ATTENDING

STUDENTS AT THE TABLE

Serving on the University of Pittsburgh Med School Admissions Committee is no small matter.

By Em Demarco

By the Numbers

- Committee Members = 30 Faculty, 15 Students
- Applications to Pitt Med = ~6,000/year, ~750 invited to interview
- Matriculants = ~150

How They Rank

-Ranking meetings are held between September and January (quorum = 13 attending).

-If the students can't be there because of a holiday break, the meetings are not held.

-Before the meetings, members must review candidates' applications and tentatively rank each candidate.

-If a member doesn't show up to the meeting to discuss the candidates, that member's ranks are discarded.

The committee's work is far from a numbers game, as student members serving on the committee explained...

*Privacy is paramount for students, as well as others on the committee. Rather than reveal the identities of students on the committee, we show the remarks of:

Student #1: Like this...

Student #2: Like this.
"When you're applying, I bet you thing that there's a magic formula." 

"Not only do they look at MCAT scores and your grades, but they also look at you as a person, as a leader, and your involvement in medicine in general."

"This is a very research-heavy school... If you don't like research, then this probably isn't the place for you." 

"I look at their personal statement to see what the drive is to be a physician." 

"You're not seeing a lot of patients in the first two years... Coming into it you need to know when you want to be a doctor. Or else it's going to make reality very hard." 

"It's a responsibility. This can affect somebody's chances of becoming a physician... at least at this medical school." 

During interview days... 

"Some red flags the committee looks for:"

- I can't make it? 
- Why do you want to become a doctor? 
- What do you see as the incredible change medicine school needs here?"

"Wow... have you seen the incredible change medicine school needs here?"

Candidates are evaluated all day - including how they work with others in a team. 

"During the meetings, each member can highlight aspects of a candidate's history, background, or personality that may not be apparent to others..." 

"Diversity on the committee is very important. You want to make sure that there are people on the committee who understand these applicants... and make sure that the other applicants..." 

"If you realize what makes you different, then you will be better at sharing that with the class... bettering us as a whole, because we're learning from each other."