

GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION MANUAL

A Guide to the Match



OFFICE OF GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION

West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine

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Lewisburg, West Virginia 24901

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is intended to be a guide to the application and match processes for students of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine who are seeking graduate medical education training positions.

While this manual contains a great deal of useful information, it is not all-inclusive. Specific information and dates for the matches for the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), *National Matching Service (NatMatch)*; the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), *National Residency Matching Program (NRMP) Match*; the American Urological Association (AUA), the San Francisco Match (SF Match), and for each branch of the military service are updated annually following the publication of this guide. Therefore, students should carefully read any and all mailings pertaining match procedures and deadlines.

The Office of Graduate Medical Education (GME Office) at WVSOM will keep students apprised of match information through email communications. Students should contact the GME Office if they have any questions related to match procedures. Students may also contact the Associate and Assistant Deans for Graduate Medical Education for counseling on issues related to their particular match scenario.

Contact Information

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PREPARING FOR THE MATCH

Options for Postdoctoral Education

There are three main postdoctoral avenues available to WVSOM students:

1. The **Osteopathic Match**, the AOA Intern/Resident Registration Program (AOA Match), which usually takes place in early to mid February
2. The **Allopathic Match**, the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP), which usually takes place in the middle of March
3. The **Military Match**, which usually takes place in early to mid December

In addition, students may participate in other matches for more specialties, such as urology (**Urology Match**), ophthalmology (**San Francisco Match**), etc.

Regardless of the particular path each student selects, the process of application is similar. The student must:

1. Register with the match program or organization;
2. Apply to the individual residency programs;
3. Interview for positions;
4. Prepare a Rank Order List indicating program preferences; and
5. Participate in the Match.

Timelines and deadlines for each of these matches vary.

Weighing the Options

The decisions students make now regarding their postdoctoral training will have a great impact on their future credentials, potential for reimbursement and staff privileges, as well as on where they can practice. It may be difficult now to envision where your medical career may take you, so it is important to carefully consider the options available to you and to make decisions that will not limit future opportunities.

The importance for osteopathic graduates to consider completion of an AOA-approved osteopathic OGME- 1 year cannot be overstated, because of its impact on a student's future credentialing and practice options. **Five states require osteopathic physicians to complete an AOA-approved OGME- 1 year (Internship) for medical licensure.**

1. Florida
2. Michigan
3. Oklahoma
4. Pennsylvania
5. West Virginia

Satisfactory completion of an AOA-approved osteopathic OGME- 1 year (Internship) is also

required to continue in AOA-approved residency training programs and to sit for osteopathic specialty certification board examinations. Osteopathic Specialty Certification is, in turn, required for physicians who wish to become a Director of Medical Education (DME) or Program Directors in osteopathic graduate medical education programs. To obtain an AOA-approved OGME- 1 year, you must register for and participate in the AOA Intern/Resident Registration Program (the "Match").

The AOA has established a pathway which may allow some first year allopathic programs to be approved as equivalent to an AOA-approved OGME- 1 year under Resolution 42. Applicants for such approval must meet the rotational requirements of a traditional rotating OGME- 1 year or AOA Specialty College OGME-1 requirements, and demonstrate special circumstances which limited their training opportunities. Students who do not participate in the AOA Match and choose to take non-AOA-approved first year graduate training are not assured of receiving AOA approval for this training. Students choosing this route should remain prepared for the potential impact on their future medical career, if their request for approval under Resolution 42 is denied. For additional information on guidelines for seeking approval of allopathic training as an AOA-approved OGME- 1 year, visit the AOA's website or contact the AOA Division of Postdoctoral Training (see page 27 for contact information).

Students planning to enter an allopathic residency program and pursue Resolution 42 in one of the five states mentioned above should also consult with that state's licensing board and the AOA prior to ranking programs. There may be state requirements for licensure during the postdoctoral training period which could preclude osteopathic students from entering directly into allopathic training. i.e. Requirement of the WV Board of Osteopathy is that a full license is required to be second year resident.

Deciding Where to Apply

One of the most important steps in the process is deciding where to apply. Networking with **alumni** who applied in the field to which you are applying can be a good starting point. If you are trying to get into a competitive specialty, find out which programs have accepted WVSOM students in the past.

Discussing your application list with members of the **faculty** is another good way to gain valuable information about programs. Ask clinicians if they know of graduates who are now on the faculty of a particular postdoctoral program. The **Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education** at WVSOM is available to provide counseling to students about choosing specialties, selecting programs, and submitting applications.

Another good way to find out about specific programs is to talk to people at that hospital. Ask **preceptors** about the program and the caliber of the house staff. Talk to **interns and residents** about their experiences. They know first hand what the program is like and can tell you about the routines of their particular program.

A list of resources for more information about graduate medical education programs can be found on page 27, including databases for searching for specific programs.

Researching Programs

There are two main sources for identifying postdoctoral training programs and finding additional information or contact information.

For **osteopathic programs**, the AOA's directory of osteopathic OGME- 1 year and residency programs is called *Opportunities*. Applicants can search OGME- 1 year and residency programs based on specialty, state, or both.

AOA Opportunities

<http://opportunities.osteopathic.org/index.htm>

To research **allopathic programs**, the American Medical Association (AMA) offers a database, known as FREIDA. Applicants can search residency and fellowship programs based on specialty or state. In addition, FREIDA has other options to narrow searches by criteria such as program size, preliminary positions, alternative start dates, primary care tracks, federal programs, etc.

Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA Online)

<http://www.ama-assn.org/vapp/freida/srch/>

ACGME

<http://www.acgme.org>

Evaluating Programs

There are many factors to consider when selecting programs. Students should ask questions about the educational program (rotation schedules, didactic schedules, electives, on-call schedule, fellowship opportunities, etc.) and the hospital environment (how many active beds, size of the department, number of other interns and residents). Find out about the salary and benefits package, whether meals or lab coats are provided, vacation, retirement benefits.

There are also questions students can ask to assess the quality of the program. What are the program's board pass rates for COMLEX III and for board certification exams? Is there a turnover of house staff, or do interns and residents stay to complete the program? Assess the stability of hospital/program by asking about recent changes involving the hospital, such as expansion or layoffs. Research the financial standing of the hospital.

There are also personal issues to consider. Where is the program located? Is housing provided or readily available? Learn more about the community, schools, recreational and cultural opportunities that may be important to you or your family.

How to Apply

Students must apply to programs independently of the Match or Matches in which they participate via Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS).

After making a list of potential application sites, the student should contact each program to verify how to apply and to find out each program's specific requirements for application and supporting documentation. Students should also inquire about application deadlines.

There is no "magic number" of how many programs to which each applicant should apply. The number will depend on many factors, including the competitiveness and availability of the chosen specialty, competitiveness of the selected program, as well as the competitiveness of the applicant. There may be other personal choices which may impact the number of applications, such as geographic location or size of the hospital.

APPLICATIONS and SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

All students applying to postdoctoral training programs will be required to complete an application- most programs will utilize the **ERAS** system- and submit supplemental documentation in support of their applications. These documents usually include:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Personal Statement
- Medical Student Performance Evaluation or MSPE (also known as Dean's Letter of Evaluation)
- Transcripts
- Board scores
- Three or more letters of recommendation
- Photograph

More detailed information on each of these items follows.

Requirements for supporting documents vary from program to program. It is the student's responsibility to identify the application requirements for each program and to insure that each program receives all the required supporting documents by their application deadline.

Students should keep copies of all requests for information and should make their requests in a timely fashion. If your request is faxed or emailed, the original request should be forwarded in the mail. **It is important to keep application deadlines in mind when requesting supporting documents.**

Applying through ERAS

The Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) is an independent, web-based service that transmits applications and supporting documents from students and medical schools to residency programs via the internet. The applicant completes an electronic residency application used to apply to multiple residency programs through a website called MyERAS. The applicant's osteopathic school of graduation scans and attaches supporting documents for the application through a program known as the Dean's Workstation (DWS). These materials are then transmitted via the internet to the sites the applicant has selected for application.

At WVSOM, the ERAS Dean's Workstation (DWS) is administered by the Office of Graduate Medical Education. This should not be confused with the Office of the Academic Dean. All questions pertaining to OGME- 1 year and residency applications or the ERAS application process should be directed to the GME Office.

ERAS opens for use by osteopathic students in July. Applicants must have an electronic token in order to register for and use ERAS. **Tokens are distributed by the GME Office in July.** Additional information about applying to programs through ERAS can be found on their website: <http://www.aamc.org/eras>.

ERAS applications require the following supporting documents: personal statement, board scores, transcripts, MSPE (Dean's Letter), letters of recommendation (up to four are allowed per program), and a photograph. **Specific requirements for preparing and submitting each of these supporting documents for ERAS are outlined below in bold.**

The Curriculum Vitae

The Curriculum Vitae (CV) provides the highlights of your academic and professional career. Your CV makes an important first impression, as it is often the first thing an interviewer will review before meeting you. Take the time to organize it logically and prepare it neatly. Be sure to proofread it carefully for spelling and grammatical errors. Your CV is also a good reference tool when completing applications.

