

Career Advisement and Residency Selection for the “Less Competitive” Student

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Where does it begin!

- Getting to know the student well beyond the traditional realm
 - For example, establishing a relationship built on trust.
 - Providing an environment in which the student is able to openly share their innermost feelings.

The “ Less Competitive” Student

- All too often we tend to focus on the most obvious.
 - Academic rank and USMLE scores are below what is typically seen as competitive for a particular specialty.
 - We remember all the times the student was in the office for personal and/or academic hurdles.

The “ Less Competitive” Student

- But what we fail to do is to have the student understand how much he/she has indeed accomplished.
 - By taking note of successes and how he/she achieved them.
 - By incorporating life experiences into their personal statement and interview in a manner in which it can help the residency program director develop a greater appreciation of the student’s potential as a resident.

The "Relationship"

- It is extremely important that the student not arrive to the dean's letter process without having had a long term relationship with a "mentor".
- the mentor can be the student affairs dean or someone who has established a "meaningful" relationship with the student.
- they have worked together to address personal and academic challenges in a non-judgmental manner.
"They have built a relationship based on trust."
- there should be outreach to the student even when he/she has not sought assistance.

The Dean's Letter

- The mentor is then able to provide the student with the confidence and insight needed to effectively communicate their ability for a particular specialty.
- This should be done in collaboration with others such as the student affairs dean and faculty/department chair from the respective specialty.

What is Success!

- This approach allows the student to reach for their goal in a practical and realistic way.
- It is important for us not continue to perpetuate the belief/stereotype that only certain types of students can go into certain specialties.