



# Medici Cohortum

December 2015

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## Did You Know?

The US military has a secret, nearly silent type of Velcro, which reduces the ripping noise by over 95%

## MATCHED!

### (An interview with a military match survivor)

**1. What did your rank list look like?** WRNMMC Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, 4 Transitional year positions. (Note: I could have listed “deferment” or more TY slots. Keep in mind the minimum number of programs you can list is 5.)

**2. Were you ever thinking of doing a civilian deferment? If not, what would have happened if you didn't match?** Yes. I applied to civilian programs and interviewed at one before military match day. If I hadn't matched, I would have tried my luck in the civilian match. Also, if I hadn't matched to continuous training for PM&R, but into a transitional year, I would have reapplied and interviewed for the PGY-2 slots the following year.

**3. Did you take both COMLEX and USMLE?** No. Only the COMLEX.

**4. What was your schedule like during the first few months during 4<sup>th</sup> year before match day, in regards to military audition rotations?** July- 4 weeks in the Tripler PM&R dept, August- one week of vacation and 3 weeks in Pediatric PM&R, Sept-October 2 weeks on OB and 4 weeks PM&R at Walter Reed Bethesda. Then I completed my required school core rotations.

**5. What kinds of questions were asked during the interview? Was there anything that came up that was unexpectedly important?** I interviewed with every attending in PM&R that I could schedule with, as well as the Transitional Year Assistant Program Director. I was surprised because at least once, I was directly asked my COMLEX scores and GPA/class rank. I was initially under the impression that no one would ask those questions. I don't think it was all that crucial to the selection process, however—since I matched to my first choice (my scores were nothing to brag about, just passes on the first try for 1 and 2).

a. Leadership and military bearing were HUGE topics during my departmental interviews. I was asked about my military goals, ties to the military, research, leadership roles in student organizations (like SAMOPS!), and why I chose to apply to the HPSP scholarship.

**6. What were some of the qualities that you looked for when choosing a residency program?** I wanted to be part of a team. I felt welcomed and trusted by the residents. After the first few days in clinic, I was even assigned my own patients each day by the chief resident. I also wanted structured learning opportunities, which are offered weekly in the PM&R program, as well as resident-led board study/review sessions. I also wanted the opportunity to do research, and Walter Reed Bethesda is right across the street (literally) to the National Institute of Health, and there are partnerships already in place.

**7. What do you feel made you a competitive applicant?** For PM&R, it was important that I knew a lot about the specialty—the inpatient, out-patient, and fellowship offerings within it. I was enthusiastic, showed up early and stayed late, participated in morning runs, followed through with my patients/scheduling follow-up appointments/writing complete notes. I just did everything I did in 3<sup>rd</sup> year. I also made a point to chat with every corpsman, resident and attending outside of formal interview time. I was also realistic. I knew there were only three continuous training spots in the Army and that they were extremely competitive the past several years. In my interviews, I asked directly what I could do to strengthen my application if I didn't match the first time around. I had letters of recommendation from people that knew me well. My advisor, my neurology attending, and one military PM&R physician.

**8. What were some things you wish you would have known going into 3<sup>rd</sup> year? What about 4<sup>th</sup> year?** When scheduling my rotations, I did not realize that I could have rotated at as many military medical facilities as I wanted. I could have done research or my electives at any location that had space for me. It wouldn't have been on ADT pay, but it would have been good exposure to more military medicine.

**9. Do you have any advice for someone who wants to match into their 1<sup>st</sup> choice?** Think of your audition rotations as just that, an audition. Everyone is determining if they would like to work with you for the next 3-4 years. By the time you get to your rotations, you've done everything you can about your COMLEX or USMLE scores or your med school grades. Accept them and own them.

## A Quick Note: Enlisted Ranks of the Air Force

	E2 Airman
	E3 Airman 1st Class
	E4 Senior Airman
	E5 Staff Sergeant
	E6 Technical Sergeant
	E7 Master Sergeant
	(with diamond 1st Sergeant)
	E8 Senior Master Sergeant
	(with diamond 1st Sergeant)
	E9 Chief Master Sergeant
	(with diamond 1st Sergeant)
	E9 Command Chief Master Sergeant
	E9 Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

## AMOPS Conference 2016

The annual AMOPS Conference is coming up April 21-24 in Philadelphia at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. In addition to exciting topics presented by DO's from around the military, there will be presentations just for students about succeeding in school and your residency. Opportunities to meet other students, residents and attendings from every military branch can't be missed. There will also be Philly Cheesesteaks to be consumed, or perhaps you would like a chance to run up the steps like Rocky. The opportunities are really endless. Scholarship opportunities are available, check out the AMOPS website for more information. Sign up now to get a discounted student rate. [Sign up here!](#)

## Officer Training: Be Prepared

Time is coming up to sign up for Officer Training for the 2016 summer. No matter what military branch you can head into training knowing you'll be prepared to succeed even after grueling finals weeks.

