

Example 5 (2014)

My liberal arts education allowed me to obtain a well-rounded education at the bachelor's level that will be an asset at the graduate level. Throughout my academic career, I have always had a strong passion for the humanities and natural sciences, constantly faced with the dilemma of which field to concentrate on. Thankfully, my undergraduate classes introduced me to audiology. As an English and Speech and Hearing Sciences double major, I have found a way to meld the passion I have for language with my interest in the sciences. I have acquired skills through my classes, graduate school requirements, and extracurricular activities that have helped me become a more well-rounded learner. Beyond that, these skills have given me the problem-solving abilities to see beyond set disciplines and relate to other people more effectively.

Although I decided to pursue a career in audiology after taking communication sciences and disorders classes, I fell in love with the profession when I began to observe others working in the field. In my textbooks, I have learned about the importance of hearing health, assistive listening devices, and the possibilities for auditory (re)habilitation. However, through observations, I have learned that audiology is not only a challenging profession that demands problem solving skills, motivation, and intelligence, but it is also a profession that requires compassion and a commitment to helping individuals hear and feel better.

As an avid learner, I consider myself highly motivated and passionate. For this reason, I have sought out numerous opportunities to observe and to develop professionally, particularly through membership in the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association. As the founder and President of our local NSSLHA chapter, I actively promote principles of evidence-based practice and continuing education. I subscribe to ASHA discussion boards, read the ASHA Leader, follow ASHA and NSSLHA social media, seek out professional opportunities such as the A.G. Bell State Fall Conferences and the ASHA Convention, and participate in ASHA's Student to Empowered Professional (STEP) Mentoring, which has by far been the most impactful of any of my experiences in the field.

My first year in the STEP mentoring program, I was matched with *an audiologist*. Though the program is meant to be a distance-mentoring program, *she* works in three practices close to my college and as a result, I was able to observe at her practice. After completing my first few observation hours with her, I knew that I also wanted to observe in different settings. I observed at an Adult Audiology Department in the fall of 2012 and this past summer I volunteered and observed in a Pediatric Audiology Department. The hospital setting most appeals to me because the audiologists have more opportunities to work with implants and a range of different patients. However, my college has a relatively small CSD program, and I want to remain open to the vast placement opportunities prior to attending graduate school.

In the same way, I want to explore additional possibilities with the diverse range of patients I may work with. During the summer, I spent in the Pediatric Department, I enjoyed observing patients in the pediatric setting. When I decided, I wanted to pursue audiology during my

sophomore year, I immediately assumed that I would work in this setting. I have always enjoyed working with children and I have a passion for language development. For this reason, I would like to be in a position that enables me to provide resources and education options for the parents of children with hearing loss to help facilitate the development of language. However, despite my comfort with the pediatric population, I do not want to rule out the possibility to work with adults. The adult population offers its own set of challenges, and throughout the course of my internship, I realized that my career goals are not set in stone. For this reason, I may be more inclined to work in a setting that allows me to interact with both populations. In graduate school, I will seek out various clinical setting opportunities in order to cement my decision.

Furthermore, *your university* offers a unique integration of research opportunities for graduate students in the field of audiology. In my Assistive Listening Devices and Aural Habilitation class, a Med-EI representative demonstrated the electrode and pieces of the cochlear implant. Though I had always been fascinated by the technology, seeing it firsthand inspired me to research it further. In the fall of 2012, I conducted a literature review on bimodal hearing benefits of implanted individuals wearing hearing aids in the contralateral ear. I am interested in expanding upon and continuing this research at the graduate level as well as learning about and participating in the latest implant research that is being conducted at Washington University.

Therefore, a Doctor of Audiology degree from *your university* offers many opportunities for graduate students in research, placements, and coursework. I am confident that the program will provide me with all the necessary resources to become a knowledgeable professional capable of diagnosing and treating hearing loss, and I am eager to apply my passion, commitment, and motivation for the field at *the university*.