Your CV should include educational experience (including high school, if it is relevant), undergraduate, graduate level, and medical school. It should cover work experiences, teaching or research experience, academic/job-related accomplishments, licenses and certifications, and honors and awards. It might also include personal experiences, professional and clinical interests especially as they relate to the position, travel, intercultural experience, foreign languages, hobbies and sports related interests. Choose your strongest experiences and those most related to the position.

Select the categories you want to use and arrange the order in which you would like them to appear. Use Education as the first category until you have related work experience. List items in reverse chronological order.

Get objective feedback from two people, and have them review drafts of your CV. Be concise, do not use abbreviations, and proofread it carefully. Do not put the word 'Resume' or 'Curriculum Vitae' at the top, rather, place your name and contact information in bold at the top of the page. Do

not include your Social Security number or mention your gender, age, marital status, or personal information about family members. Print your CV on quality resume paper. Avoid colored papers that may be difficult to photocopy.

A CV is not a required part of the ERAS application. It can, however, be a helpful tool for completing the ERAS application. As you complete the Common Application Form (CAF) on MyERAS, it automatically generates a CV for you. This will only include the information that you type into your CAF.

Resources for information on preparing Curriculum Vitae can be found on page 28. Examples of Curriculum Vitae can be found on pages 35-39.

The Personal Statement

The Personal Statement includes information about you that may not be found anywhere else. It is required for applications to most OGME- 1 years, residency programs and fellowships. The purpose of the personal statement is to help the reader to better visualize you and to tell program directors about yourself by describing the events and experiences that shaped your personality, values and goals and to highlight your strengths. It is an opportunity for you to make yourself stand out from other applicants. A well written personal statement can also facilitate the process of answering essay questions on some applications.

Provide information as to why you chose your desired specialty or why you chose to practice medicine. You may relate experiences that influenced your choices. Next, you may want to mention how you plan to use your specialty training. Anticipate this question in your interview and be honest. Include a dynamic statement as to how this graduate medical education program will help meet your goals and how you will enhance their program. Finally, include information that makes this personal statement *your* personal statement, including your personal strengths and accomplishments, interests and hobbies, etc.

The most difficult part is getting started. Determine the traits and skills being sought by your programs of interest. Identify your marketable attributes. Highlight the attributes that match up with traits and skills being sought by programs. Create an outline for each paragraph, and write a topic sentence for each paragraph. Get feedback from other students, faculty or physicians on your draft and make revisions. Try to customize your personal statement for each program.

Once you have written a personal statement, be sure to save it in an electronic format and make several copies to include with those applications that specifically request it. Some programs may ask you to include specific information in your personal statement which may require you to make several different versions.

The Personal Statement for ERAS is typed directly into the application that the student creates via the internet. It could also be electronically copied and pasted from word-processing software into the ERAS application. The ERAS program will allow the student to create a separate personal statement for each program, if desired.

Resources for information on preparing Personal Statements can be found on page 28. Examples of Personal Statements can be found on page 40-42.

Medical School Transcripts

Transcripts for applicants utilizing ERAS will be requested from the Registrar's Office on behalf of applicants directly by the GME Office at WVSOM. This is to ensure that the transcript is in the appropriate format required by the ERAS software. This request will be made in July, after the posting of third year grades.

It is recommended that students request a copy of their transcript and review it carefully for accuracy prior to releasing it to programs. Each student should also retain a copy for their application records.

To request a medical school transcript for applications other than those via ERAS, a *Request for Transcript* form must be completed and submitted to the Office of Registrar at WVSOM. The *Request for Transcript* form can be found on page 33. You may also pick up this form in the GME office, the office of the Registrar, or it may be download from the Mountain State OPTI website, www.wvsom.edu/opti, under Applications.

Transcripts include all grades posted as of the date of your request. Grades for the third year are not posted by the Registrar's office until the end of the academic year. Therefore, transcripts requested before the end of the year will not reflect any grades from the third year. To ensure a complete transcript including all third year grades, please wait until July to make the transcript request and be sure to specify on the request form that it should include all third year grades.

The first copy of the transcript is free of charge. Additional transcripts are \$6.00 each. Payment is due at the time of request. Requests for transcripts and board scores are normally mailed within 5 working days from the date of receipt. During those periods when grades are being recorded, additional time may be required.

COMLEX Board Scores

COMLEX scores for use with ERAS are requested by the student through the web-based ERAS application directly from the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). COMLEX scores are reported as a complete transcript, as of the date of the transcript request. Therefore, students may have to request retransmission of their scores through ERAS after the Level II scores are issued. The retransmission of the COMLEX transcript will be as a hard copy to the programs in which you apply and not sent electronically through ERAS. Specific instructions and fees for transmitting COMLEX scores are outlined in the ERAS website an in the ERAS Applicant Manual.

To request board scores for applications other than those via ERAS, a *Request for Transcript* form must be completed and submitted to the Office of Registrar at WVSOM. The *Request for Transcript* form can be found on page 33. You may also pick up this form in the GME office, the office of the Registrar, or it may be download from the Mountain State OPTI website, www.wvsom.edu/opti, under Applications. COMLEX scores are reported as a complete transcript, as of the date of the transcript request. Requests for transcripts submitted before Level II scores are released will not include those scores.

The first copy of the transcript is free of charge. Additional transcripts are \$6.00 each (combined requests for transcripts and board scores are \$10 each). Payment is due at the time of request. Requests for transcripts and board scores are normally mailed within 5 working days from the date of receipt. During those periods when grades are being recorded, additional time may be required.

Board scores may also be requested directly from the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME). Additional information on how to request board transcripts and fees can be found on the NBOME website: www.nbome.org.

Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE)

The Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE), *formerly known as the Dean's Letter of Evaluation*, is a standardized component of the application process. It is one of the measures used by OGME- 1 year/residency program directors to evaluate a candidate's application for a position.

The main purpose of the MSPE is to document the student's progress in the medical school curriculum and to verify the information provided by the student on the Curriculum Vitae. It is important to remember that the **MSPE is NOT a letter of recommendation**. Rather, it is a letter of evaluation, objectively and honestly summarizing the student's progress and participation in their medical school education.

In a sense, you write your own MSPE through your academic record, your involvement in extracurricular activities, your participation in research projects, your awards and scholarships, and your performance during clinical rotations. The MSPE may also be used to provide comparative information regarding a student's performance in relation to their peers. The following objective measures are cited in the MSPE: GPA, class rank, grades, preceptor comments from clinical rotations (both positive and negative), extra-curricular activities, disciplinary actions, and the Dean's overall recommendation on student performance.

To request a MSPE, students must complete the *Request for Medical Student Performance Evaluation* form and submit it to the Office of the Academic Dean at WVSOM, along with a copy of their current Curriculum Vitae. Requests for MSPE's for OGME- 1 year/residency applications should be held until July (after third year grades are posted) in order to ensure the request will reflect the academic standing at the end of the third year. You may request up to 5 copies of the MSPE free of charge. Additional letters are \$3.00 each. Payment is due at the time of request.

The *Request for Medical Student Performance Evaluation (MSPE or Dean's Letter of Evaluation)* form can be found on page 34. You may also pick up this form in the GME Office, in the office of the Academic Dean, or you may download a copy from the Mountain State OPTI website, www.wvsom.edu/opti, under Applications.

For ERAS applications, the student must submit the *Request for Medical Student Performance Evaluation* form to the Dean's Office with a current CV and check the appropriate box indicating that the letter will be used for ERAS and should be sent to the Office of Graduate Medical Education. All requests for MSPE's for use with ERAS will be held until third year grades are posted in order to include the most current grade and class rank information.

Some programs or other application services may require an original MSPE sent directly from the Academic Dean's office. For these applications, please submit the *Request for Medical Student Performance Evaluation* form to the Dean's Office with a current CV and check the appropriate box indicating that the letter must be sent to individual programs. You must also provide the names and addresses for each program to which you would like your letter sent.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation (LOR) are a crucial component of the application process. In addition to the more objective elements of your application, these letters provide an additional subjective evaluation of your particular skills and talents. They are written by individuals who know you and are able to assess your unique qualifications for a postdoctoral position.

Most programs will require at least three letters of recommendation. Many programs also have other requirements for letters of recommendation, such as a letter from a faculty member, from an osteopathic physician with knowledge of your clinical skills, or from a physician within the specialty to which you are applying. It is also recommended that applicants have at least one or two letters from physicians who are in the specialty in which they are applying.

Requirements for letters of recommendation vary from program to program. It is the student's responsibility to find out what types of letters are required by the programs to which you are applying and to obtain letters which fulfill those requirements.

The first step is to identify potential letter writers. These will ideally be clinical faculty who are familiar with your clinical skills and who think you stand out among your peers. Other quality letter writers are faculty at the programs to which you are applying, your personal physician mentor or advisor, or a faculty member with particular clinical esteem or other honors.

Courtesy is the key element in requesting letters. You should ask these individuals if they know you and your abilities well enough to submit a positive or strong letter of recommendation on your behalf. If you are doing a rotation with a faculty member who is a potential letter writer, let that person know as soon as possible that you would like him or her to write a letter on your behalf. This will give the writer the opportunity to more critically assess your performance.

