

Johns Hopkins

Briefly describe your single, most rewarding experience. Feel free to refer to an experience previously described in your AMCAS application. 2500 characters

Current word count: 2658

At WBUR, Boston's NPR News Station, I decided to write my last article about innovative mental health resources and programs. I became interested in this topic after seeing the impact of mental illness while visiting hospice patients. In my personal life, mental health issues have also affected my sister and some close friends. When they reached out for help, I tried to listen and support them as best as I could—but a part of me was also afraid of saying the wrong thing. Through my article, I hoped that my readers might feel empowered to seek help and try different strategies to manage their symptoms.

After successfully pitching my idea to my supervisor, I interviewed ten key stakeholders, including a psychiatrist, director of a mental health advocacy nonprofit, and a CEO of a social media network. One of my most memorable interviews was with a founder of a startup called Zencare that made it easier to find local therapists. Though we had never talked before, she was extremely transparent with me by openly discussing her struggles with depression and the challenges she faced with her own family, the lack of support in her family. I also felt inspired by her resilience as she detailed the challenges of creating a startup to help others while navigating these issues herself. By the end of our conversation, I felt like I was speaking with an old friend. Afterwards, I also asked my sister and friends to test experiment out with different resources and incorporated their reviews invaluable opinions into my article.

Once my article, "Inventive Help For Mental Health One College Student Would Suggest To Another," was published, I was overwhelmed with support and positive feedback from friends and family. I shared it with my interviewees and friends. It was gratifying to hear their positive comments. A few days later, I found out that my article had been shared by NPR on Facebook, receiving over 10,000 clicks and 1,200 total shares. It was also ranked in the top five most popular articles at WBUR, something of which I had never imagined possible but am very humbled by. At work the next day, my supervisor congratulated me and told me that on average, people spent over 8 minutes reading my article, which she expressed to me how made her feel proud—she was of my efforts and my final product of how engaging and well-written it was. Towards the end of the summer, a friend reached out and shared that my article inspired him to start teletherapy for his depression, a moment of which I hold near and dear to me.

This experience was incredibly rewarding because it made me feel more closely connected to people I care about and allowed me to share my work voice to an even wider audience than I could have ever imagined more widely, even with strangers. At the same time, it gave me a deeper understanding of mental health and made me want to explore it further, especially among geriatric elder people and hospice patients. This experience also affirmed my desire to pursue a career in medicine that will similarly enable me to connect with individuals while making a broader impact in healthcare.

Commented [EF1]: I know we are pressed for word count here but maybe you can elaborate. "Mental Health Issues" is kind of cryptic in and of itself.

Commented [EF2]: Who are the readers? I think we can state who the audience is that you are trying to reach.

Commented [EF3]: Is there another way you can elaborate this – how you can define the connection in a more tangible, powerful way?

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Commented [EF4]: How gratifying for a writer! That is the best feeling!

Commented [EF5]: I want to add this so that it doesn't seem as though we are "bragging" – I know you aren't but some people may not see it this way.

Commented [EF6]: I think we can clear this up a little. What exactly do you mean?

Maybe:

This experience affirmed my desire to pursue a career in medicine that will similarly enable me to connect with individuals and leave a lasting impact on patient's lives.

Good luck with Hopkins!! I worked as a Lab Scientist there for 2 years and LOVED it!

Briefly describe a situation where you were not in the majority. What did you learn from the experience? 2500 characters

Current character count: 2542

During our Fulbright orientation in Poland, I was warned that people might stare at those of us who were not white. When the pandemic hit, however, the curious and often friendly stares quickly turned into hostile and judgmental ones. On the tram, a man glanced back at me, cursed, and walked away. While taking a walk, I heard a group of teenagers yell “virus” and laugh at me. Each encounter reminded me that I was an outsider, unwelcomed and even considered a threat to my community. Yet aAt the same time, I felt I was accepted and appreciated by my coworkers and friends, something that left internal conflict in my heart. -

Commented [EF7]: I think you need to set the scene here. What exactly is this – can you describe to us the scene for a good hook?

However, during one dinner with a group of Polish friends, someone commented that the Polish government needs to stop the “Chinese virus” from spreading there. Everyone else agreed, saying that this never would have happened if Chinese people stopped eating wild animals. Though-Although not directed towards me specifically, this was even more shocking and upsetting than the racist encounters with strangers. As one of the few minority members of the group, the only nonwhite person in the group, I was initially hesitant but felt an obligation to speak up, to protect people in similar situations that I have experienced myself. After collecting my thoughts, I explained that although I understood how worried they might be, calling it the “Chinese virus” can unfairly place the blame on Chinese people and lead to discrimination against Asians, who are also victims of the far-reaching effects that such an aggressive virus has. of the virus.

