

# 2009-2010 PRE-RESIDENCY PLANNING GUIDE

A FOURTH YEAR and RESIDENCY PREPARATION MANUAL for 2010 MATCH PARTICIPANTS

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## INTRODUCTION

The *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* is your reference for the yearlong residency application process. The purpose of the *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* is to assist you in fulfilling the requirements necessary to obtain a residency during what will be one of the most challenging years of your education. The process outlined in this manual begins in late March, early April 2009 (after the 2009 Match concludes). It explains the requirements you must fulfill to be eligible for the NRMP (National Resident Matching Program), and guides you through the matching process until the beginning of your residency in 2010 (most residencies will begin July 1, 2010).

The guide outlines the components necessary to apply for your Dean's Letter/MSPE, issues concerning the USMLE, applying to ERAS and the NRMP Match, requirements for graduation, and licensure issues, to name a few of the larger topics addressed.

It is important that the Department of Graduate Affairs has a current e-mail address on file. Beginning in June, Graduate Affairs will begin issuing updates and reminders containing important information. If you have not received an e-mail from Graduate Affairs by July, we likely do not have a current or working e-mail address for you. If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Graduate Affairs at [graduateaffairs@rossu.edu](mailto:graduateaffairs@rossu.edu) or call (732) 509-4600.

### DISCLAIMER:

Changes in policy, deadlines, fees, etc. occurring after the finalized version of the guide is posted on the University's web site are not the responsibility of the University. The University cannot be held liable, as any changes originate at ERAS, ECFMG, FSMB, USMLE, etc. The Department of Graduate Affairs will alert you via e-mail, as much as possible, with changes, reminders, etc, which is why it is important to keep your e-mail accounts active, that you notify us of e-mail account changes, and ensure that inboxes are available to receive e-mail.

## ***Timeline/Table of Contents***

The following is a chronological listing of the steps you will be completing over the course of the next twelve to sixteen months. It guides you through the residency process up until you are completing the licensure paperwork that will allow you to begin practice in the state of your residency program.

This Table of Contents is designed to let you know exactly **what you should be doing** and ***when* you should be completing all pre-residency processes, as it is arranged according to the time of year you should be completing each step.** If you follow the timetable by reading and completing all the corresponding information and steps at the appropriate time of year, it should make for a smooth progression toward residency.

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April 2009	<b><i>Determining Eligibility for Residency</i></b> - What is the Match? - Rules and Requirements - How do I know if I am eligible for the 2010 Match? - What is an Independent Applicant?	Page 5
April 2009	<b><i>Identifying Prospective Programs</i></b>	Page 8
April – May, 22 2009	<b><i>Applying for Your MSPE/(Dean’s Letter)</i></b> - How do I get a MSPE/(Dean’s Letter)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSPE/Dean’s Letter Application</li> <li>• MSPE/Dean’s Letter Questionnaire</li> <li>• CV</li> </ul>	Page 9
April – September 2009	<b><i>Obtaining Letters of Recommendation</i></b>	Page 11
April – October 2009	<b><i>Determining When to Sit for Step 2 CK &amp; CS</i></b>	Page 11
April – Graduation 2010	<b><i>Pre-Licensure Documentation – Collecting CA, IL, OK Clerk Verification Forms</i></b>	Page 12

---

June 2009	<b><i>Introduction to ERAS</i></b>	Page 13
June 2009	<b><i>Download ERAS 2010 Applicant Manuals</i></b>	Page 14
June 2009	<b><i>Request “Token” from ECFMG (“Dean’s Office”)</i></b>	Page 14

---

July 2009	<b><i>Register with MyERAS</i></b> - Common Application Form	Page 14
July 2009	<b><i>Determine Your Match</i></b> - NRMP Main Match - Specialty Match <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• San Francisco Match/Urology Match</li> <li>• CaRMS</li> </ul>	Page 15
July – September 2009	<b><i>Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to ERAS</i></b>	Page 16
July – October 2009	<b><i>Send Letters of Recommendation to ERAS</i></b>	Page 17

---

August 2009	<b><i>Register for the NRMP Match</i></b>	Page 17
August 2009	<b><i>Register for the Canadian Match, or CaRMS (if applicable)</i></b>	Page 17
August – October 2009	<b><i>Ask Ross to Send Your Dean’s Letter/MSPE to ERAS</i></b>	Page 18

---

September 2009	<b><i>Begin Selecting Programs</i></b>	Page 18
September 2009	<b><i>Programs Contact ERAS to Download Your MyERAS Profile</i></b>	Page 18

---

October 2009 – Jan. 2010	<b><i>Schedule and Attend Interviews</i></b>	Page 18
--------------------------	--	---------

---

November 2009	<b><i>Universal MSPE/Dean’s Letter Distribution Date</i></b>	Page 19
---------------	--	---------

---

December 2009	<b><i><u>Last Month to Sit for Step 2 and Receive Scores on Time</u></i></b>	Page 19
---------------	--	---------

---

January 2010	<b><i>Pre-Match/Quota Deadline for Signing Pre-Match</i></b>	Page 19/20
--------------	--	------------

---

February 2010	<b><i>Submit and Certify Your Rank Order List (RoL)</i></b>	Page 20
February 2010	<b><i>Declare Your Intent to Scramble</i></b>	Page 20

---

March 2010	<b><i>Obtain Match Results</i></b>	Page 21
March 2010	<b><i>Post-Match/The Scramble</i></b>	Page 21
March – Graduation 2010	<b><i>Report Your Pre-Match or Scramble Results</i></b>	Page 25
March – Graduation 2010	<b><i>Begin Collecting Licensure Documents</i></b>	Page 25

---

Graduation 2010 – Residency 2010	<b><i>Complete State Licensure</i></b> - Send appropriate licensure documents to Ross	Page 26
-------------------------------------	--	---------

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### Additional Information

<b><i>Specialty Matches</i></b>		Page 28
- Urology Match		
- San Francisco Match		
<b><i>Graduation Related Information</i></b>		Page 32
- Ceremonies		
- Special Graduation Dates		
<b><i>ECFMG Eligibility for Certification</i></b>		Page 33
<b><i>Visa Issues</i></b>		Page 34
<b><i>For Canadians Wanting to Practice in Canada</i></b>		Page 34
<b><i>Resident Profiles</i></b>		Page 36
<b><i>Resources</i></b>		Page 41
- Publications		
- Helpful Web Sites		
- Organizations		

---

<b><i>MSPE/Dean’s Letter Application Packet</i></b>		Page 47
- Guide to composing a CV/Resume		
- Dean’s Letter Request Form		
- Dean’s Letter Questionnaire		

## Terminology

As you read, it will be helpful to familiarize yourself with the following terms used throughout the guide:

**Dean's Letter/MSPE** – The Dean's Letter is the comprehensive evaluative letter documenting your medical school performance and experience. **It is not a recommendation letter.** The MSPE stands for Medical Student Performance Evaluation and includes comparative measures of your performance.

**ECFMG** – Education Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates. This certification program originated to maintain a standardized assessment of foreign medical students' credentials, in order to be eligible for post-graduate work in the United States.

**ERAS** – Electronic Residency Application Service – The central application service used by the majority of residency programs in order to access your application materials for residency electronically.

**NRMP** – National Resident Matching Program – The entity that will “match” you with your residency program of interest, and conversely, residency programs with their desired medical students.

**PGY-1** – Post-Graduate Year 1, or your internship year/first year of residency.

**PGY-2** – Post-Graduate Year 2, or your second year of residency.

**USMLE CK** – United States Medical Licensing Examination, Clinical Knowledge

**USMLE CS** – United States Medical Licensing Examination, Clinical Skills

## Determining Eligibility for Residency (April 2009)

In order to begin a residency on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, you must begin the pre-application process in late April 2009. This means you must answer two questions: 1) Am I eligible for residency and for participation in the Match? And 2) What do I want to do?

In order to answer the first question, you need to know what the Match is.

### *What is the Match?*

The NRMP, or National Resident Matching Program, is a program giving medical students the best chance of attaining a job in a first-year post-graduate residency program (PGY 1), the goal of almost all medical students. The purpose of the NRMP is to literally “match” all medical students and other applicants with hospitals offering internships and residencies. One may obtain a residency in a different way, but almost all medical students initially participate in the Match.

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) oversees the Match. It is not an application or placement service. The NRMP matches students with residency programs, but the students apply for the majority of residency positions through ERAS, the Electronic Residency Application Service. Programs then contact applicants for interviews. Once applicants have been interviewed, residency programs provide a list of their chosen applicants in order of preference to the NRMP. Applicants also submit a list of the programs where they were interviewed, in order of preference. The role of the NRMP

is to match a program with an applicant based on both rank order lists. In order to Match, you must be registered with both NRMP and ERAS.

### **Rules and Requirements**

The NRMP imposes strict regulations and deadlines for participation. These restrictions provide programs security that applicants will be eligible to begin residency on or around July 1, 2010.

In essence, “to participate in the NRMP, graduates/students of foreign medical schools must have passed all exams required for certification by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates/ECFMG and the results must be available by the Rank Order List deadline. The NRMP contacts ECFMG periodically before the Rank Order List deadline to verify whether graduates/students of foreign medical schools...have passed required exams. **Applicants who are not confirmed by ECFMG will be withdrawn automatically from the Match immediately following the Rank Order List deadline.**”

### ***How do I know if I am eligible for the 2010 Match?***

Simply put, if you are scheduled or anticipate completing your clinical requirements by the end of May 2010 and have an anticipated graduation date of **May 31, 2010** or earlier, you are very likely eligible to participate in the *March 2010 Match*.

### ***Why before May 31, 2010?***

The majority of residency positions participating in the March 2010 Match will begin on July 1, 2010, just over four weeks after the May 31 graduation date. Therefore, graduating after May 31, 2010 will not afford Ross University enough time to process your final audit, initiate your ECFMG certification, and process your state licensure material (if necessary). All of these processes must be completed before you begin residency and cannot begin until your graduation date. The audit may take a few days and ECFMG certification arrives at your home address typically no sooner than **four** weeks after graduation. Depending on the state in which you obtained a residency position, processing time can vary from a few weeks to several weeks for your licensure to be approved. Yet almost all state boards restrict Ross from completing our portion of your licensure application until you have graduated.

**If you apply for a residency scheduled to begin July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010, you are committing to that date and must be ready to begin on that day.** If you finish your clinical rotations any time after May 31<sup>st</sup>, there is no guarantee that you will be ECFMG certified and/or licensed by July 1<sup>st</sup>. In past years some students have applied for July 1<sup>st</sup> positions with a June 30<sup>th</sup> graduation date. However, these students informed all programs to which they applied that they could not begin on the traditional July 1<sup>st</sup> day and made acceptable special arrangements with those programs.

If you expect to graduate on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 and wish to apply through ERAS and participate in The Match, you must inform all programs that you will need to start at least a month late and that your start date will be in August. **Proper disclosure of your start date is imperative; otherwise you risk misrepresenting yourself and Ross University.**

## ***I've determined I'm eligible, now what do I do?***

### **Do Now!**

Stop, print out this guide, and keep it with you until you graduate!

You are now ready to begin understanding the Match as an *Independent Applicant*.

### ***What is an Independent Applicant?***

You, when you register with the NRMP Match in **August 2009**. There are two general groups of Match applicants: United States Medical School Seniors and Independent Applicants. You fall under the latter. There are six categories of Independent Applicants. Ross University students fall under one of the last two categories.

1. Previous graduate of a U.S. medical school (someone who graduated earlier than September 1 in the year before the match)
2. Student/graduate of a U.S. osteopathic medical school
3. Student/graduate of a Canadian medical school
4. Student/graduate of a Fifth Pathway program
- 5. U.S. citizen student/graduate of an international medical school**
- 6. Non-U.S. citizen (including permanent residents) student/graduate of an international medical school.**

### **Do Now!**

- Go to the NRMP/Match web site at [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org) to familiarize yourself with the Match.
- Print out an Applicant *User Guide* and read the *FAQs* (frequently asked questions) posed by Independent Applicants. Here's how:
  - On the main page, click on "Residency Match." On the left, you will see a link to Participant Groups, where they define "Independent Applicant." You will also find a link to *User Guides*, where you will find instructions for all applicants, including Independent Applicants. You will also find a link of applicant *FAQs*, with a link specifically for Independent Applicants.

**Again, you won't register for the Match until mid-August.** But when you do, you will register as an "Independent Applicant." But there are several things you must do in the meantime. And if you don't know already, the first is to answer the question, "What do I want to do?"

### ***What do I want to do?***

Many medical students have known since baby steps exactly what kind of doctor they wanted to be. We all know this person: "I've always wanted to be a pediatrician as long as I can remember. I just love kids!" Other students make it almost all the way through their clinical training knowing they want to be a doctor, but not knowing what field.

No worries! Although at some point you will have to determine what field you want to practice in most, the Match allows you to apply to different programs in different specialties.

## Identifying Prospective Programs (April 2009)

Over the next two months or so, you will want to determine what kind of programs you will be applying to. You may already be set on applying to, for example, only psychiatry programs. Or you may be considering keeping your options open and are thinking about programs in internal medicine or family practice. Allow your clinical experiences to dictate your interests.

Some of the criteria by which you might identify prospective programs, in addition to specialty are: geographic location, desired program type (university, community, rural, etc.), sub-specialties and possible fellowship opportunities, to name a few.

You will also want to make note of program deadlines and verify their participation in ERAS.

**Future note:** Research a wide variety of programs, competitive programs as well as less competitive ones, and expand your geographic location as much as you can. The less you limit yourself and your choices, the better chance you have of obtaining a residency position. It is also helpful to join specialty/professional organizations and to read specialty journals and newsletters of professional organizations. You also will have to be honest with yourself about your academic performance as you consider the reputed competitiveness of the program.

