

Born and raised in a small town known as Mekelle, in Ethiopia, I was brought up in an orphanage. In high school, I won an academic scholarship and had the opportunity to finish my education at an international school in Ghana, West Africa. As a science student in Ghana, I was selected to study in the American School of Paris in France for two months. I graduated from high school in 2001 and received a scholarship to Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I graduated in May 2007 with a Bachelor's degree. I was admitted to Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan in 2008, and have been studying Pre-Medicine since, including studying Cell and Molecular Biology at a graduate level.

In the summer of 2006, a visit to my home-country, Ethiopia, inspired me to be a medical doctor. My best friend from childhood, Abebe, had contracted HIV-Aids. I visited him in the local hospital, and he told me he only saw a doctor once in the last five months. I did not ask why; I knew the answer: there were only two or three doctors available for the nearly 80,000 citizens. Two months later Abebe died. I knew many other untold stories were out there. Many families were left without mother, father, sister or brother. In some cases, even children were born with the disease and many others left without anybody to care for them. My late friend's wife was fortunate to be HIV- negative, but her and their two children did not have any means of support. These stories echo from all corners of Ethiopia and Africa. Since that awakening experience, I have dedicated myself and my life to change my country's health care by working to become a caring physician with an unwavering desire to serve others. This is an honorable life calling and keeps my academic drive strong every day. It is not about me, but about those who are suffering and dying from treatable diseases everyday in the place I call home—Ethiopia.

An international education will help me acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to practice medicine. In the process of going through an international education, I will be exposed

to new advanced technologies, efficient techniques, and new medical findings available only in higher learning institutions in the developed world, such as the USA. I will be better prepared to help patients like Abebe, and make a difference in their lives. Moreover, I will be able to transfer the knowledge, skills, and technologies to the health professionals in Ethiopia. An international education is also beneficial to help me learn about different cultures and traditions and for networking that could later be utilized in mobilizing physicians from the USA in order to volunteer in Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the second most populous nation in Africa with approximately 80 million people, eighty-five percent of which lives in rural areas. For this reason, I could be a bridge between the people in need and those health professionals in the USA who would like to help by either building health facilities, donating medical equipments, and/or volunteering their time.