

**Sean Connery: Match #00000**  
**Personal Statement for Orthodontics Residency**

In looking back on my personal interests and professional goals the one common element has been passion. To me, passion is defined as sincerely loving what one does and resulting accomplishments can be attributed to hard work through personal motivation. From academic interests to extracurricular activities such as snowboarding, I have noticed that in my life the degree of enthusiasm closely correlates to the level of success. Thus, with my excitement for the specialty combined with experiences in leadership and community service, I know I want to be a community leader within orthodontic patient care, research, and education.

My interest in orthodontics first began as a patient and then solidified into a career choice as a dental student. As a teenager my braces were taken off and I began to notice positive changes, for which orthodontic treatment seemed to be the cause, in myself and in my relationships with others. I realized I wanted to help others in much the same way my orthodontist helped me, and dental school seemed to be the logical next step after college. Later, during my second-year at University of California at San Francisco, School of Dentistry (UCSF), I attended our Orthodontic Journal Club elective that was undergoing a mock treatment planning session and professional aspirations became evident. I became enthralled with the specialty and felt compelled to learn more. Thus, I sought out and took part in other orthodontic related activities; for example, in addition to the above mentioned Journal Club, I volunteered in extra orthodontic clinical sessions, served as an orthodontic research assistant, and participated in UCSF's Center for Craniofacial Anomalies. With increasing exposure to the specialty, I knew for certain that orthodontics was the field that appealed to all of my interests. I like that orthodontists have rewarding challenges in diagnosing patients and face an exciting jigsaw puzzle of sorts in which they must find the proper components and sequence for successful treatment planning. In addition, clinically, orthodontists use a unique synergy of artistic talent with a mechanical sense of mind for guiding craniofacial growth and treating malocclusions. These were all qualities for which I was searching as they seemed to fit perfectly with my interests and goals.

Other interests of mine include leadership and community service as they have been gratifying opportunities to help others. Serving as class president and then student body vice-president were exciting experiences in which I saw the far reaching effects one can have as a leader. Similarly, volunteering with UCSF's Community Dental Clinic has allowed me to give back to the larger community. For the past three years our small team of coordinators has been able to organize free dental treatment for about 500 hundred Bay Area homeless residents. These skills and experiences form the foundation upon which I intend to achieve my goal of being involved in the different fields of orthodontics.

For me, research and education are two such areas, in addition to patient care, in which I want to become a leader. As well as further investigating pharyngeal airway changes in orthognathic surgery patients, I hope to integrate my college education in genetics with dental school interests in craniofacial development to my orthodontics residency; then, by applying these interests to my advanced training I hope to obtain a more complete understanding in treating patients with craniofacial syndromes, such as those I saw at our Center for Craniofacial Anomalies. I learned the positive impact that interdisciplinary teams can have on treating these patients subsequent to my experiences in our clinic. One patient from the Center that stands out in my mind is a teenage girl with dermatomyositis who one year ago was mobile with only a wheelchair and yet ran in a half marathon just three months ago. In my opinion, craniofacial syndrome patients are some of the most inspiring and challenging cases since there must be meticulous coordination and close collaboration within the interdisciplinary team to provide this life altering treatment. Similarly, it is this sense of camaraderie and transfer of knowledge while working with others that interests me in education; I had the opportunity to teach my schoolmates National Boards Part 1 material and helping them taught me the rewards of assisting others achieve their goal.

Passion, much like any emotion, is a trait that can be perceived negatively if taken to the extreme. However, in tempering my enthusiasm with compassion and remembering the process is just as important as the goal, I have still been able to maintain excitement everyday. On the other hand, in hindsight do I feel there has been one area that passion has not worked for me? Yes, in becoming an Olympic snowboarder!