In addition to the list of resources in the back of the guide on page 41 (i.e.: web sites, telephone numbers, and addresses of various professional organizations), the following are some suggestions for finding and researching both program and specialty information:

- Most residency programs' web sites provide useful program information/statistics for applicants.
- The *American Medical Association Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database Access*, known as *AMA-FREIDA*, can be found at [www.ama-assn.org/freida](http://www.ama-assn.org/freida).
- Articles of general interest and advice are available from [www.careermd.com](http://www.careermd.com).
- Access information on urology as a specialty at [www.ausanet.org](http://www.ausanet.org).
- Information on neurology, neurological surgery, otolaryngology, and ophthalmology programs is available from the San Francisco Match at [www.sfmatch.org](http://www.sfmatch.org).
- The AMA's *Graduate Medical Education Directory*, or the "Green Book," includes contact information for all ACGME-accredited programs at [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org).
- The *GMED Companion: Supplemental Data for Choosing Your Residency Program* features program data such as salary, start dates, curricula, and articles on obtaining residency.
- The *Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH) Directory* and The *COTH Survey of Housestaff Stipends, Benefits and Funding* are good reference books.
- Information produced by specialty professional organizations include *Directory of Family Practice Residency Programs* and the *Directory of Psychiatry Residency Training Programs*.
- Residency Match statistical information is available on the NRMP web site as well.

### ***Okay, So Now I Know a Little Bit About the Match, and I Have an Idea About What I Want to Pursue, What Do I Do Between Now and Then?***

Plenty! Before you can apply to the Match, there are several things you must take care of in the meantime, in addition to keeping on top of your studies. They are:

- 1. Applying for your MSPE (Dean's Letter) – Deadline May 22, 2009**
- 2. Obtaining Recommendation Letters**

3. Determining when you will sit for USMLE Step 2 CK and CS board exams. (You must pass both exams to be eligible for the Match.)
4. Collecting California L6 forms and/or Illinois Af-Med forms (for those interested in practicing in those states).

## Applying for Your MSPE (Dean's Letter) – (April – May 22, 2009 (Deadline))

An integral part of successfully matching will be determined by your performance, the professionalism of your work, and by recommendations of those who have observed your work. Who you are, your background experience, extracurricular work during medical school, and the thoughts you express through your personal statement (and eventual interview) will also have significant impact.

The Department of Graduate Affairs takes information from much of this documentation and compiles much of it (sans the interview) into one document called the **MSPE** (Medial Student Performance Evaluation), previously known as the Dean's Letter. The MSPE is a personalized, detailed letter/document of assessment, and is part of the residency application. It contains information drawn from your application materials, in addition to sources from your medical school performance. These sources are your clinical evaluations, USMLE score reports, transcript, sometimes your letters of recommendation, and other University reports and/or documentation. The MSPE also may include comparative measures and analysis. The MSPE is compiled only after you have submitted all three components of the request. Once written, a student copy of the written portion is sent to you for review of factual information, as a courtesy – but not for your editorial feedback. Students/applicants will not be able to review any comparative measures or statistical analysis that may be included.

The MSPE is an essential component to your Match application.

### ***How Do I Get a MSPE (Dean's Letter)?***

If you've already printed out this guide, you have completed step one in obtaining a Dean's Letter, as the end of the *Pre-Residency Planning Guide* is the **MSPE/(Dean's Letter) Application Packet**.

### **MSPE (Dean's Letter) Application Overview**

A complete MSPE request consists of 3 items (see MSPE/Dean's Letter Application Packet at the end of guide). All three items are due in the Department of Graduate Affairs by **May 22, 2009**. They are:

- *MSPE (Dean's Letter) Request Form*
- *MSPE (Dean's Letter) Questionnaire*
- *Curriculum Vitae or Résumé* (Preferred format example on page 49)

### ***MSPE (Dean's Letter) Request Form and Questionnaire***

Please complete these forms thoughtfully and in their entirety. We do not have the chance to meet each of you, but we still must compose a letter that best reflects who you are in relation to your medical school performance.

**Note:** Make sure to include your email address, as all communications will be through e-mail. If you don't hear from us with an update by July, please email us, as we may not have your correct/current email address.

## **Curriculum Vitae or Résumé**

The CV or résumé is a required component of the MSPE Request and your application for residency. Putting together your CV for use in writing the MSPE accomplishes two tasks, as **you also need to submit a CV as part of your ERAS materials.**

In a clear and logical manner, the résumé or CV includes professional background, previous education and degrees, extracurricular activities, previous career(s), community involvement, volunteer participation, publications, and research. Make sure to list start and end dates, contact person and phone numbers, and city and state of listed experiences. The résumé or CV should be no longer than two pages, containing significant and pertinent information. **Instructions and guidelines for preparing the CV are available at the end of this guide in the MSPE/Dean's Letter Application Packet.**

### **Critical Information! Please Read Carefully!**

**MSPEs are written in the order in which the requests are received.** The earlier you submit the completed MSPE request, the earlier you will receive the student copy. Your student copy can be delivered to you either via a pdf read-only e-mail or by regular mail.

**Important:** Your MSPE file will not be considered complete until all application materials arrive. Once complete, your request will be filed according to the date all materials were received. Your MSPE will then be written in order of the date received.

**Do not fax or e-mail requests.** Also, Graduate Affairs is **not responsible** for documents sent to other departments. Therefore, do not include your MSPE request with documents submitted to another department. Mail your MSPE request and documents to:

**Department of Graduate Affairs**  
Ross University School of Medicine  
630 U.S. Highway 1  
Suite 300  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902

To have the best chance for your MSPE to be completed by the first ERAS Dean's Letter/MSPE distribution date of November 1<sup>st</sup>, the Department of Graduate Affairs **must have received the completed MSPE (Dean's Letter) request by May 22, 2009.** If we receive the completed request on or after the May 22 deadline, you can expect to receive a student copy of the finished letter at the end of October, *or possibly even the beginning of November.* You will receive a student copy of your Dean's Letter anywhere between **one and five** months after submitting your request. Again, **the sooner we receive your request, the sooner we can complete the MSPE. But remember, ERAS will not send any MSPEs** to residency programs until **November 1<sup>st</sup>.** That means programs cannot view them until November, regardless of when they were written or when they were sent to ERAS.

### **Confirmation of documents:**

To confirm receipt of documents, either use certified mail or send a stamped, self-addressed postcard with the documents. If you are running close to the May 22 deadline, and you have not yet sent your request, use US Express Mail or Federal Express, as tracking procedures exist. Give your documents at least a week's processing time.

## Obtaining Letters of Recommendation (April – September 2009)

As part of the residency application, you will need at least four letters of recommendation from physicians at the institutions where you completed clinical clerkships. Begin to collect them as soon as possible and continue to do so throughout your clerkships. The ideal letters of recommendation are written by **program directors** and secondly, by attending physicians who supervised your rotation in your chosen specialty. The letters should not all originate from physicians who supervised the same rotation.

When requesting a letter of recommendation, ask the writer if he/she would kindly give you **two originals**. **ERAS requires you to submit original, signed recommendation letters**. You will want to have an original to send to ERAS and one to keep. Also, make copies and send them to your clinical advisor so that they may be included in your file and available for future use. Your clinical file should contain copies of all recommendation letters.

Some students elect to “**waive their right**” to view their recommendation letters. If you do this, you should also ask for a version where you have not waived your right, so that if you need a copy of them in the future, you can have one without having to ask the writer to send another copy. This becomes particularly appropriate during the Scramble (see page 11).

**Future Note:** You or the recommending physician, not Ross, sends recommendation letters to ERAS. If a physician chooses to send an original to Ross University only, and does not provide you with a copy, you must ask him/her for another original, as Ross cannot forward a recommendation letter originally sent to us.

## Determining When to Sit for Step 2 CK/CS Exams (April – October 2009)

### Very Important!

**You must sit for the Step 2 CK and CS before the end of December 2009 and have passing scores by the time you certify your Rank Order List in February 2010, or NRMP will withdraw you from the 2010 Match.**

Should you need help determining when to sit for the Step 2 CK and CS exams, consult your clinical advisor, the Registrar/Registrar materials, and ECFMG materials for detailed guidelines on scheduling, obtaining and submitting the proper forms, eligibility, fees, and applying for time off in order to study.

### *A General Overview...*

As a Ross student, you must meet the following criteria to be certified to take the Step 2 exams:

#### **Step 2 CK**

In order to sit for the Step 2 CK, you must have passed all basic sciences courses, AICM, have passed the USMLE Step 1, be at least in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, and have begun your clinical education.

**NOTE:** Regardless of when you begin the application process, the Registrar cannot certify your application until at least 90 days prior to your desired window. Were Ross University to certify your application earlier than 90 days, ECFMG would deny the application and require re-

certification. This would significantly delay the receipt of your scores. Further, the Registrar must have your application at least two weeks in advance of the desired window to insure adequate processing time.

## Step 2 CS

In order to sit for the Step 2 CS, just like Step 2 CK, you must have passed all basic sciences courses, AICM, and USMLE Step 1, be at least in the 6<sup>th</sup> semester, and have begun your clinical education.

**Please also know that the Step 2 CK and the Step 2 CS are separate exams and can be taken at different times.**

### *Okay, I'm eligible for Step 2. Now what?*

Once eligible, we recommend that you apply to take these exams as soon as you feel you are completely prepared and have met University eligibility requirements. *Keep in mind that if you end up having to re-take the exam, ECFMG requires you to **wait 60 days** between the date you first took a particular exam and the beginning of the eligibility period in which you are re-applying.*

**Also, it is very difficult to schedule either exam toward the end of the year, and there is no guarantee that sufficient spaces will be available for all candidates. If you try to schedule Step 2 after July, there is no guarantee you will get a sitting date that is before the end of December.**

**As mentioned prior, in order to make the Match, you must take both the USMLE Step 2 CK and CS exams by the end of December 2009, and have passing scores by the time you certify your Rank Order List with NRMP in February 2010.**

### **Why?**

Since exam results are communicated approximately 6 – 8 weeks after the assessment date, December is the latest you can sit and safely receive your results before certifying your Rank Order List in February. The NRMP will contact ECFMG periodically until this day to verify that all exams have been passed. **Applicants who do not have passing scores on both exams by the Rank Order List deadline, will be withdrawn from The Match.**

## **Pre-Licensure Documentation -- Collecting Clerkship Verification Forms (April '09 – Graduation 2010)**

If you plan on applying for residency in California or Illinois, you must collect clinical clerkship verification forms (the California L6 or the Illinois Af-Med), verifying the completion of certain clerkships. This is the only part of the California or Illinois licensure application process you can complete until you have graduated. They are also the only states that require it.

- California** – Requires a completed L6 form from a hospital official at each clerkship site. Send copies of the L6 form to each site and their Director of Medical Education asking that they be returned to you to include in your application.
- Illinois** – Requires a completed Af-Med form from each core rotation only, except Family Practice.

**Oklahoma** -- Oklahoma also requires the completion of clerkship verification as part of their credentialing prior to beginning residency.

These forms are available when you obtain your licensure application from your state of interest. **These forms can only be completed by the hospital.** Ross cannot complete them, as boards will reject these particular forms if they come from us.

Collection is best completed as you progress through your rotations, rather than having to get back into contact with the hospital after you have moved on.

Make sure to verify these practices are current in each state, as rules change periodically.

For more information on state licensure and general guidelines, see the section on licensure on page 25 and reference the **State Licensure Guide** on the Ross University web site under "Forms and Handbooks."

## Introduction to ERAS (June 2009)

If you have followed the pre-application procedures outlined, you should have your **CV** prepared, your **Dean's Letter/MSPE request completed and sent** to the Department of Graduate Affairs, have begun **collecting letters of recommendation**, as well as started the research and **identification of prospective programs**. If you have completed these steps, you are ready to begin the application process, which means enrolling with ERAS. (Enrolling in NRMP, or the Match, comes a little later)

### What is ERAS?

ERAS stands for Electronic Residency Application Service. In other words, it's a service that will make your application and materials available electronically to residency programs you have applied to and have interest in you.

### How Do I Know if I Will Need to Use ERAS?

Easy... Almost **everyone** uses ERAS in order to apply for residency in the U.S.

Participation in ERAS is required for students taking part in the 2010 Match, graduating by May 31, 2010, and planning on beginning residency on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 in the following specialties or combined programs:

anesthesiology	internal medicine/psychiatry	pediatric dermatology
child neurology	internal medicine/pm&r	pediatrics/pm&r
dermatology	neurology	pediatrics/psychiatry/child psychiatry
diagnostic radiology	neurological surgery	physical med and rehabilitation
emergency medicine	nuclear medicine	plastic surgery
<b>family practice</b>	<b>obstetrics &amp; gynecology</b>	<b>psychiatry</b>
<b>internal medicine</b>	orthopaedic surgery	psychiatry/family practice
internal med/fam practice	otolaryngology	radiation oncology
internal med/ emer med	pathology (anatomic and clinical)	<b>surgery</b> - general
internal medicine/pediatrics	<b>pediatrics</b>	transitional year
	pediatrics/emergency medicine	urology

**Important: If you are applying for a residency in any of the above specialties, you will also need to register for the NRMP (Match).**

*Again, we will cover the NRMP (Match) in the next section of the guide. Students register with the NRMP after registering with ERAS.*

Getting back...

