STUDENTS AT THE TABLE

SERVING ON THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH MED SCHOOL **ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE** IS NO SMALL MATTER.

BY EM DEMARCO

BY THE **NUMBERS**

- COMMITTEE MEMBERS = 30 **FACULTY**, 15 **STUDENTS**
- APPLICATIONS TO **PITT MED** = ~6,000/YEAR, ~750 INVITED TO **INTERVIEW**
- MATRICULANTS = ~150



HOW THEY **RANK**

- RANKING MEETINGS ARE HELD BETWEEN **SEPTEMBER** AND **JANUARY** (QUORUM = 13 ATTENDING).
- IF THE STUDENTS **CAN'T** BE THERE BECAUSE OF A HOLIDAY BREAK, THE MEETINGS ARE NOT HELD.
- BEFORE THE MEETINGS, MEMBERS MUST **REVIEW** CANDIDATES' APPLICATIONS AND **TENTATIVELY RANK** EACH CANDIDATE.
- IF A MEMBER DOESN'T SHOW UP TO THE MEETING TO **DISCUSS THE CANDIDATES**, THAT MEMBER'S RANKS ARE DISCARDED.

THE COMMITTEE'S WORK IS **FAR** FROM A **NUMBERS GAME**, AS **STUDENT** MEMBERS* SERVING ON THE COMMITTEE EXPLAINED...



* PRIVACY IS PARAMOUNT FOR STUDENTS, AS WELL AS OTHERS ON THE COMMITTEE. RATHER THAN **REVEAL THE IDENTITIES** OF STUDENTS ON THE COMMITTEE, WE SHOW THE REMARKS OF:

STUDENT #1 LIKE THIS...

AND STUDENT #2 LIKE THIS.

"WHEN YOU'RE APPLYING, YOU THINK THAT THERE'S A **MAGIC FORMULA.**"

LETTERS OF REC. · VOLUNTEER EXP. · LEADERSHIP · HOBBIES · RESEARCH · GRADES · MCATS · RESEARCH · SHADOWING · GRADES

"YOU HAVE TO HAVE A **UNIQUE, OUTSTANDING** PACKAGE TO GET INTO MEDICAL SCHOOL-- SPECIFICALLY THE UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE."

EACH WEEK, COMMITTEE MEMBERS MUST **INDEPENDENTLY** REVIEW **~50** APPLICANTS' TEST SCORES, GRADES, LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION, ESSAYS. OF COURSE, **STUDENTS** SERVING ON THE COMMITTEE HAVE TO JUGGLE THEIR OWN **COURSEWORK**, AS WELL.

"IT'S A **RESPONSIBILITY** ... THIS CAN AFFECT SOMEBODY'S CHANCES OF BECOMING A PHYSICIAN. -- AT LEAST AT **THIS** MEDICAL SCHOOL."

"NOT ONLY DO THEY LOOK AT **MCAT** SCORES AND YOUR **GRADES**, BUT THEY ALSO LOOK AT YOU AS A **PERSON**, AS A **LEADER**, AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN MEDICINE IN GENERAL."

"THIS IS A VERY **RESEARCH-HEAVY** SCHOOL... IF YOU **DON'T LIKE** RESEARCH, THEN THIS PROBABLY **ISN'T** THE PLACE FOR YOU."

"I LOOK AT THEIR PERSONAL STATEMENT TO SEE WHAT THE **DRIVE** IS TO BE A PHYSICIAN."

"YOU'RE NOT SEEING A LOT OF PATIENTS IN THE FIRST **TWO YEARS** ... COMING INTO IT YOU NEED TO KNOW **WHY** YOU WANT TO BE A DOCTOR. OR ELSE IT'S GOING TO **FADE** REALLY FAST."

DURING THE MEETINGS, EACH MEMBER CAN HIGHLIGHT **ASPECTS** OF A CANDIDATE'S HISTORY, BACKGROUND, OR PERSONALITY THAT MAY NOT BE **APPARENT** TO OTHER MEMBERS...

"[DIVERSITY] ON THE COMMITTEE IS VERY IMPORTANT... YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE ON THE COMMITTEE WHO **UNDERSTAND** THOSE APPLICANTS-- AND MAYBE UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE **EXTRA HOOPS** THEY MAY HAVE HAD TO GO THROUGH TO EVEN GET TO WHERE **THEY ARE TO EVEN APPLY.**"

MEDICAL SCHOOL

SOME **RED FLAGS** THE COMMITTEE LOOKS FOR:

I CAN'T #$!?%! **WAIT** TO BECOME A **DOCTOR!**

DURING **INTERVIEW DAY**...

WOW-- HAVE YOU SEEN THE **INCREDIBLE** CAMPUS AT [INSERT OTHER MED SCHOOL NAME HERE]?

CANDIDATES ARE EVALUATED **ALL DAY**-- INCLUDING HOW THEY WORK WITH OTHERS ON A **TEAM.**

"IF YOU REALIZE WHAT MAKES YOU **DIFFERENT**, THEN YOU WILL BE BETTER AT **SHARING** THAT WITH THE **CLASS**-- BETTERING US AS A **WHOLE**. BECAUSE WE'RE LEARNING FROM OUR **TEXTBOOKS**, BUT WE'RE ALSO LEARNING FROM **EACH OTHER.**"