

THE LETTER OF INTENT

ICHP Annual Meeting Student Session: *"The Vibrant Shuffle on the Path to a Residency:
Getting the Inside Look at the Process and People Involved"*

Jen Phillips, PharmD, BCPS

September 17, 2011

The letter of intent is one important way for you to distinguish yourself from other candidates. Residency programs are looking for the candidate(s) who are the best "fit" for their institution. Often times, the "most qualified" applicant is not necessarily the "best fit" candidate. Residency programs determine "best fit" by evaluating a number of criteria including (but definitely not limited to) the following:

- Clinical interests
- Short and long term professional goals
- Clinical strengths/weaknesses
- Character strengths/weaknesses
- Learning style
- Strength of clinical rotations
- Level of professional involvement
- Clinical aptitude
- Personality

The letter of intent can significantly help or hurt your likelihood of getting an interview. Below are some helpful hints to consider when you are writing your letter of intent:

1. Include the following:
 - a. Why you want to do a residency
 - b. Why you want to do a residency at that particular institution
 - c. A statement of your current areas of interest
 - i. Clinical subject area (if known)
 - ii. Preferred environment
 - d. A statement of your short and long term goals
2. Do ***not*** include the following:
 - a. List or summary of rotations (this information is already included in your CV)
 - b. Negative experiences (pharmacy is a small world!)
 - c. Hobbies or outside interests
3. Additional "hints"
 - a. Proofread, proofread, PROOFREAD!!!
 - b. Spend a lot of time thinking about your goals and preferences before writing.
 - c. Be specific about people you have interacted with.
 - d. Personalize your letter with specific experiences.

Rosie Glitazone
123 Pharmacy Drive
Chicago, IL 60001
July 20, 2010

Jill Burkewitz, PharmD
PGY-1 Residency Program Director
Midwestern University
555 31st Street
Downers Grove, IL 60515

Dear Dr. Burkewitz:

I am writing this letter to express my sincere interest in the residency program at the University of Illinois at Chicago Medical Center. I believe your residency program is a perfect match to my interests.

I have worked very hard during pharmacy school. I currently have a 3.9 GPA and I am a member of Rho Chi. I am also a member of pharmacy organizations like ICHP and IPhA. In addition, I consider myself to be a very well-rounded person. When I am not doing pharmacy, I enjoy bike riding and reading.

During my fourth year, I chose clinical rotations that matched my interests and prepared me well for a residency. Currently, I am on an infectious diseases rotation and I like it very much. I may consider going into this as a specialty area of pharmacy practice. I have also done rotations in internal medicine, community pharmacy, and ambulatory care. I am scheduled to do rotations in critical care and psychiatry.

I am a very hard-working and conscientious student; I think I will make a good resident. Attached you will find a copy of my application, three letters of recommendation, my transcript, and my questionnaire. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me via e-mail, as this is the fastest way to get a hold of me.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Rosie Glitazone
PharmD Candidate

XXXXXXX

December 1, 2009

Debby Gwozdz Bryniarski, PharmD
Residency Program Director
Lutheran General Hospital
1775 Dempster Street
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Dear Dr. Bryniarski:

I am writing this letter to express my interest in the PGY1 Pharmacy Residency Program at Lutheran General Hospital. I had the pleasure of speaking with your infectious diseases pharmacist, Dr. Sarah Wiczorkiewicz, at the ICHP Residency showcase and with your current pharmacy resident, Dr. Lulu Jin at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting. These interactions, combined with my own research, solidified my decision to pursue a residency at your institution. It was refreshing to hear Dr. Wiczorkiewicz and Dr. Jin speak about your residency program with such high regard and enthusiasm. I am very impressed with your program and the opportunities that are offered to residents.

I believe that the training offered by your program will help me achieve both my short and long term goals. My immediate goal is to obtain a PGY-1 residency in order to further develop my clinical and leadership skills as well as expand my skills in research and administration. I am excited about the fact that your institution is located in a large metropolitan area as this ensures a diverse patient population, which I consider to be ideal for learning. I am also very excited about the wide variety of critical care experiences that exist at your institution and about the fact that your institution offers a teaching certificate. After completion of a PGY-1 residency, my goal is to pursue a PGY-2 residency in critical care. After that, I aspire to obtain a faculty position as a clinical pharmacist within a teaching hospital where I will have the opportunity to precept students, give didactic lectures, and advance the role of pharmacists through involvement in professional organizations.

I am passionate about pharmacy practice. I have had a number of exciting and rewarding experiences during my clinical rotations and while working as a pharmacy technician at Rush University Medical Center. As a result of these experiences, I believe that I have the skills, motivation, character, and dedication necessary to succeed in your program. I am a very hardworking individual who values innovation and a team approach to providing optimal patient care. From my research and interactions with members of your clinical staff, it appears as if your institution has similar values.

My application materials are enclosed for your review. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to speaking with you and members of your department regarding my application. Thank you for your time in considering my candidacy for your residency program.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXX

Debi Gatran
123 Residency Lane ♦ City, State Zipcode ♦ Phone
email@domain.com

December 28, 2010

Sarah M. Wieczorkiewicz, Pharm.D., BCPS, AAHIVE
Residency Program Director
Lutheran General Hospital
1775 Dempster Street
Park Ridge, IL 60068

Dear Dr. Wieczorkiewicz:

It was a pleasure meeting you at the residency showcase at this year's ICHP Annual Meeting in Oak Brook, Illinois. I was also privileged to meet Fatima Ali and Jill Cwik as well at the ASHP Midyear Clinical Meeting in Anaheim, California. After talking with everyone regarding the program's attributes, I have decided to apply to Lutheran General Hospital's pharmacy practice residency program.

I do not want to be the pharmacist that sits on the sidelines and simply receives and processes prescriptions. I want to be the pharmacist who works hand in hand with health care providers, lending my expertise and making therapeutic recommendations. This past year during my clinical rotations, I learned from the best how to assess patients and think critically about pharmacotherapy. Along the way, an interesting thing occurred; I transitioned from a student pharmacist who hesitated in her assertions to one who felt she had the capabilities to become a great clinician. I gained confidence while working with health care providers and became more comfortable assessing patients and making recommendations. I realized that I can be the pharmacist I want to be, but I know I am not there yet. I need additional training as a pharmacy practice resident, where I could continue to learn from the best and grow as a clinical pharmacist.

I am looking for a residency program that will provide me with a myriad of inpatient experiences, both in terms of rotation quality as well as patient diversity. I would like to work at a teaching hospital, where I have the independence to teach inexperienced medical residents while at the same time learn from seasoned attendings and clinical pharmacists. I am looking for a program that is going to afford me the opportunity to precept student pharmacists and earn a teaching certificate. I am applying to Lutheran General Hospital because I know this program will provide me with all of the experiences I desire. I understand that a pharmacy practice residency will be quite challenging, but I am eager to accept that challenge because I know at the end of the year, I will be that diverse clinical pharmacist who is capable of working hand in hand with health care providers and plays a big role in patient care.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply to Lutheran General Hospital's pharmacy practice residency program. I look forward to visiting the institution and interviewing with the clinical pharmacy staff. Please feel free to contact me if there are any concerns regarding my application.

Sincerely,

Debi Gatran
Pharm.D. Candidate March 2011
Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy