

Medical Miracles on the Horizon

The world and its inhabitants will face a multitude of problems in the 21st Century, including drug addiction, deadly disease, violent crime, warfare and hostility, hunger, and homelessness to name a few. All of these critical issues have been present to some extent in the 20th Century and, left unsolved, will continue to plague society and mankind as we enter the new millennium. As we rapidly approach the next era, new issues of equal or even greater importance for mankind will almost certainly arise. I personally envision health issues, concerns related directly to medicine, as the central, most critical and comprehensive problem facing leaders of the 21st Century.

In my opinion, physicians and others associated with the medical profession will participate in one of the most vital and urgent roles entering into the new era. This is one of the reasons that I intend to pursue a career in the medical field after I graduate from The University of Tennessee. Of all occupations in the next millennium, medicine will be perhaps the most important and influential in combating the problems of mankind and in solving them.

People in the field of medicine will continue, as they have in this century, to address and participate in almost all concerns. For example, methadone is currently being used as a therapeutic intervention for some drug addictions. In addition, various medications are now being given in the treatment of criminals, like anti-psychotic drugs to curb aggressive or violent behavior in schizophrenics. A new and improved group of antidepressants is also being used to treat and reduce the growing rate of suicide in all ages of our society. Because a very high percentage of homeless people suffer from psychological problems and/or drug addictions, doctors may also eventually play a larger role in prescribing medication for these individuals. Concerning warfare that may be present into the 21st Century, the medical community will be required to detect and treat a variety of injuries and illnesses, just as they have had to decipher and work on patients who fell victim to the Gulf War Syndrome. Any future wars may have even more insidious side-effects due to the use of lethal chemicals.

Cures have been found for many illnesses, such as polio, smallpox, and various childhood diseases in the present century, but other health concerns are manifesting rapidly. One of the most important task doctors and research scientists may face is to fight new strains of deadly diseases in the coming years. Outbreaks of eboli and the emergence of diseases that are drug-resistant to antibiotics threaten the survival of mankind.

If humanity is to thrive and prosper in the 21st Century, each individual must do his or her own part to deal with the problems that are presently in existence as well as to prepare for the potential problems of the future. The path I will choose in solving some of the current and future considerations for mankind is the field of medicine. In other words, I want to be a part of the solution for the issues that face my own generation, as well as benefiting past and future generations. No one person can solve all of the dilemmas. It will take a concerted effort by a multitude of individuals in a variety of occupations and by concerned humanitarians who work for their own causes to improve living conditions and the quality of life in the next era.

Doctors, scientists, teachers, social workers, politicians, leaders, and virtually every other segment of the population must team up in a joint effort to eradicate the serious issues facing our society in the 21st Century. For example, the leaders of the 21st Century must seek new methods and alternative plans to ensure the "well-being" of others as the Preamble of the United States Constitution declares as a basic "right." The leaders in our government need to go out into society, talk with people, study the pertinent concerns, and actively participate in finding solutions. They should ask questions such as: what should we do, how do we do it, and what is working for you? These leaders need to enlist the help of

the medical community so that they may better realize and more fully understand that the hospitals and research centers need additional funds for new treatments, better facilities, and updated technology. In addition, a comprehensive health care program must be developed that is satisfactory to the citizens as well as to the health care professionals.

In the field of medicine, we have much to look forward to as the new century begins. Great progress is currently being made in the medical field of genetics. In the 21st Century, it is very possible that many incurable diseases such as autism, diabetes, and others may be eliminated. Physicians and scientists are even showing some hope for a future cure for AIDS, a terrifying and rapidly spreading disease that is now in the top ten causes of death. Another field of medicine that will be extremely vital in the next era is that of geriatrics. As life expectancy continues to rise and our society continues to age, the field will undoubtedly become one of the most exciting and critical of all. Many medical miracles are on the horizon because significant breakthroughs are pending, for the flu, for spinal cord injuries, for Parkinson's, and for many others. I truly believe that many diseases will be eradicated in the next millennium, and I look forward to being an active participant in finding the cures as well as treating the needy.

I am still in the process of exploring, investigating, and evaluating the various options of the medical profession and have not yet decided which specialized path to follow. But I know that the profession of medicine is where I need to be, where I want to be, and where I will someday be. I am very focused, self-motivated, and determined in obtaining my goal to become a physician. Being a successful Medical Doctor means helping other people and solving complex problems in the next era, and this is what I will strive to do.

I firmly believe that the world and its inhabitants will face a multitude of problems in the 21st Century, both old ones and new ones. In my opinion, the solution for most of these critical issues will be in some way related to the field of medicine, either through diagnosis, research, or treatment. Still, all segments of society must work together to make the new millennium prosperous and successful for all. My first step in being an active part of this concerted effort will be to earn my degree from the University of Tennessee so that I may one day reach my goal to be an active participant in the medical community and to fulfill my desire to help others.