To get started with ERAS, you must:

**First**, download the ERAS Applicant Manual in June 2009  
**Second**, obtain your “token” (login number) from ECFMG in June 2009  
**Third**, register with MyERAS in July 2009  
(Then later, **Fourth**, register with the NRMP Match in August 2009)

*Detailed instructions for all steps are outlined below.*

## **Download ERAS 2010 Applicant Manuals from the ERAS web site (June 2009)**

In mid-June, ERAS posts their applicant manual for the following Match year. For an exact date, log on to their web site at [www.aamc.org/students/eras/](http://www.aamc.org/students/eras/). Once available, you will be able to print out a pdf copy for your reference. On the main page, go to “Resources to Download.” You will communicate with ERAS through a system known as MyERAS, which will require an admission “token.” **You acquire this token from ECFMG, not from any Dean’s office at Ross.**

## **Request your “Token” from Your “Dean’s Office” (June 2009)**

For students/graduates of foreign medical schools, ERAS is administered by ECFMG; therefore **ECFMG is considered your designated “Dean’s Office,” not any department at Ross. You obtain your ERAS Token from ECFMG.** The token is a sixteen digit electronic code that allows you to access MyERAS and the Applicant Web Station. Get your token by going to <http://www.ecfm.org/erasinfo.htm/>. Print out the Request Form.

You will also find information on requirements, fees, and ECFMG’s role in the ERAS/residency application process, dates/schedule, and frequently asked questions/FAQs. Go to: <http://www.ecfm.org/eras/>

### **Submit the Request Form to ECFMG/ERAS**

You must submit the Request Form for an ERAS 2010 Token along with required payment. The ERAS 2010 Token will be e-mailed to you.

## **Register with MyERAS (July 2009)**

Once you have received your “token,” you may register with MyERAS to begin working on your application using the MyERAS login link on the ERAS homepage.

## Complete the Common Application Form

You will complete one Common Application Form through ERAS and pay the required fees. When using a credit card, you will pay all necessary fees, which will eventually include the amount equal to the number of programs to which you are applying. If you pay by check or money order, your application will not be made available to programs until your payment has cleared.

You may download an *Applicant User Guide* to help you through the process.

ERAS will instruct you on how to submit your supporting documentation, such as your personal statement, letters of recommendation, and the Common Application Form. ERAS will then scan these documents, attach them electronically to your application, and transmit the complete application to the ERAS Post Office.

**You are not permitted to select programs until September, and programs cannot view your profile until September.**

If you run into any technical difficulties entering the applicant web station, or while completing your application, you must contact ERAS technical assistance at [myeras@aamc.org](mailto:myeras@aamc.org).

To receive ERAS updates via e-mail throughout the application cycle, sign up with the following ECFMG-related list-serves:

ECFMG-ERAS News: <http://www.ecfmq.org/eras/erasnews.html>

ECFMG-ERAS Reporter: <http://www.ecfmq.org/reporter>

ECFMG-ERAS Correspondent: <http://www.ecfmq.org/correspondent>

## Determine Your Match (July 2009)

### Now That I Know What Type of Residency I Want to Get, Which Match Do I Go Through?

Although you will very likely be using ERAS regardless of specialty, your specialty of interest will determine which Match you participate in. The discipline you choose to pursue will also dictate which of the four types of positions you will be eligible for. So let's take a look at what types of residencies are available. The four types are:

A **Categorical position** is one which offers full residency training required for Board Certification in that specialty.

A **Preliminary position**, by contrast, is a position offering 1-2 years of training, often prior to entry into advanced specialty programs. Many surgery and internal medicine training programs offer preliminary positions in addition to categorical positions.

**Transitional Year** programs are also considered preliminary year training programs. The objective of the Transitional Year is to provide a well-balanced and broad-based clinical year program of graduate medical education in multiple clinical disciplines. A Transitional Year can be ideal training for many types of PGY-2 or Advanced training programs.

**Advanced positions**, which do not commence until one to two years after the match, are in specialty programs that require completion of 1 or more years of preliminary training. Applicants without prior

graduate medical training (fourth-year students) may apply for these positions while also applying for preliminary positions that are compatible with their plans.

The following specialties offer **advanced positions** (some of these may also have programs which offer categorical positions): urology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, dermatology, neurosurgery, radiology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, emergency medicine, neurology, psychiatry, anesthesiology.

### Which Match Do I Participate In?

**The majority of students participate exclusively in the NRMP**, as NRMP facilitates the matching process for the majority of disciplines, and the most popular ones, in the United States. There are however a few other disciplines that require you to participate in a separate match in place of, **or in addition to**, the NRMP Match. Those are: *Urology, Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology, and Plastic Surgery*. *If you want to match in Canada, you will apply to the Canadian match, or CaRMS.*

*Let's look at these matches first...*

(Canadian Match (CaRMS) information is on page 17.)

### Who Participates in the San Francisco Match?

Students interested in neurology, neurological surgery, child neurology & neurodevelopmental disabilities, ophthalmology, otolaryngology, and plastic surgery participate in the **San Francisco Match**.

Although you will begin the application process in 2009 and obtain results in 2010, these matches are for PGY-2 positions beginning in 2011. Since all of these programs require you to perform a preliminary year, you will need to apply for a preliminary position through ERAS and the NRMP **as well**.

If you are interested in participating in the **San Francisco Match**, please read instructions for participation in specialty matches on page 27, and the San Francisco Match in particular on page 30.

### Who Participates in the Urology Match?

Urology reserves its own **Urology Match**, sponsored by the AUA, for those interested in urology.

If you are interested in participating in the **Urology Match**, please read instructions for participation in specialty matches on page 29, and the Urology Match, in particular.

If you are interested in these programs, it is important that you familiarize yourself with the process now, as **SPECIALTY MATCHES TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO THE NRMP MATCH**, so as to allow participation in the main Match, if necessary.

### Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to ERAS (July – September 2009)

Before submitting this request, you should carefully review your grades for accuracy by logging on to MyRoss and looking at your grade report. **If a grade is not listed on your grade report, it is not on your transcript either. Also, your evaluation may have been sent and checked in through the Clinical Department, but that does not mean it is graded, or that the grade is on your transcript..**

Most programs expect to have access to your transcript by September 1, 2009. You must allow approximately 15 business days of processing time from the day Ross University receives your transcript request and sends the transcript to ERAS, until the day ERAS uploads it, making it available to residency programs. (If Ross and ERAS have established an electronic submission system by then, the process should work quicker. As of now, however, that system is only in the works, but not in place.)

## Send Letters of Recommendation to ERAS (July – October 2009)

You are responsible for submitting your letters of recommendation to ERAS via the methods they provide. **Ross University will not forward them for you.** You do not have to send all letters of recommendation at once. As long as you properly identify each letter with your name and USMLE/ECFMG number, you may send them separately, as you receive them from writers.

Most programs expect to have access to your letters of recommendation by October 31, 2009, but you may submit them earlier. You must allow approximately 10 business days of processing time from the day ECFMG/ERAS receives your letters of recommendation until the day they become available to programs. Attach a “Document Submission Sheet” with your AAMC# before submitting them to ERAS.

## Register for the NRMP Match (August 2009)

Now that programs have access to your information through ERAS, you must make yourself available to “Match” with them should they decide to rank you on their lists of desirable candidates.

As stated in the beginning of the guide, as a foreign medical student, NRMP considers you an “independent applicant”. The NRMP will open for applicant registration in the middle of August 2009. For the exact date, please check their web site at [www.aamc.org/nrmp](http://www.aamc.org/nrmp).

The NRMP has a web-based **Registration, Ranking, and Results System (R3)**. In other words, you will first **register** with them. Later, you will use NRMP to submit a **Rank Order List (ROL)** of the programs with whom you would accept a position should you match with them. Then in March, you will learn the **results** of your efforts – whether or not you have matched, and where.

Registration consists of an application, agreeing to their very **strict terms and conditions**, and payment.

The **application deadline** is normally **December 1** (consult web site in August for exact date).

## Register for the Canadian Match, or CaRMS (August 2009)

The Canadian Resident Matching Service, or CaRMS, provides an electronic application service and a computer match for entry into postgraduate medical training throughout Canada.

Students interested in participating in the Main Canadian Match (R-1, or first iteration) must go to their web site at [www.carms.ca](http://www.carms.ca). Registration begins on August 1 for a potential match into one of Canada’s 17 medical schools/residency programs.

Although a similar process, with a similar timetable, as the NRMP Match, CaRMS procedure varies slightly. CaRMS does however utilize the ERAS program as well. Those guidelines can also be found on the CaRMS web site at [www.carms.ca](http://www.carms.ca). Please consult CaRMS for their entire matching process, including their procedures for applying to residency if you first did not qualify for their main match. This process is known as the second iteration, or R-2, a process similar to the NRMP scramble (covered later in this guide).

Please also refer to the guidelines on page 34 and consult the Medical Council of Canada ([www.mcc.ca](http://www.mcc.ca)) web site for information on some of the additional steps that must be taken by students anticipating practice in Canada, such as the Canadian Qualifying Examination, visa issues, and taking the USMLE Step 3.

## Can I Apply, Interview, and Rank in CaRMS and NRMP at the Same Time?

**Yes!** CaRMS and NRMP work together on this issue to benefit the applicant, and both matches. You can apply and even submit final ROLs (Rank Order Lists) to both CaRMS and NRMP. Since CaRMS takes place first, if you match with them, you automatically get dropped from the NRMP Match. (This presumes you first want the chance to match in Canada before the United States.)

## Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to ERAS (Aug. – October 2009)

Once you have received and reviewed a student copy of your Dean's Letter/MSPE, you may request that the formal/official version, on university letterhead, be mailed to ERAS by emailing your writer or emailing [graduateaffairs@rossu.edu](mailto:graduateaffairs@rossu.edu). Include your student I.D. and USMLE/ECFMG number in the request.

Ross University will send your Dean's Letter/MSPE to ERAS usually within three business days of having received your request/payment. However, regardless of when your letter is sent to ERAS, **ERAS will not transmit any letters to programs until November 1<sup>st</sup>**, the first Dean's Letter/MSPE distribution date.

***Many of you will not receive your Dean's Letter for review until September or October. Don't worry. Regardless of when we send your Dean's Letter to ERAS, ERAS cannot send it to programs until November 1, 2009.***

## Begin Selecting Programs (September 2009)

In September, you may begin selecting the programs to which you would like ERAS to transmit your application. The more programs you select, the higher the cost. You may add or change supporting documents, such as letters of recommendation, personal statement(s), and your CV, at any time.

Once the ERAS Post Office is open, ECFMG's tracking system (ADTS) will allow you to check the status and progress of your application. While specific deadlines vary, most residency programs expect your application, with the exception of your Dean's Letter/MSPE and your Step 2 CK and CS scores, to be complete by October 31, 2009.

## Programs May Begin Contacting the ERAS Post Office to Download Your MyERAS Profile (September 2009)

The ECFMG/ERAS Post Office will open on a date in early September (consult site in August for exact date). At this time, programs may begin looking at your profile to consider you for an interview at the same time you begin selecting programs yourself.

**Note:** Again, regardless of whether your Dean's Letter/MSPE has been sent to ERAS, it **will not be available for download to programs until November 1.**

## Schedule and Attend Interviews (October 2009 – January 2010)

Many residency programs begin contacting applicants for interviews in November. Some programs begin interviewing in October. Regardless, the process continues until January. Since programs have a limited number of interview slots, you should schedule an interview as soon as they contact you. Books giving advice on applying for residency and going through the Match offer tips on the interview process. Refer to the resource list for titles. You will find contradicting advice on the best time to schedule an

interview. While some sources state that interviewing in November gives you an advantage, others suggest interviewing in January. If you are still rotating, it is more important to plan your interview schedule according to what is most practical for you, while continuing to fulfill your clinical responsibilities. It is not worth compromising your clinical education just to make an interview especially early or especially late during the interview season.

You should possess some knowledge of the programs with which you will interview. The interview itself provides the best opportunity for you to learn about the program, and you are encouraged to ask questions. Afterward, you should ask for feedback to ensure a better performance with each subsequent interview. We will forward very practical advice on interviewing, what to expect, and what kind of questions are typically asked in September.

## **Universal MSPE/Dean's Letter Distribution Date (November 1, 2009)**

It is very important to understand that although we need to receive all applications for MSPEs into our office by May 22, the MSPE will be completed sometime between then and October 31, because **no programs can view your letter until November 1, 2009, regardless of when it was written or sent to ERAS from Ross.** On November 1, ERAS will permit programs to view all MSPEs for the first time, regardless of when it was written or sent to ERAS, so long as it was done so before November 1.

## **Last Month to Sit Step 2 and Receive Scores on Time (December 2009)**

**If you haven't scheduled your sitting date for the Step II CK or CS by at least the end of December, it is very likely you will not receive the scores before the Rank Order List Deadline. This means you will be withdrawn from the Match.** If this is the case, you will have to try to find a position through the Scramble. In other words, schedule these tests as soon as you are ready!

## **Pre-Match**

### **What if I am Offered a Position Prior to Match?**

Being offered and accepting a position prior to submitting your rank order list is known as having **Pre-Matched.**

*Note of Interest:* Of all the hurdles and disadvantages inherent in pursuing your degree as a foreign medical student hoping to obtain residency in the United States, the Pre-Match is an opportunity that **ONLY** exists for foreign medical students.

In the past, many Ross students have been offered pre-match positions during or shortly after an interview. If you anticipate accepting an offer from a particular program, do not withdraw from the Match until you have received a written, signed offer and have returned a signed acceptance. You then must withdraw through the NRMP web site. **You cannot pre-match and continue to stay in the Match.** If you did, you would be obligated to the NRMP match position and would have to opt out of your pre-match contract in order to avoid a severe penalty, due a gross match violation of their policy.