Next, put your request in writing and provide your letter writers with your Curriculum Vitae and Personal Statement. This will help them write a more accurate and personalized letter. Allow your letter writers plenty of time to complete the letter (at least three weeks is recommended, and you may have to follow up with the physician or his/her support staff to be sure the letter is completed). Always request more letters than the minimum number required. Be sure to request the appropriate letters that fulfill the requirements of the programs to which you are applying.

The onus of obtaining positive letters of recommendation falls on you, both in terms of your ability to impress letter writers with your medical aptitude as well as in your consideration in requesting letters. You may wish to outline in your written requests some of the key elements that letter writers can highlight which residency programs will find useful, such as those referenced in *Getting into a Residency: a Guide for Medical Students* by Kenneth V. Iserson.

Elements of a Reference Letter

It is very useful to include the following items in reference letters for applicants to residency programs:

Scholastic Record

1. Standing in graduating class
2. Honors/commendations in courses
3. Other honors

Medical Abilities

1. Interaction with patients
2. Diagnostic ability
3. Physical examination ability
4. Laboratory use and test interpretation
5. Use of pharmacological agents
6. Clarity of oral presentations, Clarity/completeness of charts
7. Knowledge of medical literature

Personal Characteristics

(List strongest points first)

1. Relations with peers, faculty, ancillary staff
 2. Willingness to assume responsibility
 3. Dependability
 4. Integrity; moral and ethical qualities
 5. Industriousness
 6. Initiative
 7. Motivation
 8. Interest
 9. Maturity
 10. Flexibility
 11. Sense of humor
-

Letters of recommendation should be addressed generically, “Dear Program Director.” You should provide your letter writer with complete names and addresses for all the programs to which you require your letter to be sent. You may wish to provide the letter writer with labels to use for mailing.

Some programs may ask you to “*waive your right*” to see your LORs. It is believed that the physician will write a more objective letter, if the student is not going to read it. This seems to be more common in allopathic programs. If a student waives their right to read their LORs, the GME Office at WVSOM will be unable to provide copies to the student to review. Students may wish to ask programs of interest about whether they prefer such a waiver prior to requesting LORs.

For ERAS applications, LORs should be sent to the Office of Graduate Medical Education at WVSOM to be scanned. The student must create a name identifier (label) for each letter writer within their on-line application which will allow the LORs to be attached to their applications. ERAS provides a “Request for Letter of Recommendation Cover Sheet” that can be used to request LORs. This form is optional, not required, and it will not be transmitted to programs along with the LORs. ERAS will allow up to four (4) LORs to be attached to each application. Letters may be selected in different combinations. They do not have to be the same four letters for all programs.

Photographs

OGME- 1 year and residency programs often use photographs to identify you when you come to interview, and as a memory aid when creating their rank order lists. Photographs should be in color, show a full front head-and-shoulders view, have a plain white or light colored background (since dark colored backgrounds do not display or copy well), and should measure approximately 2½ x 3½ inches and not more than 3 x 4 inches. Your photograph should only be of you and portray a professional image (ex. passport photos).

Photographs for use with ERAS applications should be mailed to the Office of Graduate Medical Education at WVSOM (they may also be transmitted via email in a .jpeg format). Applicants may choose to use their latest class composite if available.

INTERVIEWS

Interviews are conducted according to schedules announced by individual training institutions. Students are responsible for contacting individual institutions and for arranging interviews. It is advisable to interview with several programs in order to make an informed decision regarding the best program for your individual needs.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of the interview. While GPA, class rank, recommendation letters, clerkship knowledge, skill, and performance play a major role in securing interviews, how well you interview may determine whether you will be ranked.

Interviewers often rely on chemistry and first impressions. Dress fashionably but conservatively. Areas that are often noted in interviews include: grooming, clothing, posture, manners, language, voice, eye contact and body control, attitude, personality, interview skills, motivation, preparation, qualifications, potential, ability to communicate, self confidence, sense of humor, maturity, and apparent competence.

Arrive 10 minutes early. Bring your CV with you. Be confident and enthusiastic. Do not mention personal or financial issues. Do not brag, argue or criticize. Anticipate commonly asked questions, deal with tough questions, and recognize and deal with illegal questions.

Questions regarding such things as age, marital status, religion, and criminal background do not legally have to be answered in an interview. You may choose to answer, or you might choose to say, "I do not believe that my age (or marital status, religion, etc.) has any impact on my ability to perform the job well." Know what questions are illegal and handle them tactfully.

Interviews for OGME- 1 year/residency programs are much like interviews for medical school. In most programs the DME or Program Directors greet applicants and provide a program overview, followed by an introduction of some faculty members. Interns/Residents usually accompany you on a tour of the facilities. This is the time to ask about such things as program completion, successful certification, call, moonlighting opportunities, etc. It is important that you conduct yourself in a professional manner from the initial interview and with all you meet (DME, Program Directors, OGME-1's, Residents, Coordinators, Secretaries, etc.). Many or all individuals you meet during the interview process may have input into the ranking process. The interview process varies from program to program. Some may only take a few hours; others may ask that you arrive the evening before the interview.

Throughout the day, ask each of your interviewers for a business card. That way, when you are writing thank you notes you will be sure to have correct names and titles. Immediately following the conclusion of your interview day, record your positive and negative observations about the program, as well as other pertinent facts and feelings.

Questions You Might Be Asked

Below are some questions commonly asked in the interviews.

1. ***Tell me about yourself.*** This may be the only question that your interviewer asks. Be sure to get your good points in quickly since you may not have much time.
2. ***What are you looking for in a program?*** Know the differences between training programs and the key elements that are important to you. Assure the interviewer that neither your time nor their time is being wasted.
3. ***Why did you choose this program? Why do you want to work here?*** Know about the program. Make it a point to know a lot about how training programs differ as well as what each individual program has to offer.
4. ***Where do you see yourself in 10 years? What are your long range goals?*** Be honest. If you are unsure of what you want to do with your training, let the interviewer know that your options are still open. Some applicants, especially those in highly competitive programs, assume that interviewers are looking for persons committed to academic research. If you are, good for you. If you are not, don't be afraid to let them know it.
5. ***Name your three greatest assets/strengths and your three greatest faults/weaknesses.*** Be ready to answer this one, and be sure to use specific examples to clarify your point.
6. ***Why did you choose this specialty?*** Be concise.
7. ***How do you handle stress?***
8. ***Do you have any questions?*** Have your questions prepared and take notes.

**Some programs may quiz your medical knowledge or ask you to demonstrate different skills, (i.e.: suturing, etc.)*

Questions You Should Ask

Below are some questions you may wish to ask during your interviews with faculty and residents. You should modify your questions based on what is important to you. Ask consistent questions in all your interviews, so you can compare the different programs.

To Ask Faculty

1. *What types of clinical sites are used?*
2. *Are there elective and research opportunities?*

3. *Are there non-clinical responsibilities?*
4. *Is there community service or involvement?*
5. *Are there opportunities for training in practice management, administrative areas, bioethics, medico-legal issues, etc.?*
6. *Are there moonlighting opportunities as a senior resident?*
7. *What are the program's strengths and weaknesses?*
8. *What is the average length (number of years) of faculty involvement in the program?*
9. *Is there a mentor/advisor system? How does it work?*
10. *Have any housestaff left the program in recent years? Where did they go?*
11. *How are residents oriented to their rotations?*
12. *How are residents evaluated to assess goals and objectives?*
13. *Is there a support system available during the transition into residency?*
14. *What is the program's track record? Match rate? Graduation rate? Board pass rate?*
15. *Where are your graduates now? (geographically, types of practice, etc.)*
16. *Do you help graduates find jobs?*
17. *Describe the community, schools, etc.*
18. *What are the licensing requirements during postdoctoral training and after?*

To Ask Residents

1. *Can you describe the quality of your educational experience?*
2. *How much didactic time is there? Is it a priority? What is the quality?*
3. *What is the level of contact with clinical faculty?*
4. *What type of clinical experiences will I have?*
5. *What is the call schedule?*
6. *What is the balance between work and personal time for other interests?*
7. *Tell me about on-call rooms, cafeteria, library, computer access, parking, etc.*
8. *What is the patient population? And quality of patient care?*
9. *What are the program's strengths and weaknesses?*
10. *Is there a good relationship with the nursing staff?*
11. *Describe the balance between responsibility and supervision as you progress.*
12. *Is there an opportunity to formally evaluate faculty and the program? Have changes been made as a result of resident feedback?*
13. *How do they address grievances? Is there support and fairness in this process?*

14. *What support staff is available? Are they helpful?*
15. *How is the group dynamic among residents? Do they have good working relationships and rapport? Do they support each other? Do they socialize as a group?*

Travel to Interviews

Be creative and network with fellow students, classmates, alumni and anyone else you can find to help with housing, etc. Some programs provide housing or accommodations for interviewees. Ask airlines, hotels, and rental car agencies about student discounts. Try to group your interviews geographically to minimize travel costs or within a certain timeframe if you will have difficulty getting off rotations. Some programs may allow applicants to interview when rotating at their facility if the application requirements are complete.