- **Get in Shape:** Don't let studying keep you from maintaining your fitness. Make sure you know your PT goals for your branch and make sure you can achieve them going in to camp. Not being able to do the minimum amount of push-ups on the first day of training can only hurt you. And if you come in to camp in good shape, all the other parts will be easier.
- **Look at Your Gear List:** Even though they give you an opportunity to buy your uniform and supplies when you arrive at training, you'll be more prepared and feel more relaxed when you get there ready to go and looking good. If you don't go to school near a base, try looking online at [shopmyexchange.com](http://shopmyexchange.com)
- **Sign Up as Early as You Can:** Are you are 1<sup>st</sup>

Year? Are you a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year? The earlier you can get into Officer Training, the better. You'll want to save one of your Active Duty Rotations from 3<sup>rd</sup> year to use as an Audition during 4<sup>th</sup> year, so try and get your officer training in instead of doing a campus tour.

- Sleep. Just Sleep More.

**Did You Know?** The United States Department of Defense is the largest employer in the world at 3.2 million people. Walmart is number 3.

## What Can SAMOPs Do For You?

So, we've convinced you to open and read our newsletter, let us explain what SAMOPs can do to help you.

At the national level, we are working to get information from all branches of service about applying to residency, being prepared for officer training and setting up your ADTs. At the school level, being a part of the SAMOPs club at your school gives you easy access to this information, lets you participate in volunteer opportunities, and helps you work on your leadership skills throughout medical school. If you have particular concerns or questions feel free to contact your East or West Representatives.

If your school is East of the Mississippi contact Amira Saad at [asaad19@midwestern.edu](mailto:asaad19@midwestern.edu). If your school is West of the Mississippi then please contact Kristopher Lange at [krlange@atsu.edu](mailto:krlange@atsu.edu)

Be on the lookout for emails from [SAMOPS@amops.org](mailto:SAMOPS@amops.org), our new student-specific email address. If you or someone you know wants to be on the mailing list please feel free to send us an email and we'll be happy to add you!

## Scrub Our Troops

The Scrub Our Troops Toiletry Drive was a huge success. The drive pitted schools across the nations against each to collect toiletries for Veterans centers and hospitals. We had 4 schools participate nationwide with over 700lbs of toiletries donated! The school that donated the most was Touro-CA who managed to donate over 400lbs of shampoo, soap, toothpaste and more. We also had great participation from ATSU-KCOM, Touro-NV, and Midwestern-AZCOM. Touro's SAMOPs club donated their toiletries to Operation Dignity in Oakland, CA. We far exceeded our expectations and hopefully next year even more schools will participate in the nationwide drive.



Pictured: Ensign Haylee Yepson and Founder of Operation Dignity Alex McElree

## Advice From a Program Director:

- **LOR's are helpful when they know the person writing it or if it's coming from a similar specialty**
  - Best thing: letter from physician in the same residency type you're applying to and one that you have worked with.
  - Getting a 4-star to write you a letter doesn't mean anything as to how good of a physician you'll be
  - Get a letter that speaks to how much you're rocking out in the specialty
  - LORs from residency directors in military programs are in the form of the interview sheet they fill out on you during the interview process. Every program director does this in a different way. The interview sheet usually encompasses more than just your interview. The program director for the program you rank #1 HAS to do one
  - How many LORs are needed?
    - Quality is better than quantity
    - Use the max number allotted...otherwise it might seem like you such and didn't have enough people
- **On Ranking programs and "talking about it"**
  - As a program director, I know that they all talk, so how do you talk about which program you would rank #1??
    - Don't tell them you are ranking them both of them #1!!! They know and will laugh at you.
  - Be honest. Think about it holistically, not just from a medical perspective. Allow your application essay to be honest and reflect your reasons.
  - Trust your warm & fuzzies!
  - If you change your mind:
    - It happens all the time. If it happens, just be upfront and honest. They're all adults.
    - Email the program director back at your prior 1st choice and politely and respectfully tell them about it.
    - Maintain your grace!

### Your SAMOPs Leadership

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