

## **Career Exploration Reflection Paper**

Ever since I was a little boy, I have always wanted to do something that would benefit or help others. I think this is in part because as a child, I was always very sickly. At the age of two, I was hospitalized for almost a year. During this time, I believe I was able to be conditioned to not be fearful or hesitant about doctors or hospitals. Throughout my adolescent years, I was in and out of doctor's offices due to my weak immune system, I personally believe that it was here where I became interested in health care. From this point on, I decided that I wanted to be a doctor, specifically a surgeon. This was my sole career goal from age eight until age fifteen. This did not change until the spring of my freshmen year. My step father was a political science and philosophy professor, so I was always more interested in politics than many of my friends. In the 2016 election, I actually started to pay attention to government policies and their effects on Americans. When listening to senator Bernie Sanders speak about progressive policies, it made me realize the importance of our representatives. I then had a desire to pursue public service as a legislator or attorney in order to help others. When hearing senator Sanders calls for universal healthcare, I recognized that this is another way to help others medically. I could attempt to fix a system that leaves many people unable to obtain basic health procedures.

When looking at my career options, I have always focused on these two professions because I've always been interested in health care, and I have always had a desire to help others. In my mind, the deciding factor for what career I would choose is, how can I help the most people in an impactful way. Currently when looking at the present-day political atmosphere and the state of the union, I lean towards wanting to major in economics (to get a better understanding of how certain policies would affect the nation financially and to figure out how to fund certain policies) and then go on to pursue a law degree. At the moment, this is my plan, and

from there I would make my way up to become a lawmaker in DC. The reasoning behind this decision is that if I became a surgeon, I would be forced to work within the confines of a broken system. While if I was a legislator, I could try and fix the system, so that doctors could help everyone within our society regardless of income. And being a legislator would enable me to address many more concerns other than just healthcare, such as racial inequality, the gender wage gap, LGBTQ+ rights, raising the minimum wage, and so much more. This seems like the best option for accomplishing my objective of “helping as many people as I can”.

From my exploration, I was able to reaffirm my career choices. When speaking with my friend’s dad, we discussed what his job entailed. He not only is a representative for the people in his district, but he also helps to offer and vote on amendments, bills and resolutions. Some legislation that he helped pass were things like increased funding for untested sexual assault kits, supervised injection sites, and he wrote the legislation that converted Seattle’s Metro Transit to a completely zero-emissions fleet. These are just a few of the things that he managed to accomplish for the city of Seattle. When thinking about all the years he spent dedicated to public service and when thinking about all the positive results he was able to provide to his constituents, I felt that this path was for me. Looking at it in perspective, he was able to achieve these victories on a relatively small scale, but a federal legislator could help to push for a progressive and impactful agenda for the whole nation. So overall, my takeaways from this conversation was that if at all possible a career in politics seems to be just as admirable as one in the medical field. Additionally, it seems to be enlined with my desire to live and work in a more just society where morals are not only discussed and debated but agreed upon.

At UW, I plan on continuing my study of economics, and potentially traveling abroad to Japan as part of the economics department’s program. While there I would like to observe how

their health care system functions in order to consider possible applications over to the US system. There also seems to be a number of potential internships, and academic involvements that have to do with the economic/political science area. These could be helpful to further pursue a better understanding of the American government. Any experience gained from this would surely be helpful when going to law school, or even when looking for careers.