**All pre-match decisions must be finalized by the program quota deadline of January 31, 2010.**

## Quota Deadline for Those Considering Pre-Match Offers (January 2010)

On **January 31**, programs must know how many spots they are going to want to fill in the match. In order to do so, they must complete contracts with those to whom they have offered pre-matches in order to solidify the number remaining open. Almost all pre-matches must be signed before this deadline.

**Remember, you must withdraw from NRMP if you pre-match.**

## Submit and Certify Your Rank Order List (February 2010)

If you registered for the NRMP Match, you must submit a rank order list between mid-January 2010 and their established deadline in late February. You must also certify this list, alerting the NRMP that this is your final version of the list. The rank order list should be comprised of the programs with which you interviewed and from whom you would accept an offer. When composing the list, you must not consider whether you think the program will rank you or not. The order of the programs must depend strictly on your preference. It is in your best interest to list as many programs as possible (above 15 is recommended), as NRMP statistics show a consistent pattern of matched applicants having longer ROLs. However, do not rank any programs from which you would not accept an offer, **as matching to a program establishes a commitment to accept an appointment.** After the deadline, you may not change your rank order list.

We advise not to wait until the last minute to submit and certify your Rank Order List, as the NRMP web site is quite busy at that time and you may not be able to enter it if you try last minute.

Also, if you have unpaid NRMP fees by the Rank Order List deadline, you will be withdrawn from the Match.

**Again, if your Step 2 CK and CS results are not available by the deadline, you will be withdrawn.**

### What if I Don't Think I Will Match?

## Declare Your Intent to Scramble - if applicable (February 2010)

An email will be issued in February to all students participating in the 2010 Match suggesting that if you have not pre-matched or have any doubt about the possibility of matching, that you should prepare to scramble. When you receive the e-mail, complete the attached form and fax or mail it to the Department of Graduate Affairs by the deadline on the form. This form allows you to request the most up-to-date scramble-formatted copies of your Dean's Letter and transcript.

A student can scramble without passing Step 2 CK or CS scores, but it dramatically decreases your odds of getting attention, because at that point, programs are looking for applicants who can sign immediately.

For more information on the scramble and opportunities if you do not Match, please refer to **Post-Match/Scramble** after **Obtain Match Results** below.

## **Obtain Match Results (March 2010)**

NRMP makes match results available electronically, over a four day period in mid-March. On the first day, applicants find out whether or not they have matched at all. Typically, three days later, at 1:00 pm, results for applicants, including locations, are posted on the NRMP web site.

### **What if I Didn't Match?**

You still have options...

## **Post-Match/The Scramble (March 2010)**

The Scramble is the common name for the process of seeking a residency between mid-March and July 1<sup>st</sup>, as it is an option for 3 types of applicants:

- 1) those who registered for the NRMP and/or specialty matches but did not obtain a position.
- 2) those who were withdrawn from the Match for not having passing scores on all exams by the Rank Order List deadline, but received them during the time in between. (Again, a student can scramble without passing Step 2 scores, but that student has a great disadvantage and success is unlikely.)
- 3) those who did not previously apply for a position or participate in any match, but who will be ready to begin residency by July 1, 2010.

At noon the day after the Match, a list will become available of the programs with unfilled positions. If you were once registered with the NRMP Match, even if you withdrew or were withdrawn, you will have access to this list on the NRMP web site. If you were never registered for the Match, please know that Ross University is not able to provide the NRMP's list of available Scramble positions. In order to get the list, you must register with NRMP, as some/many positions may require an application through ERAS.

If you are eligible to participate in the Match, it is in your best interest to participate in the Match rather than to look for a position through the Scramble. The Scramble should be considered a "Plan B" in your residency search. During the Scramble, positions are limited, the number of applicants is large, and the positions are filled quickly.

### **What Should I Do First?**

#### **Use ERAS Again**

Remember, ERAS allows you to scramble to up to 30 new programs for free and up to 15 programs to which you have already submitted your application. For more helpful information on the scramble, please go to <http://ecfmq22.securesites.net/eras/#nrmp> You must have applied and paid for an application to at least one residency program in order to be eligible for the free applications during the scramble.

#### **Consider a Scramble/Faxing Agency**

In the past, some students have found it beneficial to utilize a faxing service to scramble to many programs in a quicker fashion. Companies vary in their service and promise more or less than others. They typically charge several hundreds, sometimes over a thousand dollars. Ross cannot endorse by suggesting any of these services, but many have proven to be efficient in getting information to programs

quickly. Be advised, even if the scramble agency makes contact with an interested program, the program may ask you to apply through ERAS anyway. Therefore, you will want to reserve several of your 30 (45) free ERAS applications in the event a program asks you, in a response to the faxing service, to apply through ERAS.

### **Requirements for Participation in the Scramble Outside of ERAS or Use of a Faxing Service**

To participate in the Scramble outside of ERAS and without using a scramble/faxing service, you must:

- have access to a fax machine, since many residency programs prefer you to submit your application via fax. Have in your possession student copies of your Dean's Letter/MSPE and transcript; have your test scores, recommendation letters, CV and personal statement ready for faxing.
- have registered with ERAS and submitted a Common Application Form by early March 2010, as some programs prefer to receive your scramble application via ERAS (if not already registered).
- be scheduled to complete clinical rotations by May 31, 2010 to begin residency on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The positions available during the Scramble are normally for residencies beginning on July 1, 2010. If you do not graduate by May 31, you will not be ECFMG certified and licensed in time to begin on July 1. In past years, some June 30 graduates have been able to obtain positions during the Scramble. If you are graduating on June 30<sup>th</sup> and attempt to seek a position, **you must inform program directors that you will not be able to begin on time.**

### **Procedures for Scrambling**

#### **1. Prepare to Call, Fax, or Email.**

(a) To scramble by fax or email, you need to have the following documents ready to send to programs:

- Dean's Letter/MSPE (student copy)
- Transcript (student copy)
- 3 letters of recommendation (ERAS recommends students contact their letter writers in case you need to submit original letters outside of ERAS. Writers are usually cooperative and will send you additional or sealed copies)
- Step 1 and Step 2 scores, (if available).
- Personal Statement
- A print out of the ERAS Common Application Form or a Universal Application Form.

Prepare an email document containing all the items in your application, in case a program prefers it delivered electronically.

(b) To scramble via ERAS, you must:

- Have applied to at least one program before the scramble.
- Have requested an ERAS 2010 Token
- Submit your request form to ECFMG/ERAS
- Complete the Common Application Form (if not already completed)
- Send letters of recommendation to ERAS (if not already sent)
- Request Ross to send your transcript to ERAS (if not already requested)
- Request Ross to send your Dean's Letter/MSPE to ERAS (if not already requested)

## 2. Obtain List of Programs with Unfilled Positions

- (a) Simply log-on to the NRMP web site on the day after match day in March, at 11:30 EST for Filled and Unfilled results of individual programs, and at 12 noon EST for locations of unfilled positions.
- (b) If you were not registered with the NRMP, you will not have access to the list of programs online. You must register/be registered with NRMP in order to receive the list. Programs may also require you to apply through ERAS.

## 3. Contact Programs and Submit Applications

- (a) The list of unfilled positions will provide the phone number of each program and their preference for receiving information.
- (b) If you are told to submit your application via ERAS, remember ERAS allows you to scramble to up to 30 new programs for free and up to 15 programs to which you have already submitted your application. Do not use all of your ERAS applications right away. Save a few for later, in case you have a chance at a program after the match that requires submission through ERAS.
- (c) The Scramble unofficially continues until all positions are filled. So if you are having trouble finding a position, **it is recommended that you continue to contact the programs you are interested in periodically for any unexpected openings.**

## 5. Schedule and Attend Interviews

- (a) Programs that are interested in you will contact you directly and guide you on how their individual procedure will go from there.
- (b) During Scramble, some of the programs may conduct telephone interviews.

## 6. Report on Your Position

As the time approaches, the Department of Graduate Affairs will e-mail you regarding information about your position. It is important to inform the Department of Graduate Affairs regarding your status/position.

### Additional Information:

Some additional unfilled/open positions may be obtained via the hotlines below:

- 1) **Family Practice** - (800) 288-2668
- 2) **Ob/Gyn** - (800) 673-8444 ext. 2559
- 3) **Other residency search services which we cannot endorse.** A simple internet search will generate several options.

For positions in **urology**, consult the AUA web site at [www.auanet.org](http://www.auanet.org).

For positions in **Child Neurology/Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, Neurotology, Ophthalmology, and Plastic Surgery**, consult the Vacancy Information System at [www.sfmatch.org](http://www.sfmatch.org).

Specialty professional organizations may post openings on their web sites.

## Section E: Non-Traditional Start Dates

If you cannot graduate in time to begin a residency on July 1<sup>st</sup>, you can seek “midyear residencies”, as many non-traditional start dates begin in January. Some programs have the flexibility to negotiate a specific, mutually convenient start date. These residencies are harder to identify, since they are atypical and sometimes only available as a result of unforeseen circumstances.

Students interested in this option should simply contact the programs of interest and inquire if they offer midyear positions. In previous years, the supplement to the “Green Book” listed positions with multiple start dates. The *GMED Companion* contains general articles on obtaining a residency, information on thousands of residency programs, and information on alternate start dates. You may also check the previously mentioned telephone hotlines for openings throughout the year.

Consult the following as additional resources for finding a residency outside the Match or those programs with non-traditional start dates:

- Freida Online (associated with AAMC.org) has a link to programs with non-traditional start dates.
  1. Go to: <http://www.ama-assn.org/go/freida>
  2. Click on: “Residency/Fellowship Training Program Search”
  3. Choose a specialty or location
  4. Click on: “Optional Criteria”
  5. Choose specifications, including a category under “Start Dates Other Than June or July.”
  6. Click on: “Search”
- FindAResident (associated with AAMC.org)
- [www.careermd.com](http://www.careermd.com)

We suggest that even if you are applying for positions beginning in January, you should also apply through ERAS for positions beginning the following July, since January positions are limited.

If you obtain a position beginning on a non-traditional date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date. Please see the appropriate section for special graduation dates on page 33.

### Are There Other Options if I Don't Obtain a Residency?

Yes. It is important that you keep working, even if you don't obtain a residency right away. Whether your credentials were not competitive enough, or your timing with the Match made it difficult for you to obtain a position, you cannot let the fact that you didn't Match get you down and hurt your confidence. Instead, you must find a way to make your situation work for you.

Remember, now that you have additional time, you can take advantage of it in several ways:

- 1) Get an **update to your Dean's Letter**. You will benefit greatly if you have to go through the Match the following year if your Dean's Letter is complete, meaning that any other evaluations that couldn't be included at the time of its original writing, can now be included. A more comprehensive Dean's Letter will always work for you. If you have strong Step II scores, they can now be included, as they likely were not a part of the original composition. Also remember, you will now be working with a complete transcript.
- 2) Take the time to **get more recommendation letters** that you may not have been able to get prior. Gather as many recommendation letters as you can, so that you have a choice of using the best of all of them, rather than just hoping you can get the requisite number to go through the Match.
- 3) Some people elect to use the time to begin pursuing another advanced degree, such as a **Master in Public Health** or a **Master of Public Health Administration**. Remember, every credential helps, and

the more educated you are, the more likely program directors are going to want to consider you in the future.

- 4) If you didn't Match because of possibly having less competitive credentials, it is important that you **obtain work**, even if it is volunteer work, **within the hospital setting**. You have to earn a reputation in the clinical setting. By working in the hospital and earning a reputation for your work, you are networking and making connections that could lead you to a spot, a pre-Match, or some other future opportunity. If your credentials aren't showing your strengths, you'll have to take it into your own hands. Nobody is guaranteed a residency, particularly students who have struggled, but it is never too late to build a reputation as a solid worker, who programs would want to have in their unit in the future.
- 5) Remember, you now have an M.D. degree, which makes you a desirable prospect for physicians needing assistance as **technicians** or in **research**. By canvassing your local hospitals and their Human Resources departments, you may be able to find paid positions simply due to your availability and stature as an MD.
- 6) **Go back to Dominica as a PBL**. Every semester, Ross is looking for **Problem-Based Learning Instructors** to conduct group review and discussion sessions and to proctor and tutor for current students on campus. Ross takes care of most of your expenses, and the pay is typically in line with what you would receive as a first-year resident during a three-month period. Contact the Ross University Department of Human Resources at [hr@rossu.edu](mailto:hr@rossu.edu) to inquire about openings or apply online under "Careers." Positions are limited.
- 7) Don't give up. The vast majority of our students place in residencies within the first couple years after graduation. But success for those who didn't Match right away comes because they were willing to do the extra work to make themselves a better candidate the second or third time around.

## Report Pre-Match, Match, or Scramble Results (March – Graduation 2010)

Once you know where you will be practicing next year, it is important to report those results to the Department of Graduate Affairs at [graduateaffairs@rossu.edu](mailto:graduateaffairs@rossu.edu) for our records. We will not publish your name with your residency appointment without first having asked your permission. However, we do like to create a list of residency programs to assist future Ross students in knowing where we are having success.

Please report:

- Name of Program/Hospital
- Location of Program/Hospital
- Specialty
- Type of Program (preliminary, categorical, advanced)

Your assistance in reporting your results is greatly appreciated.

## Begin Collecting State Licensure Forms (Match – Graduation 2010)

Now that you know where you are going to practice, you will likely need to obtain at least a temporary licensure permit to begin practicing in that state. It is important that you collect your licensure documentation as soon as you know your Match results, as some state requirements can be extensive and time consuming. Many of them ask you to complete voluminous paperwork, and all of them ask you to send/collect information from certain third parties, such as Ross University and, depending on the state, your clinical clerkship sites.

