

Jeremy Llaniguez, MD/PHD Candidate: From medical device engineer to physician

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Staff News Writer



The AMA “Members Move Medicine” series profiles a wide variety of doctors, offering a glimpse into the passions of women and men navigating new courses in American medicine.

On the move with: Jeremy T. Llaniguez, a third-year medical student at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit.

AMA member since: 2011.

What inspired me to pursue a career in medicine: As an engineer in the medical device industry prior to medical school, I witnessed firsthand the language/technical barrier between our physician consultants and the engineers working to produce life-saving therapies. I felt that with my skillset and my newfound passion for medicine, I could be a bridge between physicians and engineers.

How I move medicine: I am most interested in social justice as applied to health care resources. I like to move medicine by staying active in the AMA-MSS and pursuing leadership positions to empower my peers to move medicine.

Career highlights: As an MD/PhD candidate, one of my most rewarding accomplishments is defending my dissertation. Within the AMA-MSS, a notable highlight was being elected MSS-GC Vice-Speaker for 2017-2018.

Advice I’d give to those interested in pursuing a career in medicine: As someone who had a prior career and worked for 10 years before medical school, I suggest to interested students that they really should dig deep and do some soul searching before applying to medical school. The drive is different when you realize that your career trajectory requires you to pursue an MD, PhD, or MD/PhD, rather than just going through the motions because your family or peers expect you to go into health care.

How I give back to the community: I like to think that our work in the AMA, creating policies that benefit patients and physicians, is one way I advocate. Additionally, voting for the policies and candidates that are supportive of these policies is how I put our work in the AMA and AMA-MSS into action.

Aspect of my work that means the most: After finishing a five-year PhD, as an M3, I am most humbled by the personal connection with patients. It continually revitalizes and reinforces my passion for medicine.

My hope for the future of medicine: The reason I went to medical school and pursued an MD/PhD is because I want to reduce the overall cost of health care. In this way, I hope to reduce barriers to access and make health care available for everyone in the country.

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