Thank You Letters

Applicants should send a thank you letter as soon as possible following each interview. It can mean the difference between being offered a position and not being offered a position. Your note should express your appreciation for the interview and your interest in the position. However, it would be unethical to write each program at which you interviewed and tell them you plan to rank them #1.

Contact with Programs regarding Rankings

During the period between interviews and the deadline for submitting Rank Order Lists, the amount of contact between students and programs varies widely from specialty to specialty, program to program, and between osteopathic and allopathic programs. Some programs will send letters or emails to everyone who was interviewed, some programs will make personal phone calls to candidates of interest, and some programs will do nothing at all. Some programs may discuss their expected rankings with students. Institutions may inform their preferred candidates that they are in a favored position for consideration in the upcoming Match, and some programs may ask for oral indications regarding how the student intends to rank their programs.

Do not allow yourself to be rushed into a decision about ranking programs. Some programs will tell

you that you have to decide immediately. **Voluntary communication of expected rankings is permitted by most match programs; however, statements implying or requesting a commitment from applicants are prohibited and may be consider a violation of the match participation agreement.** Applicants should not request intended rankings from any program, and likewise, programs cannot require applicants to provide commitments about their intended rankings.

Students are also cautioned against taking any voluntary communications about expected rankings too literally. Statements such as “we plan to rank you highly” or “we intent to rank you in our top tier” are NOT guarantees of a match. Each year there are students (and programs) who are disappointed in match outcomes, based on pre-match communications about rankings. The actual rank order listings of both programs and students are the only determining factors in the outcome of the match. Students can find information about each match program’s process for determining how matches occur on their respective websites, referenced on page 28.

THE MATCH PROCESS

AOA Intern/Resident Registration Program (the osteopathic match)

www.natmatch.com/aoairp

The match for osteopathic training programs, the AOA’s Intern/Resident Registration Program (AOA Match), is administered on behalf of the AOA by National Matching Services, Inc. (NMS). Each student must register directly with NMS in order to be eligible for participation in the Match. Each student must return a signed Applicant Agreement to NMS, accompanied by the appropriate registration fee. This registration fee is non-refundable, and is collected by NMS on behalf of the AOA. Following receipt of the Agreement and fee, NMS will send a confirmation of registration directly to each student registered for the Match, either by e-mail or regular mail. AOA Match results will be sent to applicants via email. They will also be available through the NMS website, and through the GME Office at WVSOM.

Students will obtain all the information and forms necessary to register for the Match directly from the Match web site at www.natmatch.com/aoairp/index.htm Students will need to download instructions and a non-personalized Agreement form for the Match directly from “Applicant Registration” section of the web site. Since the Agreement forms are no longer personalized, each student **must provide his/her full 6-digit AOA Id Number on the Agreement form.** Students who do not know their AOA ID Number are to contact the AOA Division of Postdoctoral Training at (312) 202-8276 to obtain this information. Each student registered for the Match by mid-November will receive a package from NMS containing instructions on preparing and submitting the Rank Order List for the Match; a personalized sheet providing the student’s confidential password/Pin for entering the Rank Order List via the internet; and, an explanation of the procedures for accessing his/her Match results via the web site.

Institutions and students are not permitted to make any formal arrangements or sign letters of acceptance or contracts at the time of interview or at any time prior to the release of the AOA Match results. Any such letters of acceptance or contracts are non-binding and have no effect on the Match results. Only the official Match results constitute binding obligations between the students and the institutions. Any student wishing to accept a position at a program that is not participating in the Match, or who decides not to participate in the Match for any other reason, must withdraw from the Match.

The results of the Match are binding for both students and institutions. Release from Match commitments and the mutually agreed upon contractual obligations of either party can only be achieved through a written release by mutual consent, which is generally done by both parties signing the appropriate release section on the intern contract. The contract is a binding legal document between the institution and the student, and there may be legal ramifications if either party breaches the contract.

Institutions (hospitals) must complete a standard contract for each matched student and send it within 10 working days after receive of the Match results to the student for signature. Each matched student must sign and return the contract to the institution within 30 days of receiving it. Beyond 30 days, the institution has the right to notify students of its decision to withdraw the contract offer. In such cases, when a contract is withdrawn because the student fails to sign it, the student is in violation of the Match commitment.

Violations of the AOA Match Application Agreement may preclude a student from taking any other AOA-approved training program for a period of one year and may prevent a student from securing approval by the AOA of any subsequent postdoctoral training.

National Residency Matching Program (NRMP – the allopathic match)

www.nrmp.org

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is a private, not-for-profit organization established in 1952 to provide an orderly and fair mechanism to match the preferences of applicants to U.S. residency positions with the preferences of residency program directors for those applicants.

The NRMP is sponsored by the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Medical Association, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the American Hospital Association, and the Council of Medical Specialty Societies.

In order to be eligible for participation in the NRMP Match, each student must register online with the NRMP, agree to the terms of the Match Participation Agreement, and pay the appropriate

registration fee. This registration fee is non-refundable. Following receipt of registration, the NRMP will send a confirmation of registration directly to each student registered for the Match by e-mail. NRMP Match results will be sent to applicants via email. They will also be available through the NRMP website, and through the GME Office at WVSOM.

Under the terms of the NRMP Match Participation Agreement, osteopathic medical students are considered “independent applicants.” In previous years, independent applicants have been allowed to accept positions in allopathic programs outside the NRMP Match. This practice has been the subject of some controversy, and the NRMP Match has been considering disallowing it. **Any student receiving a contract offer in an allopathic program outside the match should consult their NRMP Match Participation Agreement and the GME Office at WVSOM before accepting such a position.**

The results of the NRMP Match are binding for both students and institutions. The Match Participation Agreement and the Rank Order Lists submitted by the applicant and institution establish a commitment to offer/accept an appointment if a match results. Failure to offer or accept a matched position is a material breach of the Match Participation Agreement, and violators may be subject to penalties outlined in the Agreement. After the general announcement of match results on Match Day, letters of appointment will be sent to all matched applicants.

Violating the Match Participation Agreement may result in the applicant being barred from subsequent NRMP matches and/or being identified as a match violator to participating programs for up to three years. Violations committed prior to Match Day may result in the applicant being withdrawn from the match.

The Military Match

The United States Services Programs (Army, Navy and Air Force) have their own graduate medical education training programs which are filled mainly by individuals with an existing active duty service obligation for prior participation in funded educational school programs (HPSP, USUHS, ROTC). First Year Graduate Medical Education (FYGME) positions are filled by graduates of accredited schools of medicine. Applicants to such training programs must be qualified for appointment and acceptance as a Commissioned Officer in the Armed Services.

Most military programs utilize the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) to receive applications. In addition to the supporting documents requested through ERAS, each Armed Service may have other application requirements such as other military forms or a physical examination. It is important that applicants are clear on the application requirements and deadlines for their branch of service. **Failure to meet military deadlines or application requirements may result in**

suspension or revocation of all scholarship entitlements including stipend and tuition payments. For questions about specific requirements, students should contact the appropriate liaison for their branch of the service.

Applicants to Armed Services programs should also register to participate in the AOA Match and/or the NRMP Match, as there are often fewer spaces available than the number of applicants for military positions. Students applying to specialties in high demand may also be deferred from military programs. It is the student's responsibility to advise civilian programs of the potential for military obligations during the interview process and to ensure that they are withdrawn from the civilian match if they receive a military appointment.

Students with military commitments will participate in the government's military matching program, which is completed in December, prior to both the AOA Match and the NRMP Match. Students registered in the NRMP Match who match with military programs will be automatically withdrawn. Students registered in the AOA Match who accept positions in military programs must personally withdraw from the Match through National Matching Services' website.

Osteopathic graduates who participate in Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)-accredited required military programs may apply for AOA approval of their military program as an osteopathic OGME- 1 year. These trainees will be required to maintain their AOA membership, register with the AOA Division of Postdoctoral Training, and meet the core rotation requirements of an AOA OGME- 1 year (with review and approval of the military commanding officer/program director). It is the responsibility of the federal/military trainee to be sure that the training program meets the rotational requirements. Students are advised to seek such approval to keep open the opportunity for expanded practice options, as well as the option of AOA certification in any chosen specialty. Application forms for approval of military training and information on the rotational requirements may be found on the AOA's website, and questions can be directed to the Division of Postdoctoral Training (see page 27 for contact information).

It is the understanding of the AOA that not all military programs will provide an opportunity for you to complete AOA's required rotations. In this event, you are requested to use your elective time to complete as many rotational requirements as possible. If you have any doubt about the program you have selected being in compliance with AOA requirements, please call our department at **(800) 621-1773, ext. 8276**, for further clarification

Trainees in military programs may subsequently seek AOA approval of their military residency or subspecialty training, allowing for specialty certification through the AOA, by requesting and submitting an application to the AOA Division of Postdoctoral Training. Completed applications should be returned to the AOA prior to beginning their training on July 1.

Other Matches

In addition to the military, osteopathic (*NatMatch*), and allopathic (*NRMP*) matches, students may also participate in other matches for particular specialties, sub-specialties or fellowships.

The **San Francisco Matching Program or SF Match** (www.sfmach.org) provides matching services and application support services for the following several fellowship programs and the

following residency specialties: Neurotology, Child Neurology/Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, Ophthalmology, and Plastic Surgery.