**You may be able to complete a significant portion of your licensure application prior to your graduation. However, there will be portions, such as the forms you send to Ross University that simply CANNOT be completed until you have officially graduated.**

**Note:** For a comprehensive state-by-state guide to licensure, please refer to our **State Licensure Guide**, also under “Forms and Handbooks.”

## Complete Your State Licensure (Graduation 2010 – Residency 2010)

State licensing boards and statutes have become more and more stringent. Additionally, the rate of change and the types of changes are a direct result of the resources and Medical Practice Act of the individual state, as each state is the imprimatur. Regardless of the different regulations, keep in mind:

**Remember:** Ross cannot issue ECFMG certification, diplomas, complete licensure documents, or issue final transcripts to any hospital/residency or third party until you have graduated, unless you indicate, and we agree to accommodate, special circumstances. Finishing your clinical rotations will not suffice. Your graduation date must arrive before we can process those requests.

1. California is particular about requirements, and Illinois and Massachusetts require extensive paperwork, even for residency. Virginia and Texas can also require extensive documentation when applying for full licensure privileges. **(Note: Ross University cannot complete California L6, Illinois Af-Med forms, or Oklahoma Clerkship Verifications. These forms must be completed by physicians/administrators at your clinical hospital sites.)**
2. If you are seeking licensure in Florida, please see the instructions on the following page.
3. Determine if your state board requires a **transcript**. If so, indicate so when sending your materials to Ross.
4. When seeking licensure for the first time or in another state, you should anticipate delays, as the state boards must fully investigate all submitted documents and credentials.
5. **Never omit or hide negative and/or derogatory information**, as any misrepresentation on a licensing application will result in either denial or future restrictions.
6. The peak workload of licensing boards and medical universities occurs between April and September, as many want to be licensed between June and August.
7. Be patient with all administrative offices, as we at Ross University must research and evaluate your records and compose the appropriate supporting documentation to submit to the licensing boards.
8. The purpose of licensing boards is to be the watchdog, as the boards must protect the public from unprofessional and/or incompetent physicians. Such scrutiny is regulated by “recognized standards of professional conduct.”
9. All IMG’s (international/foreign medical graduates) must be ECFMG certified before starting residency, gaining licensure, and sitting for Step 3.
10. Some state medical board web sites provide downloadable regulation(s) information and licensing application forms. Make sure you access the forms for students of foreign medical schools.
11. Students who are not U.S. Citizens or permanent residents must secure a visa for residency.
12. Before filing your application with any state, **make sure you have confirmed your leaves of absence with the University**. Remember: time taken in order to study or attend board reviews **is considered a leave of absence** for independent study. If Ross University reports an LOA to a particular licensure board and you do not, you could be subject to a penalty for nondisclosure.

### Particulars

Any forms that are to be verified or completed by the University must be directed to the Department of Graduate Affairs.

Again, **Ross University cannot complete California L6 forms or Illinois Af-Med forms**. They must be completed by a(n) physician/administrator at the hospital in which you conducted your clinical training.

### Florida Licensure Issues:

The Florida Board is very stringent with inconsistencies in reporting leaves of absence. If Ross University reports a leave, and the applicant fails to report the same leave (even if you merely forgot you had taken one), **the Florida Board will subject you to a monetary penalty for nondisclosure, and the offense will become a part of your permanent record.** It is important to verify breaks in your education with Ross, realizing that time taken to study/prepare for board exams is considered a leave of absence. Also, time away from classroom or clinical training over 30 days may be categorized as a break.

#### California Licensing Issues:

The California State Board of Medicine requires 54 weeks (including cores) of clinical clerkships to be performed through ACGME-approved programs or in hospitals with ACGME approved family practice residency programs. California will accept weeks in DO/unapproved rotations **for electives only**, provided they were completed in facilities **outside** California and at institutions with which Ross has a contract.

If...

- (a) You have completed core rotations in DO hospitals or in hospitals that do not have ACGME-approved programs in family practice or in the area of specialty of choice.

or

- (b) You have completed less than 54 weeks of clerkships in ACGME-approved teaching institutions.

...then you cannot apply for California licensure without making up those requirements. If re-mediation is needed, contact your clinical advisor.

Additionally, **the procedure for obtaining a license in California makes it difficult to do a residency in California the same year of graduation.** Many residency program directors do not interview, rank or offer residencies to foreign students/graduates who have not yet obtained the "status letter" from the Medical Board of California. The letter verifies eligibility for licensure in California and **is issued only to graduated students** and only after a review process of at least 45 days. Even if a program granted you an interview and stated that they would take you without the letter, if your anticipated graduation date is April 30 or May 31, 2010, you may not have enough time to acquire the status letter, regardless.

There are four options for students who want to do a residency in California:

- 1) Complete a transitional or preliminary year elsewhere and go through the Match again the following year to look for a position in California.
- 2) Arrange your schedule for a November 30 graduation date.
- 3) Sit out a year.
- 4) Apply only to California hospitals from the list below or programs that inform you that they will consider the application even without a status letter.

The list below consists of hospitals that have granted interviews in previous years to students who did not yet have a status letter from the California Board. If applying to any in the list below, be sure to contact the institutions to see if the option still exists. All options, particularly those necessitating interruption of medical training, must be considered carefully. **This is not a finite list. If you are interested in a California program, inquire if they will grant you an interview without the letter, as policies change every year.**

- Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, Oakland
- California Pacific Medical Center, San Francisco
- San Joaquin General Hospital, Stockton
- Kern Medical Center, Bakersfield

- West Los Angeles VA Medical Center, Los Angeles
- University of Southern California, Los Angeles
- LAC-King/Drew Medical Center, Los Angeles
- University of California San Francisco, Fresno

It is your responsibility to make sure that the Form L6 is completed for each rotation by the institutions where the clerkships were performed (i.e.: the hospital, not Ross University).

If you are a California resident and are scheduled to complete clinical rotations considerably prior to a scheduled graduation date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date that will allow you to obtain the status letter as early as possible. You will have to submit a written request and will likely have to provide evidence to the Registrar regarding why you will need the special date. Even so, granting a special graduation date is at the complete discretion of the Registrar.

#### Texas Licensing Issues:

The Texas Medical Board recognizes Ross University as “substantially equivalent” to a Texas medical school, and Ross graduates are eligible for licensure there. Feel free to email Graduate Affairs at [graduateaffairs@rossmed.edu](mailto:graduateaffairs@rossmed.edu) if you have any questions.

However, Texas also requires that all clinical rotations be completed in hospitals with ACGME or AOA-accreditation in **the specific specialty**. **Having the appropriate clinical schedule does not guarantee Texas licensure beyond the permit required for residency**. To increase the likelihood you will receive Texas licensure, it is important to become Board Certified in your specialty as soon as you are eligible, in order to minimize any gap between completing residency and receiving your Board Certification.

#### Illinois Licensure:

The State of Illinois requires the student to send an Af-Med form to the clinical site of each of his/her core rotations, except family practice. A different form must be used for each core rotation, regardless of if they were all completed within the same hospital. **Ross University cannot complete the Illinois Af-Med form.**

#### Idaho Licensing Issues:

Idaho will consider a Ross graduate on a case-by-case basis. Obtaining a license to practice in Idaho is not a guarantee.

## **Specialty Matches**

The **AUA Residency Matching Program** oversees the Urology Match. The **San Francisco Matching Program** oversees separate matches for child neurology/neurodevelopmental disabilities, neurotology, ophthalmology, and plastic surgery. The scheduling of these specialty matches is designed to allow you to coordinate the application for PGY-2 positions in these specialties with the application for preliminary positions. These matches are timed to give you the result of the specialty match a month before you need to submit your rank order list to the NRMP. You can then determine your NRMP ranking based on your PGY-2 specialty match results.

Most urology programs and some neurology programs are integrated, meaning that they include a PGY-1 year within their training. However, many of them still require you to register for the NRMP Match and to rank the preliminary year of the program as your first choice. Refer to the section on NRMP and the Match for more information, for instructions on registering with the NRMP and applying through ERAS.

## **Urology Match**

### **Application Procedures for the AUA Residency Matching Program for Urology**

#### **1. Register for the Urology Match**

You may register for the Urology Match as early as spring 2009. There is no central application or electronic residency application system for urology positions. On the Urology Match web site ([www.auanet.org](http://www.auanet.org)), you will find a list of the participating programs and contact information. You must contact each program to request application materials.

In some cases, applicants must also go through the NRMP as a formality for the surgery training required before urology training. Applicants should check with each program to determine their requirements relative to the NRMP Match.

You can register on their web site using a credit card to pay the registration fee.

You will then receive your I.D. registration number, which you will make available to the programs you are applying to.

#### **2. Request an ERAS 2010 Token (if necessary)**

#### **3. Submit the Request Form to ECFMG/ERAS (if necessary)**

#### **4. Register for the NRMP Match**

#### **5. Contact Prospective Urology Programs**

#### **6. Complete Applications:**

- a) Make sure to take note of the deadline for each urology program on the application and do not wait until the last minute. Include your I.D. registration number in each application.
- b) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

#### **7. Send Letters of Recommendation to Urology Programs**

As discussed earlier, you are responsible for sending your letters of recommendation to each urology residency program. It is perfectly acceptable to send copies in the urology match. They may be sent along with the application, or separately.

#### **8. Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to Urology Programs**

- (a) Before submitting this request, you should carefully review your grades for mistakes by logging on to MyRoss.
- (b) To request that your official transcript be sent to programs, send or fax a typed list of the programs to the Department of Graduate Affairs, with addresses and all other pertinent information. You must remember to ***sign the request***.

#### **9. Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to Urology Programs**

- (a) If you submitted a complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, a student copy will be mailed to you once it is written. Please keep in mind that Dean's Letters/MSPEs are written in the order the requests are received. The earlier you submit your complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, the earlier you will receive your student copy. If you submit your complete request on, or a few days prior to, the May 22 deadline, you can expect to receive your student copy around the end of October, or beginning of November.
- (b) After having reviewed the student copy of your Dean's Letter/MSPE, you may request that it be mailed to Urology programs by sending or faxing a typed list of the programs to the Department of Graduate Affairs. You must remember to **sign the request**.

## **10. Schedule and Attend Interviews**

## **11. Submit Your Rank Order List to the AUA**

The AUA must receive your ROL via mail by their deadline in mid-January, 2010.

## **12. Obtain Urology Match Results**

- (a) In late January, the Department of Graduate Affairs at Ross will receive a fax with the results of the Urology Match. You may call for your results at that time.
- (b) If you matched to a combined program and no longer need to participate in the NRMP Match, log-on to the NRMP web site to withdraw from the match.
- (c) If you did not match, continue following the instructions for ERAS and the NRMP Match. Also, whether there are Urology openings remaining after the Match can be obtained by logging on to the AUA web site at [www.auanet.org](http://www.auanet.org).

## **The San Francisco Match**

**Application Procedures for the Child Neurology/Neurodevelopmental Disabilities, Neurotology, Ophthalmology, and Plastic Surgery Matches through the *San Francisco Matching Program (SFMP)***

### **1. Register**

Visit the San Francisco Match web site ([www.sfmach.org](http://www.sfmach.org)) to print the registration form and submit it with the required fee, in order to receive your registration number.

### **2. Request an ERAS 2010 Token (if necessary)**

### **3. Submit the Request Form to ECFMG/ERAS**

### **4. Register for the NRMP Match (if necessary)**

### **5. Download the SFMP Central Application and Instructions**

- (a) All specialties overseen by the San Francisco Matching Program use the Central Application Service/CAS, which will distribute your application to your selected programs.
- (b) Download the application from the web site ([www.sfmach.org](http://www.sfmach.org)), which also lists participating programs.

## 6. Complete Application

- (a) Make sure to note the deadline for each program and do not wait until the last minute to submit your application. Check the San Francisco Matching Program web site for deadline information for each program.
- (b) The application must be sent to the San Francisco Matching Program and include your registration number.
- (c) Apply through ERAS (if applicable).

## 7. Send Letters of Recommendation

Send your letters of recommendation to the San Francisco Matching Program.

## 8. Ask Ross to Send Your Transcript to the SFMP

- (a) Before submitting this request, you should carefully review your grades for mistakes by logging on to MyRoss.
- (b) To request that your official transcript be sent to the SFMP, send or fax a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs.

## 9. Ask Ross to Send Your Dean's Letter/MSPE to the SFMP

- (a) If you submitted a complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, a student copy will be mailed to you once it is written. Please keep in mind that Dean's Letters/MSPEs are written in the order the requests are received. The earlier you submit your complete Dean's Letter/MSPE request, the earlier you will receive your student copy. If you submit your complete request before the May 22 deadline, you can expect to receive your student copy by the end of October, or early November.
- (b) After having reviewed the student copy of your Dean's Letter, you may request that it be sent to SFMP by sending a written request to the Department of Graduate Affairs, indicating that you would like it sent to the SFMP. Please remember to **sign your request**.
- (c) Ross University will send your Dean's Letter/MSPE to the San Francisco Matching Program usually within three working days of having received your request. Dean's Letters/MSPEs will begin to be transmitted to all residency programs by the San Francisco Matching Program on November 1<sup>st</sup>, the first Dean's Letter distribution date.

## 10. Schedule and Attend Interviews

## 11. Submit Your Rank Order List

- (a) Download the ROL instructions from the San Francisco Matching Program web site.
- (b) Rank the list of programs in order of matching preference and submit.
- (c) Access the San Francisco Match web page to obtain specialty submission deadlines, as each specialty has different dates.

## 12. Obtain Specialty Match Results

- (a) San Francisco Match results become available approximately 2 weeks after the deadline for submitting your rank order list.
- (b) If you matched with a combined program and no longer need to participate in the NRMP Match, log-on to the NRMP web site to withdraw from the match.
- (c) If you did not match, continue following the instructions for ERAS and the NRMP.
- (d) Openings available after the specialty matches can be obtained through the Vacancy Information System on the San Francisco Matching Program web site.

