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Job Shadow Essay

Physical Therapist

Ever since I was little, people have asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. Like a typical young child, I would always have some unrealistic occupation that was changing every time I was asked. Once I began high school, I really started to put thought into what I could see myself doing for the rest of my life. With much contemplation and research, I finally decided on physical therapy.

During my job shadow at Great Lakes Orthopedics in St. John, I observed physical therapist Paula Skurka doing all of her daily duties. Experiencing a typical day in a physical therapy office, I can confidently say that I love physical therapy. Every aspect interests me and I cannot wait to enter the profession. I am still very passionate about being a physical therapist. I enjoy the variety of clientele and their wide range of injuries. Every day would be different. I also like the fact that the hours are flexible. According to Mrs. Skurka, if her child is ill one day she can have another therapist fill in for her. Vacation time is very easily accumulated and the pay is very hefty. Being a physical therapist has so many benefits and perks that it does not even seem like a job. Personally, another thing I liked about the job shadow was the patients. This job would be perfect for me because most of the patients are middle aged to older and the few younger patients that are in the office are all in middle school or above.

Although there are many positives to being a physical therapist, I have a few concerns. Becoming a physical therapist requires a lot of schooling. Six and a half years to be exact. Physical therapy is a very competitive field. Once I have completed four years to get a

Bachelor's degree, I then have to reapply to a school and go for another two and a half years minimum to get my Doctorate. Getting accepted into a physical therapy school will be very hard. Most schools only accept 30-40 applicants a year. Another concern would be cost. College is expensive but physical therapy school is triple that. University of Iowa has the fourth best physical therapy school in the country; the price for two and a half years of school there is \$98,000 dollars. Yet another dilemma is making the grades. With it being a very competitive field, one must have the best grades possible in order to even be a possible consideration. The classes required to even be looked at as an applicant are also very rigorous. They would include hours of high level math and science classes. To alleviate some of my concerns, I need to try harder in school and attempt to receive a scholarship.

This experience was great. I loved the environment and feeling of being in the office. The patients were all such great company. The job shadow made me realize that this is officially what I want to do for the rest of my life. The shadow has convinced me to work hard and get good grades in order to become as great of a physical therapist as Mrs. Skurka. She was amazingly fast at recalling answers to every question that was fired at her. Her brain was a textbook with everything anyone could ever want to know about physical therapy. I am so glad I got the chance to job shadow and I will continue my studies in hopes of one day being a physical therapist.