

# How to Find the Best Away Rotators (and how to get your students away rotations)

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# VSLO or not to VSLO

- Visiting Student Learning Opportunities
- As of March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, there were 233 different institutions on VSLO
  - 404 electives when filtering by emergency medicine, clinical, United States
  - Variable start dates
  - There is an annual fee for programs to list their electives
  - There is a \$40 fee for students (this includes 3 applications) + \$15 for each additional application
- Non-VSLO institutions
  - EMRA Match (Clerkships)
- Individual residency or school websites
  - Google

# What can your program do to get more rotators?

- Make sure that your demographic information is UTD
  - Personal Website
  - EMRA Match (Residency AND Clerkship)
  - American Medical Association FREIDA
- Students need to have someone to email/call
- Advertise at medical student fairs (ACEP, CORD, SAEM, others)
- Have an initial application → prelim acceptance → full application
  - This helps decrease the administrative burden
- Give your rotation some teeth
  - What does your program do well? Expose your rotators to it. Have your rotators do more than just shifts in the ED.
- Write your SLOE's in a fair and efficient matter
  - If my student rotated with you in September, and it takes a month to write the SLOE, this is a problem. I will advise future students not to rotate at that program.
  - If I notice significant bias in letters or unexplained low rankings, I will advise future students not to rotate at that program.

# What information is usually available when choosing your 4<sup>th</sup> year rotators?

- CV
- Letter of good standing from the medical school
- Personal Statement/“Why us” statement
- Letter of reference
- Transcript
- USMLE Step 1 Score

# How to pick students who are great matches for you?

- Stop emphasizing Step 1 above all else
- Look for what is important to you
  - History of service?
  - Grit?
  - Desire to work with the patient population you serve?
  - Diversity?
- The “why us” statement can help elucidate all of this
  - 500 words (one paragraph)
- Set realistic parameters for who you would otherwise interview
  - Allow for some flexibility – you might be pleasantly surprised

# How to get your students away rotations

- Unless they have a particular need, they only need ONE away rotation
  - The whole system falls apart when too many students have 2 aways + many students have no aways
- Apply to 3-5 programs to assure a single away rotation
- Many different acceptance and application dates (VSLO and non) so have your students apply early and accept a rotation early if they get a spot
  - Encourage students not cancel an away rotation if they are within 6 - 8 weeks of the start date
- Have your students get the typical documents together EARLY - November/December of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year
  - HIPPA
  - Immunizations
  - Letter of good standing from the dean's office
  - CV
  - Drug test
  - Proof of Malpractice
  - Background check

# How to get your students away rotations

- Meet with your EM-bound students in January of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year for an initial boot camp
- Meet with your students 1:1 and create dashboards with their data (February/March of third year)
- Go over their whole application (Who are they?, Step 1 score, couples matching, military, IMG, red flags, etc.) and determine whether they need to do more than 1 away
- Try to match students to programs where you think that will succeed
  - We all read each other's letters... don't send your super meek and quiet student to the rough, county program
- Have students apply to a diversity of programs

# If all else fails...

- Email your colleagues
  - If I am emailing you it is usually because I have a student with NO away rotation
- If your rotation is closed/full, please indicate so on VSLO – this will save you from a lot of emails
- In truly dire situations (late, amazing applicant who we all want in EM) you can post on the CDEM list serve
  - For obvious reasons this cannot be used for the vast majority of applicants
- In years past a list was kept of programs who “still had spots” available
  - A modifiable document that we collectively keep so that students still searching for a spot can find one without spending a ton of \$ on VSLO + many futile emails within our own network.