## Graduation Related Information

### Requirements for graduation:

- **To receive a diploma**, you must fulfill all requirements:
  - all official clinical evaluations must be received.
  - all accounts with Bursar and Financial Aid must be settled.
  - Exit Interview forms from the Registrar's Department [and from the Financial Aid Department, if applicable] must be submitted.
  - Graduation application must be completed by deadline
  - All other paperwork must be completed as determined by a degree audit
- You must also:
  - (a) complete clinical rotations on or before your scheduled graduation date.
  - (b) sit for and pass the Step 2 CK and CS

Please note that 2010 graduation dates may be subject to change, so check with the Office of the Registrar for information on these dates. At this printing, applicable upcoming scheduled graduation dates are:

3/31/10; 4/30/10; 5/31/10; 6/30/10 and 11/30/10

The Commencement Ceremony will be a date set in June 2010

**NOTE: Aside from the June date, the above are not graduation ceremony dates;** however, these are official dates of degree conferral for the purposes of issuing you a diploma and processing your ECFMG certification and state licensure (if applicable) paperwork. **November 30<sup>th</sup> graduates walk in June of the following year.**

**Also, your graduation packages will be e-mailed to you about 3 months prior to the anticipated graduation date.**

You should make sure that the Office of the Registrar has the correct permanent address on file for you. If you do not receive a graduation information packet at least one month before the ceremony, please e-mail the Office of the Registrar ([www.registrar@rossu.edu](mailto:www.registrar@rossu.edu)) and include your e-mail address.

If you complete your clinical rotations considerably prior to one of the scheduled dates and need an earlier graduation date, check below to see if you are eligible to receive a special graduation date.

### **Special Graduation Dates**

A special graduation date may be approved for the following reasons:

- You are a Canadian Citizen and **are required** to take Step 3 to obtain a Visa. You must submit proof of citizenship with request. **[copy of passport]**
- You are applying for California licensing. You must submit L2 and L5 of California licensure application with your request for a special graduation date. If you are applying for a special graduation date between 7/31 and 10/31, submit supporting documentation from the program you are applying to, which states that the program will not offer you an interview without the ECFMG certificate. Otherwise, a special graduation date will only be approved between 12/31 - 4/30 to afford the 45 - 60 days required for California to issue the Status Letter.
- You have received a residency position, which is scheduled to **begin more than one month before** your scheduled graduation date. With your special graduation date request, you must submit a copy of a signed contract or letter from the program director indicating that they are offering you a position to begin before your scheduled graduation date.

**Under no circumstances will a special graduation date be given for a day other than the last day of the month in which you complete the clinical curriculum and pass the required boards.**

**To apply:** Submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar, requesting a special graduation date and the anticipated date you will complete all requirements. Attach the above-listed required documentation applicable to your situation with the graduation application, which is available on MyRoss.

### **ECFMG Eligibility for Certification**

- (a) you must have passed Step 1 and Step 2 CK and CS to graduate.
- (b) On or after the day of your graduation, certified copies of your diploma will be sent to ECFMG, provided you have cleared the degree audit, which includes the clinical department having received the originals of all your evaluations.
- (c) The diploma copies are then returned to the University for verification and are again mailed to ECFMG. The certificate is then issued to you and mailed to the address ECFMG has on file for you. The process, in its entirety, takes about 4 weeks from the graduation date.
- (d) If you change your address after you graduate, but before you receive your certificate, you must notify ECFMG. The change of address should include: your full name, ECFMG number, old address, new address, a home phone number where you can be reached, and your signature.

## Visa Issues

If you are neither a U.S. Citizen nor a permanent resident and you are planning to apply to residency programs in the United States, you must secure a visa (either J -1 Visa or an H -1 Visa). **Furthermore, you are obligated to inform the program directors of your immigration status.**

### J - 1 Visa

The J - 1 Visa, the more common of the two, is a sponsorship through ECFMG. To initiate the process for acquiring a J -1 Visa, contact ECFMG to obtain the appropriate paperwork (MF-1/Application for Initial Sponsorship). You may contact the Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program by phone at (215) 662-1445 or via <http://www.ecfmq.org/evsp/index.html>.

ECFMG has United States Department of Education authority to sponsor “foreign national physicians as Exchange Visitors in accredited programs of graduate medical education or training or advanced research programs. Exchange Visitors sponsored by ECFMG receive a Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J -1 Visa) Status (Form IAP-66). This document is used to apply for the J -1 Visa.”

In order to be sponsored, you must have secured a valid ECFMG certificate. ECFMG will issue form IAP-66 to those who have the following: a) proof of acceptance into an ACGME accredited residency program and b) receipt of completed application for initial J -1 Visa sponsorship. You must see to it that the J -1 Visa is renewed each year - you make this renewal request in conjunction with the training institution (i.e.: the hospital of residency). The length of time allowable to use the J -1 Visa is “limited to the time typically required to complete the advanced medical education program”. Additionally, it is your responsibility to alert ECFMG of any changes in your status while you are training.

The J-1 visa has two requirements:

- 1) You must have a copy of your contract with a residency program.
- 2) You must have a letter issued to you by the Ministry of Health of the country where you are a legal permanent resident (If you are a citizen of one country but maintain a permanent residency in another country, the letter should come from the latter). The letter must state the country’s need for this type of physician and that you have an intent to return to your home country after you receive your training.

## For Canadians Wanting to Practice in Canada

Graduates of medical schools outside Canada/U.S. must sit the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination. Medical students may apply to write the examination in their final year of medical school if they intend to apply for a Statement of Need from the Government of Canada in support of a J-1 Visa application. Contact the Medical Council of Canada for information on schedules and fees. It is recommended that the medical student write the MCC EE in January before the beginning of the residency.

There is no requirement to obtain a contract or return-in-service agreement in any province or territory prior to applying for a Statement of Need. The provinces and territories provide a projected need for medical specialties on an annual basis and Health Canada administers the program on their behalf.

Contact Information at Health Canada:

Program Administrator  
Statement of Need / J-1 Visa Program

Health Human Resource Strategies Division  
Health Care Policy Directorate  
Health Policy and Communications Branch  
HEALTH CANADA  
Address Locator 1918C, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1B4  
Telephone: (613) 952-1912, Facsimile: (613) 948-8081

You can find the requirements for Obtaining a Statement of Need from the Government of Canada for Medical Graduates Seeking Postgraduate Training in the United States by going to the Health Canada web site at [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca). You might also try  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/healthcare/pubs/sponsorship/index.html>  
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/soinsdesante/pubs/parrainage/index.html>

## **H - 1B Visa**

To obtain the H -1B Visa, which is a temporary worker visa, you must contact the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service at 800-375-5283. Because ECFMG has no role in the H-1B Visa, the arrangements are made between you and the residency program; thus, the training institution sponsors you as the H-1B Visa holder. Securing this visa is dependent upon the efforts made by both you and the training institution. Be aware that residency programs are granted a certain number of H-1B Visas yearly; therefore, program directors must know of your need for a visa in order to hold one for you.

Students must take the USMLE Step 3 in order to qualify for the H -1B. In order to take Step 3, you must be a graduate and you must apply to take the exam in one of the few states that allow you to take the exam prior to starting residency. If you are not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, and are scheduled to complete your clinical rotations considerably prior to a scheduled graduation date, you may be eligible for a special graduation date that will allow you to take Step 3 as early as possible. You will have to submit a written request and provide reason/evidence to the Registrar regarding why you will need the special date. For information on Step 3, contact the Federation of State Medical Boards at (817) 571-2949 or (817) 868-4041 or access [www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org).

Another source for e-mail immigration and visa law information is available via [www.visalaw.com](http://www.visalaw.com)

## Resident Profiles

Read the following profiles of Ross graduates who began residencies between July 2006 and July 2008. These experiences will be of interest to you, as they may be similar to your own.

### Syed Ahmed

*Read how a strong student became the first Ross graduate to gain acceptance to one of the top neurology departments in the United States.*

Ross University graduate Syed Ahmed recently obtained a residency at Ohio State University Hospital, which boasts one of the most respected neurology departments in the United States. However, Dr. Ahmed contends that he did not achieve this position based solely on academic performance. In fact, Dr. Ahmed strongly suggests that students should give equal attention to academics, discipline, and personality. Academics, Dr. Ahmed maintains, are very important, and he did perform well during his time at Ross. However, upon entering the highly competitive medical field, he needed to compensate in order to vie with those students with better GPA's who may have been competing for the same residencies. Admittedly, his "Step I and Step II exam scores were just average." How, then, did a student who was not at the top of his class, and who was a foreign medical graduate, attain a much-sought-after position in one of the nation's top neurology departments? He did so in two ways: staying focused and building a reputation.

#### The Strategy...

While all of Dr. Ahmed's strategies for obtaining a residency proved useful, the most effective, in his opinion, was building a reputation. Dr. Ahmed describes himself as "very professional, easy to get along with, and willing to work on a team." This self-description of his personality was confirmed by Dr. Ahmed's attending physician at Prince George's, who stated, "His interaction with patients is exemplary and he never hesitated to make sacrifices or take initiative when assigned patients to manage." One thing to keep in mind, says Dr. Ahmed, is that "once you get the interview, it matters less and less where you went to school. It matters who you are and what your personality is." This attitude proved beneficial to Dr. Ahmed, who will not only be the first Ross University graduate in Ohio State University's neurology program, but also the first foreign medical graduate in that program. Still, his success at Ross and in the Match has only strengthened Dr. Ahmed's philosophy on success in the medical field. When asked about his thoughts on starting at Ohio State, Dr. Ahmed said that he was "ecstatic," but added, "I'll have to make sure that I'm well-prepared and go the extra mile to gain the faculty and patients' respect."

#### Preparation...

In order to earn interviews at the hospitals of his choice, Dr. Ahmed made sure to remain diligent and pay close attention to deadlines. In preparation to participate in the Match, Dr. Ahmed realized that he not only had to request letters of recommendation early, but he had to request them from the right people. He advises students to be aware that **programs are most influenced by "recommendations from professors in your area," and that recommendations are looked at very closely.** In his experience, Dr. Ahmed noticed just how heavily these letters weighed on a hospital's decision to grant an interview. "Programs," he says, "really do look at the whole portfolio." He emphasizes that students' grades on the Step I or Step II exams, for example, will not necessarily make or break their chances of obtaining

interviews, and eventually, residencies. If students fall behind in one aspect of their performance, they can still make good impressions by obtaining appropriate letters of recommendation, and preparing all documents required to participate in the Match “*on time*, if not earlier.” By wisely submitting his materials as early as he could, Dr. Ahmed was able to match at Prince George’s Hospital Center, where he will spend his preliminary year before starting his residency in Ohio State University’s Department of Neurology.

### **Before Ross...**

Dr. Ahmed, like many medical students, was inspired to enter the field at an early age. Having first been introduced to the profession by his mother (also a physician), Dr. Ahmed’s interest grew as he immersed himself in the study and practice of medicine. Throughout his undergraduate studies, he participated in a number of programs, including volunteer work at the University of Virginia Pharmacy and Johnston Willis Hospital. However, according to Dr. Ahmed, “It was my time working as an emergency medical technician in college that led me to choose medicine as a career path.” Upon matriculating to Ross University School of Medicine, Dr. Ahmed performed very well during his basic sciences, and at an outstanding level during his clinical rotations. It is this consistency that has carried Dr. Ahmed through his medical education and will continue to serve him well in his career.

### ***Mazen Al-Beldawi***

*Learn how education and cultural experience helped this student during the Match.*

Mazen Al-Beldawi is currently performing his internal medicine residency at the Cleveland Clinic. An honors student with exceptional step scores, Mazen emphasizes the importance of educational excellence in the pursuit of an ideal residency program, and believes that the opportunities available at Ross University can give a candidate an advantage during the Match and interview process.

### **The Match...**

Dr. Al-Beldawi believes his high board scores and impressive GPA are responsible for his success during the Match, as well as his experiences in research and volunteer initiatives. He emphasizes the importance of a strong educational background in any future doctor's quest to obtain residency, but also advises applicants to apply early, interview early, and, upon encountering your ideal program, be sure to make it known to the program director. Dr. Al-Beldawi believes that his experiences with Ross helped him immensely during the Match and in interviews. He believes he was exposed to superior preparation in the basic and clinical sciences in comparison to US schools, as well as experiences in cultural sensitivity, flexibility, and adaptability that he feels are unique to Ross. He believes that Ross has allowed him to explore different health care systems in many different settings and regions, which is an opportunity not usually available through other medical programs. During interviews, Mazen found that many program directors showed a keen interest in his experiences in Dominica, as well as the many different hospitals in which he rotated.

### **The Dream...**

Dr. Al-Beldawi was inspired to enter the medical field at a young age after experiencing firsthand the difference a physician can make in a patient's life. During his freshman year of university, Mazen's mother was diagnosed with a noncancerous, but serious spinal cord tumor. After a long line of

pessimistic prognoses from many different doctors, Mazen's family was finally given hope by the man who ultimately saved his mother's life. It was this experience that inspired Mazen to enter medical school so that he, too, could help others find hope. Driven by the strong work ethic of his parents, and intrigued by the intricacies of the medical sciences, Mazen pursued his dream by first earning a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacotoxicology from the University of Western Ontario. When evaluating his medical school options, he chose Ross University due to its reputation as a well-known and highly respected institution. He was also intrigued by the opportunities to live and learn within the context of a new culture.