The SF Match uses its own Central Application Service (CAS) to receive applications. Additional information and a CAS Manual can be found on their website. Participants in the SF Match will be matching for advanced (PGY 2 and beyond) positions, so registration in the NRMP or other matches may be required to secure placement in preliminary (PGY 1) training positions. **Ophthalmology and Child Neurology/NDD matches conducted by the SF Match occur in early to mid-January Plastic Surgery takes place in May and Neurotology will occur in October.**

The American Urological Association conducts the **Urology Residency Matching Program** (www.auanet.org/residents/resmatch.cfm). Most urology programs utilize ERAS for receiving applications (this should be confirmed with each individual program). The Urology Match is for advanced positions, so applicants may be required to participate in the NRMP or other matches to secure required preliminary training in surgery. **The Urology Match usually occurs at the end of January.**

Participating in Multiple Matches

If you are participating in more than one match program, there are several points to keep in mind about how the matches interplay.

Military and Other Matches

Students who match in military programs will be automatically withdrawn from the NRMP Match, and should notify NMS to withdraw from the AOA Match.

AOA Match and NRMP Match

Students who are applying to both allopathic and osteopathic programs should consult the AOA and the ACGME websites for training requirements for the specialty to which they are applying. There may be differences in the length of training and requirements for preliminary training. Student who plan to take an AOA OGME- 1 year in lieu of an allopathic transitional year or prior to an allopathic residency should also consult the allopathic programs to which they plan to apply to be sure they will be credited for their AOA OGME- 1 year.

Students who participate in both the AOA Match and the NRMP Match are prevented from matching to concurrent year positions. Match results are communicated from the AOA Match to the NRMP match. Students who match through the AOA Match will be automatically withdraw from NRMP Match for concurrent training year positions.

Specifically, if you participate in both matches for PGY 1 positions, and you match in the AOA Match, you will be withdrawn from the NRMP Match. Likewise, if you match in the AOA Match to a combined or linked OGME- 1 year/residency program (considered to be a match for PGY 1 and PGY 2), you will not be permitted to participate in the NRMP Match for PGY1 or PGY 2 slots. However, students who match through the AOA Match to OGME- 1 year-only positions can participate in the NRMP match for PGY 2 slots.

The interplay of the two matches is important to remember for students who are interviewing with both osteopathic and allopathic programs. This should be carefully considered when making choices of preferred programs and preparing rank order lists.

Matching as a Couple

Two applicants who are participating in the Match at the same time and who wish to coordinate their matches (e.g. obtain positions in the same location) may participate in the Match as a “Couple”.

Applicants who are members of a couple can link their program choices together in “pairs” so that they can be matched into a combination of programs suited to their needs. In creating pairs of program choices on their rank order lists, couples can mix specialties, program types, and geographic locations. Applying as a couple should not influence the selection decisions made by program directors.

Additional information and instructions for registering and submitting Rank Order Lists by couples can be found on the NMS and NRMP websites. Additional fees may also apply. Please contact the GME office with any questions.

The Rank Order List

Following interviews, students will identify on their Rank Order Lists, in order of preference, the OGME- 1 year/residency programs where they would like to serve. Rank Order Lists for both the AOA and NRMP Matches are submitted by students via the internet. Students can find additional information for rank order lists on the website for the particular match (es) in which they plan to participate.

Students should include on their Rank Order Lists only those programs where they would agree to accept a contract. Likewise, institutions identify on the programs' Rank Order Lists the students to whom they are prepared to offer contracts, in order of preference. The results of the Match are binding for both the students and the institutions.

Students may list as many or as few programs as they wish on their Rank Order Lists. However, listing too few programs may decrease the probability of a match taking place. Applicants should include on their preference lists all of the programs they would be willing to attend. Sometimes applicants who did not match at all received offers from programs they did not include on their rank list. The same holds true for programs. By listing all acceptable applicants, the program protects itself from cases of applicants implying that the program will be their first choice and then changing their minds when submitting their preference lists.

The best way to assure a good match is for applicants and programs to list all acceptable choices in order of desirability rather than in order of perceived chances of receiving offers or acceptances.

Sending in a match agreement and a rank order list commits you to the program with whom you match. However, some participants registered for the match may choose not to submit a rank order list. This allows the student to participate only in the scramble, and avoid a match that might not have been to the student's liking.

WARNING: In the event of accidentally ranking the wrong program, the chances of getting out of that match are slim to none. You may have heard of someone who got released, but these situations are rare. Be very careful when making your rank selections.

The Match

The match process begins with an attempt to place an applicant into the program indicated as most preferred on that applicant's list. If the applicant cannot be matched to this first choice program, an attempt is then made to place the applicant into the second choice program, and so on, until the applicant obtains a **tentative match**, or all the applicant's choices have been exhausted.

Tentative matches will continue until the program's positions are filled. At which time the match process shifts to the preferences of the programs. Tentative matches for lesser preferred applicants will be broken to make room for a tentative match with the more preferred applicant on the program's rank list.

Matches are "tentative" because an applicant who is matched to a program at one point in the matching process may be removed from the program at some later point, to make room for an applicant more preferred by the program. When an applicant is removed from a previously made tentative match, an attempt is made to re-match that applicant, starting from the top of his/her list. This process is carried out for all applicants, until each applicant has either been tentatively matched to the most preferred choice possible, or all choices submitted by the applicant have been exhausted. When all applicants have been considered, the match is complete and all tentative matches become final.

The NMS, the NRMP and other match program websites contain additional information about the mechanics of the computer algorithm, as well as examples of the match process that illustrate how the process works.

The Scramble

Every year, a small number of students fail to match with any of their ranked programs. Do not despair if you find yourself in the scramble; many excellent programs do not fill in the first match.

ERAS will offer special services during the scramble allowing additional applications at no charge during a designated period. ERAS will notify applicants of the procedures via email.

Students should prepare for the possibility of scrambling prior to the match. Compile all your application materials including printed copies of your ERAS Application Form, CV, Personal Statement, Dean's Letter, Transcripts, board scores, and your letters of recommendation. You may be asked to fax these materials to programs of interest. You will also need access to a telephone, computer, and fax machine. Any student in the process of scrambling can contact the GME Department to answer questions about the Scramble and to assist with the process.

Following the match, students who fail to match are provided with information on programs with available positions for them to contact. Likewise, programs with available positions are provided with information regarding unmatched students to contact. Thus, opportunities to obtain a position still exist after the Match.

Post Match Communications with Programs

After securing a postdoctoral training position, each student should contact the medical education office at the program and provide them with current contact information. Students should inquire whether there are any pre-employment requirements they need to fulfill before they begin training. Students should also find out from their program or the state licensing board whether there are licensing requirements for the postdoctoral training period.

RESOURCES

Osteopathic Programs

- **American Osteopathic Association (AOA)**
800-621-1773
do-online.org
For information on the AOA Match, go to Students & Residents, and click on Match Program.
- **AOA Division of Postdoctoral Training**
(800) 621-1773, ext. 8276
do-online.org
For applications for approval of allopathic training or federal/military training as an AOA-approved OGME- 1 year, go to Students & Residents, and click on Application Forms.
- **AOA Opportunities**-Database of osteopathic OGME- 1 year and residency programs

do-online.org

Go to Students & Residents, click on Opportunities on the left side menu, and then click the Opportunities icon on that page

- **Mountain State OPTI**-Information on postdoctoral training programs affiliated with WVSOM. Students may also find forms required for applications, Request for Transcripts and Request for MSPE, etc. under 'Applications'.
(304) 647-6343 or (304) 647-6330
www.wvsom.edu/opti

Allopathic Programs

- **American Medical Association**
800-621-8335
www.ama-assn.org
Click on Med School & Residency
- **Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)** - The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education within the United States.
312-755-5000 www.acgme.org
- **Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA Online)**-Database of allopathic graduate medical education programs
www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2997.html.
Links to FREIDA can also be found on the NRMP and ERAS websites.

Military Programs

- **Army Scholarship Program**
HPSP Student Management Office: 877-MED-ARMY
www.mods.army.mil/medicaleducation
- **Navy Scholarship Program**
Director, Medical Department Accessions: (301) 295-1217
nshs.med.navy.mil/gme/INSTRUCTIONS1.htm
- **Air Force Scholarship Program**
Air Force Personnel Center, Physician Education Branch 800-531-5800
www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/medical/PhysicianEducation

Match Information

- **National Matching Services, Inc.(NMS)**-Detailed information on the **AOA Match** process
(416) 977-3431 (main office in Toronto)
www.natmatch.com/aoairp

- **National Residency Matching Program (NRMP)** -Detailed information on the NRMP Match process
(202) 828-0566
www.nrmp.org
- **San Francisco Matching Program**
(415) 447-0350
www.sfmatch.org
- **AUA Urology Residency Matching Program**
866-RING AUA (866-746-4282), ext. 3913
www.auanet.org/residents/resmatch.cfm
- **Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)**-Web-based application service for some military programs
(202) 828-0413
www.aamc.org/students/eras

Reference Materials

- *Getting into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students* by Kenneth V. Iseron
- *How to Choose a Medical Specialty* by Anita D. Taylor
- *Strolling through the Match* published by the American Academy of Family Physicians
- *Roadmap to Residency* published by the Association of American Medical Colleges, 2007
- *Resumes and Personal Statements for Health Professionals* by James W. Tysinger, Ph.D.

