**Please use the space to explain why you believe you should be considered a disadvantaged applicant by your designated medical schools. \* (1325 word limit)**

1. **Social:** Being treated differently due to ethnicity, language, religion or sexual orientation.
2. **Economic:** Receiving any form of government aid or growing up in a single parent household on one income that is below the poverty threshold.
3. **Educational:** Overcoming a learning disability or attending low performing public schools.

Throughout my childhood and much of my life, I had to overcome multiple faucets of adversity as a first-generation Hispanic male born to hard-working Mexican immigrant parents. I am the oldest of three brothers raised by a single mother. Both of my parents stopped attending school at an early age to work on the farm. When my mom was 5-6 months pregnant with me, she and my dad immigrated to the United States. My parents faced language, educational, employment, housing barriers and lacked access to medical services as they raised me and later separated.

We lived in a ranch trailer in rural Malibu, CA where my dad worked as a ranch hand. At birth I was underweight and malnourished, and the nearest hospital was over an hour away. Our trailer did not have running water, electricity or proper insulation. Mice and rats made their home in our house. The living room floor had a large hole that was never properly sealed and our house had a draft come   
 My parents often struggled to get by and the nearest hospital was over an hour away. At birth I was underweight and malnourished.

I attended kindergarten in Malibu as one the few Mexican students in the entire school. I struggled to learn English, so I was placed in English as a second language classes (ESL). Through the act of a kind stranger, my mom was able to afford “Ingles Sin Barerras” (English without barriers) tape cassettes. At home I read books by candlelight and required glasses but my mother could not afford glasses for a few years. My mom was not informed that we qualified for government aid programs until much later.

As I grew older my mom’s marital position with my father worsened. My father was an abusive man who beat both my mom and I regularly. My father was addicted to alcohol and cigarettes and I would often hear them arguing. My father did not believe in education and clashed heads with my mother who wanted me to get an education. One day following an extremely violent fight, I intervened getting stuck but managing to get them stop. Afterward, my mother told my father to leave and never return. I grew up without a father figure by 5th grade.

My mom and her extended family where able to buy a home in 2005. Entering middle school, I started cutting neighbors lawns to make money to pay the mortgage. During this time my three younger brothers were born. My mom gave birth to my three brothers, she had to work multiple jobs to afford the mortgage. The responsibility to raise my siblings fell on me as the oldest child, from the 6th grade and onward my brothers and I were often abandoned for great lengths of time during which I provided sibling care, emotional support, and financial support.

My grades suffered in school, and I felt that I was denied a healthy safe home environment to properly develop and grow as a young child and was pushed to mature very quickly to perform roles primarily accustomed for adults.

in doing so my mother had neglected and psychologically abused us.

The constant struggle was further stained when my youngest brother Jerry was born with an undiagnosed medical condition. Because of my experiences in speaking English, I would function as the translator for my mom. By Jerry’s 5th birthday his condition had worsened to include fluid buildup in his legs, and his skin became a jaundiced yellow. The doctors lacked resources to definitively diagnose my brother, so we requested a second opinion at UCLA.

Once I graduated high school in 2008, my parents wanted me to take over the family business and become a general contractor since I was a legal citizen. I disagreed which lead to an argument because I wished to join the military. Secretly I enlisted in the military to get away from my parents and try something new, subsequently lost their home in 2008 and our family began to faced homelessness as we frequently moved or were evicted from one location to another.   
  
  
Despite these challenges I learned how to persevere in the face of adversity.