Commented [EF8]: Are we jumping back to the initial scene here? Can we clarify or add something that makes it flow a little easier?

Commented [EF9]: Which ones?

However, some of my friends didn’t understand what the issue was—after all, the virus was first discovered in China. I then shared my personal experiences with racism and urged them to consider what it might feel like if it were called the “Polish virus.” It may seem insignificant, but language can have a powerful impact on our attitudes, -and- actions, and not to mention our well-being. Following my remarks, a few people appeared uncomfortable but I know my comments were warranted and I am proud of my actions. A few of them seemed uncomfortable at that point and quickly changed the subject. After coming home, however, I received a message from one of my friends who was present at the dinner. She apologized and -indicated said she would be more careful-meticulous with her word choices, and thanked me for sharing my thoughts and experiences.

Commented [EF10]: This is great! Good point...

Though-Although I won’t-will not always be able to change people’s beliefs or attitudes, this experience taught-showed me that it is still worth engaging in open conversations. I am committed to trying to understand various perspectives and will continue sharing mine to build empathetic relationships. These conversations are especially meaningful when I am in the minority, as they are unique opportunities to influence the majority and to teach and provide insight to others. As a physician, I will remember to listen to and advocate for marginalized communities, especially in situations where I am part of the more privileged majority.

Commented [EF11]: Try to always avoid contractions in formal writing.

Commented [EF12]: Great ending!

Wonder encapsulates a feeling of rapt attention ... it draws the observer in. Tell us about a time in recent years that you experienced wonder in your everyday life. Although experiences related to your clinical or research work may be the first to come to mind, we encourage you to think of an experience that is unrelated to medicine or science. What did you learn from that experience? 2500 characters

Current character count: 2522

As I was returning home from HopeHealth, a local hospice I volunteered at, I decided to take a detour and walk through the cemetery. Normally, my schedule was so packed that I often rushed back to campus; but because class was cancelled that day, I had plenty of time to explore the cemetery before grabbing dinner with friends.

While enjoying the peaceful atmosphere, I stumbled upon a tombstone of a woman who had died on my ~~birthday~~ date of birth in 1885. I stopped to look at it more closely, trying to read the ~~faded~~ weathered writing on the discolored stone. It read, *“in the midst of life we are in death.”* I had heard this quote before, but it still struck me in that moment—perhaps because I had just been spending time with a hospice patient or because I was in a cemetery.

I was also fascinated by the small vines growing on the tombstone, which looked like ~~a piece of artwork memorializing an illustration of~~ the woman's previous life. All of the people and living things that have died vastly outnumber those currently alive—and yet, this tiny plant and I were both alive in that moment. While engrossed in the details of this tombstone and ~~wondering~~ pondering about this ~~person's~~ woman's life, I suddenly became aware of how short ~~my~~ life is compared to the history of humanity and the larger universe—a feeling I had experienced before while ~~gazing at the constellations at night~~ looking at the stars at night. But unlike the night sky, this felt much more intimate. Her death and my birth are separated by over a century, but we are still connected by a specific date and place that is meaningful to both of us.

Looking back, this moment was also special because it occurred between two activities I found deeply fulfilling: volunteering with hospice patients and spending time with friends. It almost felt surreal to be in this silent, peaceful place—it ~~reminded~~ prompted images me of the “Wood B between the Wworlds” in The Chronicles of Narnia, where there are pools of water that each lead to different worlds. In my case, the cemetery connected the gratification and contentment of visiting hospice patients ~~and as well as~~ the anticipation of seeing my friends. Like my hospice volunteer work, this moment reminded me to invest time into my relationships and to be fully present while connecting with others.

Standing in front of the tombstone, I distinctly remember breathing in the cool, crisp air of which ~~stung my lungs~~ and feeling overwhelmed with happiness and gratitude. Now, I realize that this sense of wonder is always accessible to me, no matter the time and place. I just have to slow down, appreciate the moment, and remember how good it feels to be alive. My wonder is a tool ~~accessible to me at all times.~~

Commented [EF13]: What made you choose to walk through the cemetery? I would elaborate on this! It is a curious decision

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Commented [EF14]: Brainstorm about what you mean here and try to reword. I think it can be a profound statement but needs a little revision.

Commented [EF15]: How?

Commented [EF16]: How is the place meaningful to you too?

Commented [EF17]: I love this last essay! You did a great job! Be sure to make sure each word is clear says EXACTLY what you want.

You have a great and powerful voice which is evident. Great work on all of these essays and let me know if you need further clarification or help!

Take care,
-Emma