself, leading me to be in the top 3% of the La Cueva High School senior class. I led the Science Olympiad team with perseverance by presenting well-prepared lessons, all the way toward the state championship. Along with volunteering at Carrie Tingley Hospital, cooking food at the Barret and McDonald House, I am delighted to put my footprints onto the path of making our community a better place.

Starting in 9th grade, a 4-year journey I have embraced with the Native Health Initiative (NHI) ultimately cultivated my dedication to serving New Mexico. Dr. Anthony Fleg, the founder of NHI, has sharpened my appreciation of cultural diversity and increased my awareness of medical disparities in NM. Through the Running Medicine program, instead of feeling nervous about my medical condition, I was warmly accepted into their community as a family member right away. In July 2019, I went to Taos Pueblo as an intern for Health Justices. Everybody there was so friendly and charming. However, these great people have been underserved in healthcare; New Mexico is suffering one of the worst physician shortages in the US. The Native American communities are one of the hardest-hit populations during the pandemic. I

coordinated donations for Zia Pueblo members affected by COVID in 2020, a small step toward serving the Native Americans. Such a detrimental shortage and urgency for medical support have fueled my dedication to pursue wellness and compassion for others in New Mexico.

A desire to serve others ultimately drove my decision to become a physician. This sense of calling was reinforced by my NHI experiences and my own journey. I have applied for biomedical programs, including the BA/MD program at the University of New Mexico. The program trains students to become physicians committed to practicing medicine in New Mexico communities with the greatest need. I want to be the candle, small but bringing light and hope, putting a meaningful footprint into the road to medical justice.