

MOMENTS

IN MEDICINE AT MICHIGAN


“This is important to know ...”

“I’ve gone through illnesses and traumatic injuries with my family that have really plunged me into the world of medicine from the patient’s point of view, and as a support to the patient.

“When my younger brother was three, he fell on a stick that went into his eye. He had multiple surgeries — but they were able to save his vision. There were a number of car accidents in my family. My oldest brother was almost killed when I was in middle school. I witnessed all that. Then my mom and my sister were in accidents, and then I had my accident ...

“A week before my high school graduation, I was driving home from my job as a waiter in my parents’ restaurant, and I fell asleep and hit a tree. I suffered a spinal cord injury that left me an incomplete quadriplegic. And after that my father was diagnosed with lung cancer and died.

“All these experiences shape you. Adversity makes you strong, changes the way you approach problems.

“As long as I can remember, medicine is what I’ve wanted to do. And because I knew that, these experiences were even more relevant to me. I remember thinking as I experienced them, ‘This is important to know — remember this.’” 

*Interview by Whitley Hill
Photograph by J. Adrian Wylie*



Jaffer Odeb, from Stockbridge, Michigan, is a member of the Class of 2007.