

Title: Applying To A Plastic Surgery Residency



Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020

Panelists: Nicole Le, MD, ; Editt Taslakian, MD, MS, ; Anusha Singh, MD

1. Choosing A Specialty

- a. What is one thing you love about plastic surgery?
 - i. You operate from head to toe, and it is an art. You can be creative and adapt from patient to patient.
 - ii. The people
 - iii. There is a lot of technical expertise, and we care a lot about how we do things at every step, from opening to closing to follow up care.
- b. What resources are available to you as a resident?
 - i. Dedicated research/ elective time
 - ii. Short-term trips
 1. Look to see if programs use these trips longitudinally to sustain partnerships
 - iii. Ask faculty what they do and how they are involved
 - iv. Funding specifically for conferences
 - v. Look at the public health program that is at your program's institution
 - vi. Some programs have 6 month-1 year fellowship programs internationally

2. How To Approach Your Residency Application & Interviews

- a. How did your interest in global surgery affect your residency application experience?
 - i. Interview is the time to talk about what you're interested in. If your interviewers and their programs are interested in that, then that could be a program for you. If a program views your passion in global surgery negatively or even indifferently, then you may not be happy there. Don't be shy!
 - ii. Look for programs that fit you and fit your interests, but remember that you can pave your own way, too.

3. Choosing A Residency Program

- a. Just pay attention to conversations throughout the application/ matching process.
- b. Look at dedicated research and elective time available.
- c. If they're asking logistical questions about how you envision carrying out your goals and passions, that's a good sign they could be willing to accommodate.
- d. Follow social media accounts and websites for programs.

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4. Seeking Mentorship

- a. What challenges have you seen as a woman of color to achieving your career and life goals? Any that are specific to plastic or global surgery?
 - i. We'll always encounter haters
 - ii. If possible, surround yourself with female mentors and colleagues that share similar goals and passions.
 - iii. If you're comfortable, bring up this question with prospective programs. If you're not comfortable with the attendings, ask it to the residents and see how they view the issue and what their program is doing to combat gender and race disparities in medicine.

5. Resources

- a. What skills are helpful to learn during medical school to prepare for a career in global surgery?
 - i. Understand and know inside and out your why. Be able to explain why and how you want to/ are capable of a career in global surgery.
 - ii. Experience working with many different kinds of systems.
 1. Understanding barriers in different settings
 - iii. Be humble
 - iv. Follow through is an essential skill to completing projects.
 - v. Reflect on why you are successful or why/ how barriers impeded your progress. Being able to detail those things in an application/ interview will show that you are thoughtful and that you learn from every experience.
 - vi. Be proactive and put yourself out there.
 - vii. How do you show these skills?
 1. Have global surgery projects, but have other local projects that you can wrap up and add to ERAS because global surgery projects can take a while to finish.
 2. Convince programs that you have acquired skills in global surgery that will make you a valuable asset to their program.
- b. How can we get involved in global surgery during a pandemic with many restrictions to travel?
 - i. Unfortunately, we can't do it the way it's done best, which is being where you need to be.
 - ii. BUT, get involved with organizations (GSSA, campus interest groups, etc.)
 - iii. Anusha, Nicole, and Editt are working on collaborating with and collecting contact info from other students, trainees, and surgeons interested in plastic surgery and global surgery, so feel free to reach out to them to get involved.

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6. Miscellaneous

- a. Where do you see plastics and global surgery going in the future? How do you envision your career as a global surgeon?
 - i. Dr. Editt Taslakian
 1. In all specialties, global surgery is headed away from short-term trips and long-term partnerships and mentorships
 2. I want to learn how other surgeons practice with their given resources and see how I can improve my own practice with their techniques
 - ii. Dr. Anusha Singh
 1. We need to create partnerships between practicing providers, not just trainees.
 2. In global surgery and global health, we will inevitably see things that are unethical or incorrect. Seek out mentors that do things the right way to help propagate correct practice.
 - iii. Dr. Nicole Le
 1. Global surgery can pave the way for innovation
- b. Where can we best invest our efforts to help move global surgery forward?
 - i. Every region, country, and community has different needs. Learn those so you can work to promote equity in that area.
 1. Additionally, learn the goals of those with whom you are in a partnership/ shared mentorship