

Personal Statement

By: Jacob Thompson

Growing up in a small town, sports were everything. It did not matter if you were just at the grocery store getting milk or if you were simply just getting gas, everyone loved to talk with their hometown heroes. Early on, I based my future off this aspect without really considering what I wanted to do in life as a career. In a matter of minutes however, a simple diagnosis of a torn ACL completely changed that mindset. It forced me to begin thinking outside of athletics which up until that moment, I have never done. Now over the course of six and half months, I began to fall in love with my rehab. It not only helped me cope with the looming thoughts in my head, but it helped me become more confident in myself with every visit. This process solidified that I wanted to help people as a career. I wanted to help people become more confident, overcome those barriers that seem immovable, and take on new challenges.

I believe my experience as a collegiate athlete has given me many opportunities that would not have been accessible without soccer but as competitive as athletics are, the most rewarding experience has come from off the field with my involvement with Special Olympics Track and Basketball. This program teaches young individuals like me, how to work alongside individuals with cognitive and physical disabilities but also compete with them. The positive attitudes and dedication that I witnessed from these athletes is the type of attitude that I want to bring to my career. Washington County Special Olympics has given me lifelong friends and has taught me very valuable lessons that I can apply to many aspects of my life. It shows time and time again that even though life seems to be giving you hard times, a smile and dedication can impact lives.

Outside of athletics, I was blessed with the opportunity of interning at Athletico Physical Therapy as a Rehabilitation Aide. This opportunity taught me how a family like atmosphere and a friendly attitude can render positive results. I noticed quickly that I was going to be challenged with updating client logs as well as leading individuals through their workouts. Once I became comfortable, I began to learn how to manage my time more effectively to become more successful at that job. Over the course of many weeks, I learned how to further my communication skills with clients, enhance my knowledge of the moving parts of a clinic, and be open to new, complicated tasks that might seem out of my realm.

All these experiences have come back to the common theme of bettering others. I have found great joy in helping others reach their goals and overcome barriers. Adversity is everywhere in the world and in the medical field. I have learned that some people experience more than others. The best thing you can do as a Physical Therapist is to create an atmosphere that allows them to not only better themselves and push themselves, but to relax from the daily stresses they face. If I can keep this mindset and power it with passion and determination, I believe will have an impactful career as a Physical Therapist. I look forward to expanding my knowledge and overcoming the many challenges ahead.