

October 2009

Dear (name withheld),

My name is (name withheld), and I am the 2009-10 recipient of the Peter D. Olch, M.D. Memorial Scholarship Fund. Receipt of this scholarship is a great honor, and I cannot thank you enough. Because of your generosity, I can afford to go to medical school at such an amazing place as Johns Hopkins, and I will always be grateful for that opportunity. Thank you.

In addition to giving my thanks, I also would like to give you a sense of who I am, and about my long, strange road to Johns Hopkins. After growing up in Northern California, I attended Dartmouth College, where I studied mechanical engineering and economics and was a member of the men's lightweight rowing team. Not knowing at the time that I would go on to medical school, I graduated in 2001 and immediately began working as a business strategy consultant in Boston. That lasted for three years until I decided to make the switch to medicine, and in 2004 I put myself through night school at Harvard to complete the pre-requisite courses to apply to medical school.

I applied to Hopkins and was accepted in 2005, but spent the next 3 years completing my research in cardiovascular imaging at the Massachusetts General Hospital and competing for the United States Rowing Team. As an oarsman, I finished 5th at the 2006 and 2007 World Championships, in London and Munich, respectively, and finished 11th at the 2008 World Championships in Linz, Austria. I also trained at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in 2008, but missed the Olympics by 2 spots, and at that time knew it was time to hang up the rowing and begin medical school. My wife Elizabeth certainly agreed!

In the fall of the 2008 Elizabeth and I moved to Baltimore and I began school as a first-year student, while she began work as a non-profit human rights lawyer in Washington D.C. We were married this past summer, and now live in Federal Hill. She has been an enormous source of inspiration and support for me in my academic, professional, and athletic careers, and she too, is incredibly thankful for your generosity. The scholarship doesn't only help us pay tuition and buy groceries, but it allows us to do things we otherwise wouldn't be able to do, such as return to Boston this weekend to see our newborn nephew for the first time. Such a trip would not have been possible without your help. So thank you again for your generosity, and please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to talk further.

Sincerely,
(name withheld)