### **Before Ross...**

Mazen's tenacity towards learning and passion for the medical arts can be easily deduced from his exceptional academic performance at Ross. Earning a place on the dean's list, Mazen thrived within the context of the core curriculum, earning honors in his basic science courses before fervently taking on the rigors of his clinical studies. He graduated with an impressive 3.9 grade point average, and feels that his educational and clinical training prepared him very well for both the Match and residency.

### **The Future...**

Mazen Al-Beldawi has brought the same hard work and dedication into the match and residency that he has carried with him throughout his life. He has earned an outstanding medical education at Ross while gaining experiences that allowed him to fine-tune his clinical skills and patient rapport. In the future, he hopes to pursue a fellowship in gastroenterology and anticipates a lifetime of learning through continued experiences within the medical field.

### ***Homayara Aziz, M.D.***

*Consider the advice this Ross graduate gives regarding the match, the interview process, and using your distinct background as an advantage.*

Ross University graduate Dr. Homayara Aziz is currently participating in an obstetrics and gynecology residency program at the State University of New York at Buffalo, but her path to becoming a successful physician began long before entering medical school. Driven by a love of science and a thirst for knowledge, and encouraged by her desire for self-respect and improvement, Homayara managed to balance her family needs with her developing educational and professional responsibilities in an impressive and inspiring manner, while striving to contribute to the needs of others.

### **The Match...**

In her personal experience with the Match, Dr. Aziz found that, while program directors use your academic qualifications in the initial screening process, during interviews they are most interested in an applicant's background, personality, and long-term potential. "They want to feel good about training and teaching us," she concluded. "Once you get the interview, you are on the same level as everyone else." She found that her experiences at Ross made her a competitive candidate for residency, and evidenced her hard work, flexibility, and ability to work well in many different situations and environments. Although Homayara felt that the basic education she received at Ross was on par with that of U.S. medical schools, she also believed that it provided her with unique experiences not available in other programs, as well as an inside perspective on the administration of medicine outside of the United States. When it comes time to participate in the Match, Dr. Aziz believes that students can use these distinctive aspects of Ross's curriculum to stand out from the crowd, but also suggests students be flexible, open-minded, and apply strategically to as many programs as possible. Most importantly, she advises that students

conduct themselves professionally at all times. No matter how many programs request an interview, she encourages students to take them all seriously and attend each one, or cancel in advance if they are unable to make an appointment with a program director. The student's professional reputation, in conjunction with hard work and dedication, are instrumental in achieving success in the Match. In addition to this valuable advice, Dr. Aziz also suggests students take advantage of opportunities to speak with alumni about their experiences with the Match and residency, as they may provide valuable insight, advice, and direction.

### **The Path to Medical School...**

Having fled Kuwait with her family during the Gulf War, Homayara believes that her experiences as a refugee taught her the true meaning of hard work, the value of education, and the rewards of being humble. These values have been the creed by which she has led her life, and have contributed to all her educational and professional successes. After coming to the United States as a child, Ms. Aziz strove tirelessly to assimilate within her new environment, and began to thrive within the context of the American education system. However, there came a time during her childhood when she became seriously ill, and her family feared that financial constraints and lack of health insurance might prevent her from receiving adequate medical attention. The compassion and dedication of the doctor who saved her life, despite the family's financial situation, awakened within Homayara the dream she is living today. Inspired by this doctor's humanity, and determined to become a physician so that she too might help others, she devoted herself to her studies and achieved academic excellence while working to help support her family.

### **At Ross...**

Dr. Aziz earned her Bachelor's degree in biochemistry from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and then spent several years working in the corporate sector of healthcare before enrolling in medical school. Though initially concerned about the effects that her time away from school might have on her application, she was ultimately accepted into Ross University where she felt she was given the opportunity to follow her passion despite the gap in her education. Ross, she felt, taught her a "perfect balance between didactics and self-discipline," and she feels she was given the tools and experiences necessary in becoming an effective and competent physician. In the end, though, she believes it is self-motivation and determination that will see you through, and advised that Ross provided an excellent forum for students to develop these independent qualities in a manner which prepares them for the rigors of residency and their future careers. She encourages future graduates to work hard, study hard, and constantly look for new and unique experiences that will build their resume and help them "stand out" as a well-rounded physician.

### **The Future...**

Dr. Aziz has spent a lifetime pursuing excellence in all areas of her life, and continues to do so in her medical career. She is thoroughly enjoying her current program, where she feels she is utilizing the skills and knowledge she gained at Ross, and spoke passionately about her future within her specialty. She hopes to integrate ongoing educational and research experiences into her career, as well as efforts to teach others about the many aspects of health, medicine, and wellness. She plans to devote time to women's health issues in third world countries, and participate in inner city clinics while working in a hospital position after residency. Her long-term goals include earning a Master of Business Administration, and eventually going into private practice. Her hard work, self-discipline, and high prioritization of educational experiences has led her to numerous successes, and contributed greatly to her positive experience with the Match.

## ***Natan Fooks, M.D.***

*Learn about what a former physical therapist has to share about his experiences with the Match.*

Dr. Natan Fooks is currently conducting his residency in anesthesiology at the University of Rochester Strong Memorial Medical Center, but the path to his current position would not have been possible had he not had a successful experience in the 2008 Match. Though he performed exceptionally well during the basic sciences, earning a place on the dean's list and receiving honors in all but one of his clinical rotations, Dr. Fooks believes that more than just his educational excellence contributed to his continued success.

### **The Match...**

During the match, Dr. Fooks applied to programs primarily in the northeast. With strong ties to a close-knit family, it was important to him to stay in a close proximity to home. He applied to as many programs as possible and was accepted to his third choice, but was not at all disappointed. His voice filled with excitement as he described the work he is doing, and feels that the program is going very well. While his clinical studies at Ross prepared him fully for the rigors of residency, Dr. Fooks found the most important part of Matching to be the interview process. Once a candidate is invited to interview with a program, Dr. Fooks believes that "you are on the same level as everyone else," and that confidence and personality is what will set you apart from other applicants. He advises future graduates of Ross to apply to as many programs as possible and rank their most desired programs very high. He further advises students to have all their paperwork and documents prepared early, and follow the guidelines outlined by Ross. It was by following these guidelines that Natan was able to achieve his lifelong medical goals.

### **The Dream...**

The dream of becoming a medical doctor evolved gradually over time for Natan Fooks. As a child, Natan showed a strong interest in the natural sciences, and was fascinated with botany and zoology. As he matured, so did his scientific interests, which broadened to include biology, chemistry, and physics. The aspiration to become a physician was born out of this love of science, and continued to grow as Natan continued to learn. When he was fifteen years old, he moved to the United States from his native country of Russia, where discrimination issues may have discouraged or even prevented him from pursuing that dream. Here, he adjusted quickly to American life, picking up English within a year and thriving in the American education system. He was grateful for the unlimited educational opportunities in a country where only your qualifications and grades determine your eligibility for higher education – opportunities that he has never taken for granted.

### **Before Ross...**

Dr. Fooks earned a degree in physical therapy from Hunter College in New York, New York, and worked as a physical therapist for three years prior to entering medical school. Though his experiences as a physical therapist were rewarding, his passion for the medical arts was not satisfied. Having developed a strong bedside manner and gained valuable experience in patient interaction, Dr. Fooks decided to pursue his ultimate goal of becoming a physician. He applied and was accepted to Ross University, where he believes he gained "very good knowledge" that prepared him for his future career and made him a very strong candidate for residency. Dr. Fooks thoroughly enjoyed his clinical studies at Ross, and believes that his highly developed communication skills and bedside manner allowed him to provide exceptional care for his patients. He also relished in the opportunity to help others and gain first-hand

experience within the clinical setting. Dr. Fooks credits his education for his finely tuned technical skills, outstanding knowledge base, and exceptional step scores, and also believes it gave him unique experience that made him competitive during the match.

### **The Future...**

Dr. Fooks has led his life without taking any opportunity for granted. Grateful for the experiences that have led him to residency, he is a testament to the rewards of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. His ability to be well-prepared and confident allowed him to have a positive, productive experience with the Match, and continues to serve him well during residency. In the future, Dr. Fooks hopes to eventually pursue a fellowship after gaining additional experience, and expects to continue to make positive contributions to his profession and his community.

## **Resources**

There are several books available on the residency application process. Additionally, the home pages, web sites, newsletters and publications of professional/specialty organizations are all good resources. Below, find a list of publications, organizations and their web sites, contact information and other helpful web sites.

### **(A) Publications**

Iserson, Kenneth, *Getting Into a Residency: A Guide for Medical Students*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.

Tucson, Arizona: Galen Press, (2006):

This book is an excellent source for information covering every phase of the residency search, from choosing a specialty to writing your personal statement to interviewing. Provides advice for students on looking for a residency both in and out of the Match. The annotated bibliography is extremely useful.

Le, Tao, Bhushan, V., and Amin, C. *First Aid for the Match: Insider Advice from Students and Residency Directors*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Stamford, Connecticut: Appleton & Lange, (2000):

A guide to looking for a residency and navigating the matching process. This book includes tips about applying to residencies in each specialty, the odds of obtaining a residency in a particular specialty and suggests resources to reference and which specialty organizations to contact. A more recent edition of this book may be available.

Tysinger, James, *Résumés and Personal Statements for Health Professionals*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.

Tucson, Arizona: Galen Press, (1999):

As the title suggests, this book provides information on writing personal statements and putting your résumé together. The majority of the book is comprised of sample résumés and personal statements. It is a relatively inexpensive and useful source.

AMA, *State Medical Licensure Requirements and Statistics*.

AMA, (2006):

As the title suggests, this book provides valuable information and does so in a very direct manner.

### **(B) Publications by professional organizations**

[Note: Contact information for each of these is listed in the organization list.]

*COTH Directory*:

Lists all hospitals that are members of the Council of Teaching Hospitals (COTH) and gives descriptions of each institution. It is published by the American Association of Medical Colleges.

*COTH Survey of Housestaff Stipends, Benefits and Funding:*

Describes the salaries and benefits offered to residents by type of institution and region of the country. It is published by the American Association of Medical Colleges.

*Directory of Family Practice Residency Programs:*

Lists all currently approved family practice residencies and a variety of details about the program, such as number of spots, the number obtained by U.S. and foreign graduates, level of responsibility by post-graduate year, salaries, benefits, faculty to student ratio, etc. It is published by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

*Directory of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Residency Training Programs:*

Lists accredited programs and details about each. It is published by the Association of Academic Physiatrists.

*Directory of Preventive Medicine Residency Programs in the United States and Canada:*

Lists approved programs (its publication date is 1991, so ask for a separate current list) in preventive medicine, aerospace medicine, occupational medicine and public health, as well as other specialty-specific information. It is published by the American College of Preventive Medicine.

*Directory of Psychiatric Residency Training Programs:*

Lists all accredited programs and many details about each program, such as: who's filling them, how many are available through the Match, how many are available outside of the Match, demographics of patients, salaries and benefits, etc.

*Emergency Medicine in Focus:*

A good resource for students who are interested in doing residency in emergency medicine published by the Emergency Medicine Residents Association. Other useful publications from this organization are the *Job Catalog* and *Career Planning Guide*.

*Exchange Section 1: USMLE and M.D. Licensing Requirements:*

Summarizes the licensure requirements to obtain initial licenses, licensure by endorsement and licensure for postgraduate training in each state, including eligibility requirements to sit for USMLE Step 3. This book is published by the Federation of State Medical Boards.

*Graduate Medical Education Directory (The Green Book):*

Lists all ACGME-accredited residency programs by specialty and state, with information on the number of positions offered by each program, university affiliations, etc. It is published by the American Medical Association.

*GMED Companion: Supplemental Data for Choosing Your Residency Program, 2008-2009:*

Features information on 4,200 residency programs, including salary, start dates, hours of duty, and curricula. Also includes articles on obtaining a residency, international medical graduates, and growth of specialization in GME. It is published by the American Medical Association.

*State-Level Data for Accredited Graduate Medical Education Programs in the U.S.:*

Gives valuable information on the number of residency positions offered in each specialty by state and the number of those positions that are held by foreign medical students/graduates. It is published by the American Medical Association.

*The New Physician:*

A monthly publication of the American Medical Student Association that deals with topics of general interest to medical students, such as medical specialties and The Match.

*Transitional-Year Program Directory:*

Lists available transitional-year programs and details about each; has much hard-to-come-by information. It is published by the Association for Hospital Medical Education.

*US Medical Licensure Statistics and Current Licensure Requirements:*

Outlines the number of licenses given out by each state board and to whom, as well as summarizing the licensure requirements of each state. This book is published by, and can be ordered from, the American Medical Association.

## Helpful Web Sites

[www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/graduate-medical-education/freida-online.shtml](http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/education-careers/graduate-medical-education/freida-online.shtml)

This is the web site for the Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA). It provides a listing of all residency programs and useful information about each. You should use this site often as you research prospective programs.

[www.amsa.org](http://www.amsa.org):

This is the web site for the American Medical Student Association, which sponsors an annual convention for medical students. The web site has a wide range of topics of interest to medical students, and gives you access to the AMSA Resource Center and legislative news.

[www.careermd.com](http://www.careermd.com):

This web site contains articles that deal with topics of general interest to medical students, such as going through The Match, advice on choosing a specialty and writing a personal statement, information on residency programs, and personal accounts from residents of their postgraduate training experiences.

[www.studentdoc.com](http://www.studentdoc.com):

This is the web site for the *Medical Student Resource Guide*, which offers on-line resources for medical students, including information on preparing to obtain a residency.

[www.studentdoctor.net](http://www.studentdoctor.net):

This is the link/resource page for the Student Doctor Network, which contains resources for medical students and residents, presents articles, and provides message boards, as well as other useful web sites not listed here.