TIMELINE FOR THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Below is a rough timeline to follow during the application process. Specific dates and deadlines for the AOA Match, the NRMP Match, other matches, and for ERAS will be issued by each of these organizations later in the year and provided as they become available. Specific dates for military programs are issued by each service and will be conveyed to students through that service's student liaison.

Summer/Fall/Winter 2009

- Schedule rotations at sites of interest
- Request resource materials from programs of interest
- Select programs to which you would like to apply
- Contact each program for application requirements and deadlines

- Request Letters of Recommendation
- Prepare Personal Statement and Curriculum Vitae
- Have photo taken for applications

LATE JUNE 2009

- Osteopathic applicants receive ERAS information

JULY 2009

- July 1, Dean's Workstation (DWS) will generate tokens and distribute
- July 1, register for ERAS and complete application on-line
- Register for AOA Match
- Request Medical Student's Performance Evaluation from Academic Dean's office (Dean's Letter)
- July 15, apply to osteopathic programs through ERAS

AUGUST 2009

- Register for NRMP Match

SEPTEMBER 2009

- September 1, apply to allopathic programs through ERAS

JULY - DECEMBER 2009

- Schedule and conduct interviews

NOVEMBER 2009

- Retransmit COMLEX transcript through ERAS to send Level II Board scores

DECEMBER 2009

- Military Match results released

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2010

- Make program selections and prepare Rank Order Lists

FEBRUARY 2010

- AOA Match results released

MARCH 2010

- NRMP Match results released

MATCH AND APPLICATION CHECKLISTS

NRMP AND MILITARY MATCH

January – July

- £ Research programs of interest
- £ Request brochures and information
- £ Make preliminary program selections
- £ Obtain application deadlines and requirements for application from programs
- £ Request Letters of Recommendation
- £ Obtain a photograph
- £ Prepare Personal Statements
- £ Prepare Curriculum Vitae

June

- £ Obtain token and register for ERAS

July

- £ Complete Military Match registration and requirements
- £ Request Dean's Letter

August

- £ Register for NRMP Match

July-December

- £ Complete ERAS application
 - Name LoRs
 - Transmit board scores
 - Select Programs
 - Assign Documents
 - Submit supporting documents to WVSOM's GME Office

September-December

- £ Certify and submit completed ERAS application(s)
- £ Schedule and conduct interviews

November

- £ Retransmit board scores through ERAS

December

- £ MILITARY MATCH DAY
- £ Deadline for NRMP Match registration

January

- £ Prepare Rank Order List

February

- £ Submit Rank Order List

March

- £ NRMP MATCH DAY

AOA MATCH

January - July

- £ Research programs of interest
- £ Request brochures and information
- £ Make preliminary program selections
- £ Obtain application deadlines and requirements for application from programs
- £ Request Letters of Recommendation
- £ Obtain a photograph
- £ Prepare Personal Statements
- £ Prepare Curriculum Vitae

June

- £ Obtain token and register for ERAS
- £ Receive AOA Match materials

July

- £ Register for AOA Match
- £ Request Dean's Letter

July-December

- £ Complete ERAS application
 - Name LoRs
 - Transmit board scores
 - Select Programs
 - Assign Documents
 - Submit supporting documents to WVSOM's GME Office
- £ Certify and submit completed ERAS application(s)
- £ Schedule and conduct interviews

October

- £ Deadline for AOA Match Registration

November

- £ Retransmit board scores through ERAS

January

- £ Prepare and submit Rank Order List

February

- £ AOA MATCH DAY

SAN FRANCISCO MATCH

RESIDENCY MATCHES				
Specialty	CAS Target Date	Rank List Due	Match Results Released	Training Begins...
Ophthalmology PGY-2	Wed., Sep. 2, 09	Thurs., Jan 7, 10	Thurs., Jan 14, 10	July 2011
Child Neurology & NDD PGY-3	Wed., Aug. 26, 09	Thurs., Jan 14, 10	Thurs., Jan 21, 10	July 2010 July 2011 July 2012
Plastic Surgery PGY-4	Tues., Sept. 1, 08	Thurs., May 7, 09	Thurs., May 14, 09	July 2010
Neurotology	N/A	Thurs., Oct 8, 09	Thurs., Oct 15, 09	July 2010

** Applicants and programs rank lists must be in match office by 12:00 PM PST.

FELLOWSHIP MATCHES			
Specialty	Rank Lists Due	Match Results Released	Training begins...
Craniofacial	Mon., Nov 16, 09	Mon., Nov 23, 09	July 2010
Mohs	Mon., Nov 16, 09	Mon., Nov 23, 09	July 2010
Pediatric Dermatology	Tues., April 7, 09	Tues., April 20, 09	July 2010
Neurocritical Care	Tues., April 28, 09	Tues., May 5, 09	July 2010
Neurosurgery	Mon., Nov 16, 09	Mon., Nov 23, 09	July 2010
Ophthalmology	Tues., Dec 1, 09	Tues., Dec 8, 09	July 2010
Orthopaedic Trauma	TBA	TBA	August 2011
Orthopaedic Sports Medicine	Fri., March 20, 09	Wed., April 15, 09	August 2010
Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle	Wed., April 15, 09	Fri., May 1, 09	August 2010
Spine Surgery	Tues., May 5, 09	Tues., May 12, 09	July 2010
Pediatric Otolaryngology	May 14, 09	May 21, 09	July 2010
Rhinology	Mon., June 1, 09 <i>CAS Target Date: February 2, 09</i>	Fri., June 5, 09	July 2010
Facial Plastic Surgery	Thurs., June 4, 09	Thurs., June 11, 09	July 2010

Urology Residency Match Program Schedule

- Spring 2009 —
Jan. 2010** Match information is available on line. Register [on line](#) with a credit card. A \$75 non-refundable payment is required to receive an I.D. number. Match registration is accepted through December 2009.
- Within two weeks after registration, you will receive your I.D. number. This number should be given to each program with which you interview. Apply to programs of interest to you. The match programs have the option to participate in Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS[®]). You will find a list of accredited urology training programs on our web site. Each individual program designates its participation in the current match and ERAS[®]. Note program application deadlines, but do not wait until the last minute, as they can change. If you are offered an interview by a program, respond immediately, as interview slots can fill quickly. The program you match with generally provides pre-urology training. Some programs require that you also go through the National Resident Match Program (NRMP) as a formality for the surgery year(s)—check with each individual program for their requirements.
- Fall — January 2010** Applicants interview at the urology training programs with which they have made previous arrangements.
- December —
January 2010** All applicants and programs submit preference lists online to the Urology Residency Matching Program, showing their highest preference first and remaining choices in descending order. These preference lists must be submitted to the Urology Residency Matching Program no later than January 3, 2008. [Click here](#) to view safeguards.
- January 2010** The matching process is performed. A number of cross checks and safeguards will be utilized to ensure fairness, accuracy and confidentiality.
- January 2010** Results for current medical students are emailed to U.S. and Canadian Student Affairs Offices. E-mails are sent to medical schools, urology programs, and applicants informing them of their match(es). [Click here](#) to view Results Distribution.
- January 2010 —
NRMP Deadline** If you match with a urology program, check to see if you must go through the formality of the NRMP Match for surgery training at that same institution. If appropriate, submit your ranking list to the NRMP with code provided.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

HOSPITAL/ PROGRAM NAME: _____

APPLICATION DEADLINE _____

Application Service Used _____

/	Item Requested	Date Submitted	Rec'd by Program (/)
_____	Application	_____	_____
_____	Personal Statement	_____	_____
_____	Curriculum Vitae	_____	_____
_____	Dean's Letter	_____	_____
_____	Transcript	_____	_____
_____	COMLEX 1	_____	_____
_____	COMLEX 2	_____	_____
_____	Photograph	_____	_____
_____	Letters of Recommendation		
	Dr. _____	_____	_____
	Dr. _____	_____	_____
	Dr. _____	_____	_____
	Dr. _____	_____	_____
_____	Interview Date:_____	_____	_____
_____	Thank You Letter	_____	_____

NOTES ON APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

FORMS

- (1) Request for Transcript Form
- (2) Request for Dean's Letter of Evaluation Form



WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
400 NORTH LEE STREET
LEWISBURG, WV 24901
(800) 356-7836, ext. 383/369 or (304) 645-6383,
FAX #: (304) 647-6350

REQUEST FOR TRANSCRIPT

Signature of Student/Graduate _____
 Student/Graduate Name (printed) _____
 Street Address _____
 City, State & Zip Code _____
 Currently Enrolled? YES ___ NO ___ Date of Request _____
 Year of Graduation _____

**All transcripts include
 GPA & numerical
 class rank**

**Please select from the following choices
 (FIRST TRANSCRIPT IS FREE)**

- ___ Official Transcript: **\$6.00**
- ___ Unofficial Transcript: **\$6.00**
- ___ Unofficial Transcript - Faxed to Recipient: **\$8.00**
- ___ Official/Unofficial Transcript & NBOME Scores: **\$10.00**
- ___ Official/Unofficial Transcript & NBOME Scores - Faxed to Recipient: **\$10.00**
- ___ NBOME Scores Only (Level 1 and/or Level 2): **\$5.00**
- ___ NBOME Scores Only (Level 1 and/or Level 2) - Faxed to Recipient: **\$5.00**
- ___ Diploma Copy: **\$6.00**
- ___ Diploma Copy - Faxed to Recipient: **\$6.00**
- ___ Special Delivery/Overnight Delivery (Plus regular fees as appropriate): **\$20.00**

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION
 Name on Card _____
 Type of Card _____
 Acct. No. _____
 Expiration Date _____

This request must be signed and the name printed below the signature. All incomplete requests will be returned to the student/graduate for completion (example: no payment, no signature, lack of complete address).

1. _____ _____ _____	4. _____ _____ _____
2. _____ _____ _____	5. _____ _____ _____
3. _____ _____ _____	6. _____ _____ _____

01/31/05



WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE
OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC DEAN
400 NORTH LEE STREET
LEWISBURG, WEST VIRGINIA 24901
800-356-7836, ext. 269
fax: (304) 645-4859

REQUEST FOR MEDICAL STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (MSPE OR DEAN'S LETTER)

- First five (5) letters ever requested are FREE, \$3.00 processing fee for each additional letter
- Make checks payable to WVSOM
- A Curriculum Vitae must be attached. Failure to do so may delay your request.
- Letters are usually mailed within 7-10 working days after request is received

Full Name _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Year of Graduation _____ SSN _____

Evaluation letter requested is for:

- OGME- 1 year
 Residency Specialty (will be referenced, if included): _____

CURRICULUM VITAE IS ATTACHED Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Signature: _____

Please send a copy to me at the address above (this will be added to your total letter count)

Request for ERAS, please send to Joyce Martin, Graduate Medical Education

Request for independent programs, please send to addresses noted below:

Name _____

Department _____

Institution _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Name _____

Department _____

Institution _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

3/1/07

CURRICULUM VITAE and PERSONAL STATEMENTS

There are many different styles and formats that you may use for preparing your curriculum vitae. Regardless of the format selected, your resume should provide the reader with a neat, concise summary of your academic and extracurricular activities, in addition to some basic biographical data. In most instances, your curriculum vitae should be condensed into one typewritten page and may be attached to your application form. Do not try to include long distracting explanations of your employment, extracurricular activities and research involvement. You will have the opportunity to expand upon the information listed on your curriculum vitae in your personal statement and perhaps during your interview.

Following are some examples of curriculum vitae and personal statements. You may choose among many different formats as long as your curriculum vitae is neat, well-organized and complete.

NAME
Street Address
Town, State and Zip Code
Phone Number

EDUCATION:

D.O. West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine
Lewisburg, West Virginia
August 1994 - May 1998 (anticipated)

B.A. Concord College
Athens, West Virginia
Major: Biology and Pre Medicine
September 1986 - May 1990

Honors/Awards

Medical School Ciba-Geigy Community Service Award
Department of Public Health Scholarship
Student Osteopathic Medical Association Scholarship

Undergraduate

Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society
Cum Laude Graduate
Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society
Naperville Jr. Women's Society Scholarship
State Scholar

CAREER-RELATED EXPERIENCE:

March 1992-August 1993

Research Specialist, West Virginia University. Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Morgantown, West Virginia. Instituted and operated a clinical andrology laboratory program. Conducted research studies to investigate cellular and molecular regulation of implantation.

January 1992- March 1992

Cytogenetic Medical Technologist, Loyola University Hospital and Medical Center. Department of Pediatrics. Maywood, Illinois. Karyotyped and Analyzed specimens for genetic chromosomal abnormalities.

July 1990 - December 1991

Cytogenetic Medical Technologist. Cook County Hospital. Dept. of Pediatrics, Chicago, Illinois. Performed laboratory testing for genetic abnormalities. Instructed residents and medical students in cytogenetic laboratory techniques.

May 1990 - August 1990

Physical Therapy Aide. Chiropractic Care Center. Naperville, Illinois. Treated patients with interferential therapy and taught patients effective back care exercise programs.

RESEARCH:

March 1992- August 1993

Research Specialist. University of Illinois at Chicago. Department of Obstetrics/Gynecology. Chicago, Illinois. Investigated the morphologic and biochemical changes associated with primate decidualization in vitro. Studies involved the effects of steroids and growth factors on cellular

transformation.

Advisor: Asgi T. Fazleabas, Ph.D.

July 1994 - August 1994

Summer Research Project. University of Illinois at Chicago. Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology. Chicago, Illinois. Characterized the expression of the LH/hCG receptor in the baboon uterus during the menstrual cycle and early pregnancy. Advisor: Asgi T. Fazleabas, Ph.D.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
American Medical Women's Association
State Osteopathic Society
Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy
Student Osteopathic Medical Association

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians
Student chapter: Vice President 1994-95
Catholic Charities Arts of Living School
Prenatal Health Mentor Program Committee 1993-94
National Osteopathic Women Physician Association
Student Chapter Secretary 1993-94
Member, AIDS Awareness Committee

REFERENCES:

Furnished upon request

Name

Contact Information

Street Address
Town, State, Zip
Phone Number
Email Address

Education

1989-93 Duke University
 Durham, North Carolina
 B.S. Major: Biology, Minor: Chemistry

1994-98 West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine
 Lewisburg, West Virginia
 D.O. degree anticipated in May of 1998

Honors and Awards

1995-97 WVSOM Alumni Loan
1994-95 WVSOM Alumni Book Grant
1992-93 Golden Key National Honors Society, Duke University
1992-93 Alpha Sigma Nu National Honors Society, Duke University
1992-93 Blue Key National Honors Society, Duke University
1989-93 Alpha Epsilon Delta Honors Society, Duke University
1989-93 Dean's List, Duke University

Boards

National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners
Level 1 June 6-7, 1996 passed

Memberships

1994-current American Osteopathic Association
1994-current Medical Student Society
1994-current Student Osteopathic Medical Association
1994-current Undergraduate American Academy of Osteopathy
1994-current American College of Family Practitioners

Service Activity

1996 I am currently researching a case on liver abscesses secondary to perforated diverticular disease and hope to publish an article by December.

1996 I participate in an overnight camp, sponsored by RHEP, for underprivileged high school students interested in the medical profession.

- 1994-95 I was the chairperson for the Special Olympics Committee of SOMA and organized campus participation with handicapped persons. I also, with the assistance of the Family Medicine Dept., Family Medicine physicians and medical students set up an event that offered financially unstable Special Olympics participants a free physical.
- 1994-95 I voluntarily taught a self-defense course, sponsored by NOWPA to all WVSOM students interested.
- Summer 94 I helped teach and tutor gross anatomy to physician assistant students.
- 1993-95 I spoke at six area high schools about sexually transmitted diseases and the D.O. profession with the help of the Family Medicine Dept.
- 1989-93 Alpha Epsilon Delta 1990-91; treasurer, 1991-92; Vice President 1992-93, President

Outside Interests

Home improvement, real estate, weight lifting, running, Tae Kwon Do, and working with handicapped children.

NAME PERSONAL STATEMENT

No one in my family nor any of my family's close friends are physicians. Why then did I choose to become a physician? At the time I chose to attend medical school, I could not provide a definite answer, except that something drew me to the profession. Early in my training, my reasons became clearer, and I now know that my choice was correct. The challenge of diagnosing diseases fascinates me. The ability to heal and better people's lives is a gift I will treasure my entire life. I know that my choice to become a physician was correct because I love people, I love what I do, and I cannot see myself content in any other profession.

There are many reasons for me to continue in my training in West Virginia. First, my home is in the Parkersburg area, and I received my education at West Virginia University. I chose to obtain my education in West Virginia because my family and friends are important to me and a major cornerstone of support. I, therefore, hope to continue my training in West Virginia. I chose to attend WVSOM because I believe in the D.O. philosophy, and the quality of training impressed me. Now at the end of medical school, my choice is to continue my training with a WVSOM-sponsored program. The reasons for my initial choices and this choice remain the same - the quality of education and proximity to family and friends.

Family medicine was always of interest to me. It began my first year of medical school. As a student, I kept my mind open to other areas of medicine trying to truly examine each area so that I could pursue the one that best suited me as a person. I thrive on the variety that family medicine offers. Family medicine fits me as an individual.

While working, I like to concentrate and focus on the task. I also do not mind working long hours. However, after hours, I like to know that I can make plans to do other things that are important to me. I am an independent person.

I have many outside interests in life and goals to accomplish. As a boy, my grandfather, who worked in construction, taught me many things about home improvement. My high school wrestling coach worked in real estate. We shared this common interest in discussions concerning buying, selling and owning rental properties. I find fulfillment in working on my parent's and grandparent's homes and still maintain an interest in real estate. So my future could combine all of these interests.