## Organizations

American Hospital Association: [www.aha.org](http://www.aha.org)

One North Franklin  
Chicago, IL 60606-3421  
312-422-3000

American Academy of Family Physicians: [www.aafp.org](http://www.aafp.org)

11400 Tomahawk Creek Pkwy

Leawood, KS 66211-2672  
913-906-6000  
Residency Information: 800-288-2668  
Keeps a list of open residency positions (updated the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month)

American Academy of Neurological and Orthopaedic Surgeons: [www.aanos.org](http://www.aanos.org)  
2300 S. Ranch Dr., Suite 202  
Las Vegas, NV 89102  
702-388-7390; FAX: 702-871-4728

American Academy of Ophthalmology: [www.aao.org](http://www.aao.org)  
P.O. Box 7424  
San Francisco, CA 94120-7424  
415-561-8500; FAX: 415-561-8533

American Academy of Otolaryngology: [www.entnet.org](http://www.entnet.org)  
1 Prince St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314-3357  
703-836-4444

American Academy of Pediatrics: [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)  
141 Northwest Point Blvd.  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
847-434-4000; FAX: 847-434-8000

American College of Emergency Physicians: [www.acep.org](http://www.acep.org)  
1125 Executive Circle  
Dallas, TX 75038-2522  
800-798-1822; FAX: 972-580-2816  
[Note: Offers information on residency and on the Emergency Medicine Resident Association.]

American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists: [www.acog.org](http://www.acog.org)  
409 12<sup>th</sup> St. S.W., P.O. Box 96920  
Washington, DC 20090-6920  
202-638-5577

American College of Physicians/American Society of Internal Medicine: [www.acponline.org](http://www.acponline.org)  
190 N. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1572

American College of Preventive Medicine: [www.acpm.org](http://www.acpm.org)  
1307 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-466-2044; FAX: 202-466-2662

American College of Radiology: [www.acr.org](http://www.acr.org)  
1891 Preston White Dr.  
Reston, VA 22091-4397  
703-648-8900

American Medical Association: [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org)  
515 N. State St.  
Chicago, IL 60610

800-621-8335

American Medical Student Association: [www.amsa.org](http://www.amsa.org)  
1902 Association Dr.  
Reston, VA 20191  
703-620-6600; FAX: 703-620-5873

American Neurological Association: [www.aneuroa.org](http://www.aneuroa.org)  
5841 Cedar Lake Rd., Suite 204  
Minneapolis, MN 55416  
952-545-6284; FAX: 952-545-6073

American Psychiatric Association: [www.psych.org](http://www.psych.org)  
1000 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1825  
Arlington, VA 22209-3901  
703-907-7300

American Urological Association Residency Match Program  
Office of Education, American Urological Association: [www.auanet.org](http://www.auanet.org)  
1000 Corporate Blvd.  
Linthicum, MD 21090  
1-866-746-4282, ext. 3913; FAX: 410-689-3939

Association for Hospital Medical Education: <http://www.ahme.org/>  
205 Sixth Street  
Irwin, PA 15642  
724-864-7321; FAX: 724-864-6153

Association of Academic Physiatrists: [www.physiatry.org](http://www.physiatry.org)  
Department of PM & R  
1106 N. Charles Street, Suite 201  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
410-637-8300; FAX: 410-637-8399

Association of American Medical Colleges: [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)  
2450 N Street. NW  
Washington, DC 20037-1127  
202-828-0400; FAX: 202-828-1125

College of American Pathologists: [www.cap.org](http://www.cap.org)  
325 Waukegan Road  
Northfield, IL 60093  
800-323-4040 or 847-832-7000; FAX: 847-832-8000

Council, Teaching Hospitals & Health Systems (COTH): [www.aamc.org/members/coth](http://www.aamc.org/members/coth)  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
2450 N St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20037-1126  
202-828-0541

Educational Council for Foreign Medical Graduates/ECFMG: [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org) or [www.ecfm.org/eras](http://www.ecfm.org/eras)  
3624 Market St.

Philadelphia, PA 19104  
215-386-5900; FAX: 212-386-9196

Emergency Medicine Residents' Association: [www.emra.org](http://www.emra.org)  
1125 Executive Circle  
Irving, TX 75038  
972-550-0920; FAX: 972-580-2829

Federation of State Medical Boards of the U.S.: [www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org)  
PO Box 619850  
Dallas, TX 75261-9850  
817-868-4000; FAX: 817-868-4099  
[NOTE: USMLE Step 3 application and administration (for some states)].

National Association of Residents and Interns: [www.nari-assn.com](http://www.nari-assn.com)  
Hillsboro Executive Center North  
350 Fairway Drive, Suite 200  
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441-1834  
1-800-221-2168; FAX: 954-571-8582

National Resident Matching Program: [www.nrmp.org](http://www.nrmp.org)  
2450 N Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037-1127  
202-828-0566 or 1-866-617-5838; FAX: 202-828-4797

Ross University School of Medicine  
630 U.S. Highway 1  
Suite 300  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902  
732-509-4600

- (a) Department of Graduate Affairs: General Information x 2737 or [graduateaffairs@rossu.edu](mailto:graduateaffairs@rossu.edu)
- (b) Office of the Registrar: [registrar@rossu.edu](mailto:registrar@rossu.edu)
- (a) Clinical Department: [clinical@rossu.edu](mailto:clinical@rossu.edu)

Society of Academic Emergency Medicine: [www.saem.org](http://www.saem.org)  
901 N. Washington Avenue  
Lansing, MI 48906-5137  
517-485-5484; FAX: 517-485-0801

San Francisco Matching Program: [www.sfmatch.org](http://www.sfmatch.org)  
P.O. Box 45161  
San Francisco, CA 94145-0161  
415-447-0350  
Fax: 415-561-8535

## MSPE/Dean's Letter Application Packet

The following pages contain important information necessary for submitting your MSPE/Dean's Letter application. Please follow the guidelines carefully in order to ensure the timely writing, processing, and transmission of your letter.

**Three (3)** items are necessary in order for your MSPE/Dean's Letter application submission to be considered complete:

1. Dean's Letter Request Form
2. Dean's Letter Questionnaire
3. C.V. or Resume

**All** must be submitted to Graduate Affairs by **May 22, 2009** in order to receive the best chance of having a completed Dean's Letter by the November 1 Universal Distribution Date, the first day ERAS transmits any MSPE/Dean's Letter to any program.

Please mail to:

**Department of Graduate Affairs  
Ross University School of Medicine  
630 U.S. Highway 1  
Suite 300  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902**

**\*\*Mailing your materials to another department could possibly result in a delay in getting your MSPE completed and submitted to ERAS on time.\*\***

The MSPE/Dean's Letter Request Form and MSPE/Dean's Letter Questionnaire assist us in constructing the MSPE. However, the c.v. is a requirement for participation in the Match.

The MSPE/Dean's Letter Questionnaire and Request Form can be found on pages 51 and 52.

**Important:** Although you may submit your c.v. to ERAS in your own style, **please follow the format in the below examples for composing the c.v.** you submit to Graduate Affairs for the purposes of composing your MSPE.

## *The C.V./Resume*

The C.V./resume is an important aspect of your Match application. It should be informative yet concise, easy to read and clear as to when and where your accomplishments took place. For example, listing an educational institution without the city of its location, or listing research experience without indicating where and for how long it took place, indicate a lazy approach to something considered important by others. It would be reasonable for a program to presume the same of the applicant and his/her work ethic.

### **C.V./Resume Dos and Don'ts**

#### **DO -**

1. Limit your resume to between one and at the most, two pages. Be clear and concise.
2. List items relevant to medicine, education and healthcare such as volunteer work, teaching/tutoring, research experience, communication skills, etc.
3. Include the dates of ALL items listed - including year, month and/or season.
4. Differentiate between Ross and pre-Ross experience using dates and identifying captions.

#### **DON'T -**

1. Write long descriptions defining your activities and research.
2. Pack your resume with too much information – stress greatest accomplishments followed, if necessary, by a brief summary.
3. List items that fail to support your career goals, such as work in a retail store or an appearance in a high school play.
4. List your clinical clerkships. They're on your transcript; therefore, not necessary on your c.v.
5. Create or add information because you think your c.v. should be longer. If dishonest information from your c.v. makes it into your MSPE/Dean's Letter and is questioned by a potential program, it is both the program's and Ross University's responsibility to take the appropriate disciplinary action. In turn, if information is written in your MSPE/Dean's Letter that is untrue but favorable to you, you must apprise the University of the error, as the same disciplinary considerations apply.

### **Example**

Begin with your prior education. Include **all dates**, awards and degrees. Follow with any special honors or awards. Then list applicable extracurricular involvement, research, and work experience during Ross. **Feel free to use the following format for constructing the c.v. you submit to Graduate Affairs.**

## **Johnny Physician**

79 Wistful Vista  
Shinbone, NJ, 08872  
(606) 555-0841  
DocDude@gnn.com

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### ***EDUCATION***

- Sept. 2006 – Present      **Ross University School of Medicine**, Portsmouth, Dominica, West Indies  
Doctor of Medicine Degree anticipated May 2010
- Sept 2004 – June 2006      **Empire State University**, Pleasantville, NY  
Master of Science Degree: Biology
- Sept. 2000 - May 2004      **Bixby College**, Bixby, MN  
Bachelor of Science Degree: Biology  
GPA 3.68, *Cum Laude*, Dean's List – six semesters

### ***HONORS & AWARDS***

- 2006      **Outstanding Student Award**
- 2003      **Bixby College Summer Research Grant**
- 2002- 2005      **Chemistry Honor Society**
- 2002      **Victor F. Mackey Biology Scholarship**

### ***EXTRACURRICULAR***

- 2007      **Ross University Health Fair**, Dominica, West Indies  
Conducted physical examinations, hypertension screenings
- 2005 to Present      **American Way Meals, Silby, MN**  
Provided food for the elderly

## ***RESEARCH***

Summer 2006

**Research Assistant**

*Empire State University Science Lab*

Developed optimal laser firing patterns

Summer 2004

**Research Assistant**

*Bixby College Department of Dermatology*

Performed testing on the mutant healing factor

## ***EMPLOYMENT***

April 2002-June 2003

**Receptionist**

*Aching Back Chiropractic Center, Bixby, MN.*

Aided in the day-to-day activities of a local doctor's office

## **PERSONAL**

Fluent in Spanish and Sign Language. Licensed lifeguard.

Avid surfer, mountain climber and ballroom dancer.

---

## **Dean's Letter Request Materials**

### **MSPE/Dean's Letter Request Form**

Please complete the MSPE/Dean's Letter Request Form (p.51) in its entirety. By signing the form you are giving consent for a Dean's Letter to be written on your behalf and for us to send it with an official transcript to the ERAS program.

## MSPE/Dean's Letter Questionnaire

Please take some time to answer the questions on the MSPE/Dean's Letter Questionnaire (p.52) thoughtfully. Since we don't have the opportunity to sit down and speak with each of you, the answers you give will be one of our only windows into your thoughts on medicine and how you plan to contribute to medicine and to the medical community.

### MSPE/DEAN'S LETTER REQUEST FORM

Please mail this form as part of your official request for your MSPE/Dean's Letter. **Faxed materials are not acceptable.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** For the best chance of having your MSPE/Dean's Letter completed by the November 1<sup>st</sup> ERAS MSPE distribution date, the Dept. of Graduate Affairs requires all 3 documents (the Request Form, the MSPE/Dean's Letter Questionnaire, and your cv) to be in our office by **May 22, 2009**. MSPEs/Dean's letters are written in the order files are completed with **all** documents. **Partial submissions of one or two documents will not reserve your place in line.**

FULL NAME:

Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS NAME: If you have legally changed your name during enrollment at Ross University, indicate former name:

Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT I.D. # \_@\_\_\_\_\_ SOCIAL SECURITY # \_\_\_\_\_ ECFMG# \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS :

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone # (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

+++++

- Anticipated graduation date is \_\_\_\_\_

- Anticipated date of taking the Step 2 CK is \_\_\_\_\_

- Anticipated date of taking the Step 2 CS is \_\_\_\_\_

+++++

Intended field(s) of specialty: This will not affect how your MSPE/Dean's Letter is written, but it is helpful information for composing it. The document is composed as a "general" letter, allowing application to multiple specialties.

\_\_\_\_\_

- Anticipated application through a specialty Match? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ If so, indicate which \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing below, I grant Ross University permission to send a MSPE/Dean's Letter and transcript to the ERAS program on my behalf for purposes of applying to the Match.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**MSPE/DEAN'S LETTER/MSPE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student I.D.# \_\_\_\_\_

Please dedicate ample time to completing this form, as it will be used as a vital component of your MSPE/Dean's Letter. When you have finished, mail it as part of your official request for a MSPE/Dean's Letter. **Faxed materials are not acceptable.**

- 1) Please indicate any honors or activities **not already included in your c.v.** Be sure to indicate dates, city and state. **Please write/print clearly.**

Basic Sciences \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Sciences \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Is there an experience or event that influenced you to become a physician? If not, why are you becoming a physician?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 3) Other than overcoming the USMLE, is there a *specific* personal obstacle you overcame during the course of your medical education that you might want mentioned in your MSPE/Dean's Letter?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 4) Other than being a hardworking medical student and enjoying your interaction with patients, what do you consider to be your strongest personal/professional attribute, one that sets you apart on a clinical rotation?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 5) What three words would you use to describe yourself to a potential program director?

\_\_\_\_\_

- 6) What are your plans for expanding your medical education as a practicing physician?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 7) Is there anything else you would like us to know, information you have not included here, on your c.v., or that you plan on incorporating as part of your personal statement ?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_