Family medicine is my goal. It is where I am happy and feel useful to society. Life is short. I feel that to truly get the most out of it, one needs to not only love what they are doing, but believe in it. Family medicine enlivens me and my belief is that it is a main gate to the medical field. I believe I have the qualities that make me a viable candidate for the family medicine residency program.

My past experiences, both in college and in medical school, show my ability to be a leader and to organize a group of people to achieve a common goal. As an intern or resident, I will always give 100%, not because it is expected of me, but because I demand it of myself. My patients always deserve the best care I can provide. I hope to prove myself an asset not only as a resident, but also as an attending.

During medical school, I participated in a number of events that enabled me to educate others about medicine. I found great fulfillment in the teaching aspect of medicine. Teaching, as a part of one's practice, betters the physician. It is my hope to incorporate it into my practice as an attending. During my training, I have proven myself to be a hard working, well-liked, and respected individual. Finally, I believe that the difference between a good physician and a great physician is that great physicians love what they are doing. I love family medicine and will someday be a great family practitioner.

NAME

PERSONAL STATEMENT

In 1988, I suffered a major knee injury that required multiple surgeries and countless hours of physical therapy. During my period of rehabilitation, I decided I wanted to become an Orthopedic Surgeon. I applied to medical school, and the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine accepted me into its program.

Retrospectively, my long-term goals, both career and personal, have changed over the past four years. Through everyday interaction with attendings, residents, patients, and fellow classmates, I learned to work within a team oriented environment. I have enhanced the communication skills required to build a trusting patient-physician relationship. In addition, my daily interactions with patients allowed me to become a more compassionate and caring individual.

My first two years of medical school provided me with a thorough background in the basic sciences. As a result, I found myself very interest in Microbiology, Pharmacology and Physiology. I developed an interest in the complex chemical processes that are vital to normal human function. I was also very interested in how a slight alteration in the body's normal physiology could result in a devastating and perhaps fatal disease. During my clinical clerkships, I experienced a variety of medical specialties. However, I consistently found internal medicine to be the most interesting. I was also impressed with the knowledge of the medical attendings. Their ability to treat the most acutely ill patient led me to realize the importance of an internist in the medical environment.

I am applying for an internal medicine track OGME- 1 year position because I have a true desire to learn both the pathophysiology of disease and its therapeutic modalities. I feel, as an internist, I will be better trained to manage my patient's medical disorders. I enjoy working with individuals who suffer from multiple and often complex medical problems. I find that diagnosing a new disease state and then slowing the progression of the pathology with the proper therapeutic modalities to be an exciting challenge. I feel confident that my medical interests, in combination with my caring and compassionate nature, are assets for a successful internist.

As I evaluate programs for my postdoctoral training, the first and foremost quality I seek is the ability to further my education, both clinically and academically. Gaining experience in multiple medical specialties is also very important. Because my interest is primarily in the field of internal medicine, I prefer to work in both the clinical setting and the inpatient environment. In my opinion, a postdoctoral program should provide the intern with a certain level of autonomy, while simultaneously providing a workplace conducive to open communication and interaction with the attending physicians.

I am undecided at this point as to whether I will further specialize after my residency. Currently, I am particularly interested in infectious disease and endocrinology. I would prepare to join a private medical practice and become affiliated with a teaching institution.

With graduation quickly approaching. I look forward to the next phase of my medical education. I am dedicated to meeting new challenges and applying the knowledge that I have gained these previous four years. I realize this will not be an easy road, but with perseverance, commitment, and hard work, I believe that I can become a valuable addition to your institution.

NAME

My interest in Emergency Medicine began when I worked in the emergency department as a nurse's aide. There, I enjoyed giving first aid to patients and being the first to assess initial presenting problems. I found the variety of cases challenging. The need to know about multiple medical problems and the ability to constantly evaluate new conditions is exciting. The emergency department is the hub of the hospital. No other specialty allows the physician to interact with all the other subspecialties to manage the complexity of the cases entering the emergency department.

I find the field of medicine fascinating. My path into the profession first started through my family contacts, and then continued as I worked as a nurse's aide, and then as a nurse. From this background I learned to manage several patients, teach them about their condition, help them with decisions, and be there for them emotionally. I enjoyed working together with the patient, the family, and physician to meet the complexity of their needs: health, social, family and spiritual. During this time, I developed many technical skills and obtained knowledge of many different areas of medicine. From this background, I chose to enter medical school to obtain the knowledge that would enable me to be a better health care provider.

Being a nontraditional student with significant work history, I navigate the sea of personal decision making and recognize my own unique contributions to this profession. With my work experience, I have an understanding of patients' needs as well as the experience needed to develop as a physician.

After considering all the specialties, I chose Emergency Medicine for the diversity, the interaction, the use of manual skills, and the vast knowledge required.

In addition to my interest in medicine, I spent considerable time learning Spanish, which enhanced my ability as a student physician to communicate with my patients. I enrolled in several university classes, spent six months in Venezuela, and worked for two months in an emergency department in Mexico. I found this experience exciting, learning the second largest language of the United States and experiencing Latino culture.

I look forward to a program offering a diversity of experience and a staff that works as a team to provide education for patients, family, community and the faculty. Such an environment would prepare me as an emergency medicine physician and guide me toward a lifetime of continuing education and teaching.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get my AOA ID?

You can contact the Graduate Medical Education (GME) office at 304/647-6343 or 304/647-6330 or by contacting the AOA at 800-621-1773.

How do I get my AAMC ID?

This is the number you received when taking the MCATs. This number will become available to the GME office once you have registered on ERAS.

What is an MSPE? How do I request it?

Medical Student Performance Evaluation formerly known as the Dean's Letter. To request your MSPE go to www.wvsom.edu/opti/applications.cfm download the form and send in with a current Curriculum Vitae (CV). A copy should also be sent to the GME office to be uploaded to your ERAS account.

Do I need to use the LOR Coversheet?

This coversheet makes it easier for your Letter Writer to know how to address the letter and aids in assuring your information is correct. This form is optional, not required, and will not be transmitted to programs along with the LoRs

Should I waive my rights to view my LORs?

It is believed that the physician will write a more objective letter, if the student is not going to read it. This seems to be more common in allopathic programs. You may wish to ask programs of interest about whether they prefer such a waiver prior to requesting LoRs. The GME Department is not responsible for reviewing your letters but processing and uploading them to your ERAS account.

To whom should I have my LORs addressed to?

Letters of recommendation should be addressed generically, "Dear Program Director."

How many LORs can I have?

You can have as many letters as you want, however, ERAS will allow up to four (4) LoRs to be attached to each application. Letters may be selected in different combinations. They do not have to be the same four letters for all programs.

Who can review my Personal Statement?

Anyone can. It is highly recommended that you get feedback from other students, faculty or physicians on your draft and make revisions.

What are the important deadlines that I need to remember?

You should make sure you keep up with registration deadlines for ERAS, any Matches you are participating in, Rank Order List deadlines, and any program specific deadlines. The GME staff sends regular reminders regarding deadlines via email.

What is the difference between the NRMP Match and National Matching Service?

The NRMP Match is the match service for allopathic programs. The National Matching Service or NatMatch is the match service for osteopathic programs.

Frequently Asked Questions continued

Can I submit my applications without all of my documents in?

Yes. The programs will continue to update your application as documents are available.

How many Personal Statements can I have?

The ERAS program will allow the student to create a separate personal statement for each program, if desired.

Some programs require a LOR from a department head that WVSOM doesn't have, what should I do?

Check with the program to see if they will allow another department head to write this letter. The Associate Dean for Predoctoral Clinical Education has assisted in writing letters for students if WVSOM does not have the specific department.

How do I get a Fellowship Token?

You must contact ERAS directly. WVSOM does not handle these types of tokens.

Can I fax or email my LORs to the GME Department?

If it is down to the wire, we will accept a faxed or emailed signed copy. The original must follow in the mail. Faxed copies typically don't come through very well and once scanned in the legibility is greatly decreased. We prefer to use originals as much as possible to help your application look as professional as possible.

Does all of my COMLEX scores show or just the most recent?

Unlike the allopathic side of the ERAS application, osteopaths do not have the option to have their COMLEX scores automatically updated as new scores become available. After you initially click on the COMLEX Release button and assign it to programs, you must manually repeat this process each time you take the exam and have received notification of your results. *If you only click it one time the programs will only see the original score. The transcript will include the scores available on the date the request is processed by NBOME.*

Programs are not able to see my COMLEX transcripts even though I clicked on the link, what do I need to do?

The authorization and distribution of the COMLEX transcript is a three-step process:

1. Verify that the correct NBOME ID is listed in the Profile.
2. Authorize the release of the transcript.
3. Assign the transcript to interested programs. (Under the Programs tab)

You need to assign the COMLEX transcript document to each program that should receive the exam scores. If the transcript is not assigned to a program, the program will not receive the COMLEX scores.

Is my Match ID the same as my AOA ID?

Yes. Students have a 6-digit number and for the matching purposes the Match services only use the last 5-digits, i.e.123456 your match number would be 23456.

Can a family member who is in the medical profession write an LOR for me?

It is highly recommended that you refrain from asking a family member to write a LoR for you. As with any job application, listing a relative as a reference is not appropriate.