



Jennifer Arcand

My name is Jennifer Arcand. I was born and grew up in Prescott Ontario, a small town of approximately 5000 people on the St. Lawrence river. I lived there for 19 years with my parents, brother and grandmother. My family still lives there in the same house I grew up in. I went to elementary school in Prescott, St. Mark's Catholic School and St. Joseph's Catholic School. I attended high school in Brockville at St. Mary's Catholic High School, where I graduated after completing my OAC with honors in June of 2002.

I had many different aspirations of what I wanted to be when I grew up, including an artist and veterinarian. I volunteered with a local physiotherapist in Prescott towards the end of my high school education and really took a liking to it. I enjoyed being able to help people in working through an injury or disability and assist them in achieving their personal goals for their health and quality of life. I also really enjoyed the working environment, where I could interact with people on a weekly to daily basis and develop relationships with them. I was keenly interested in the human body and its physiology and working here allowed me to learn more about the physical functioning of the human body, and how intricate and complex the systems in our body are.

I decided to apply to Kinesiology, which I did at McMaster University in Hamilton from 2002-2006, so that I could further pursue this interest, with an original goal of pursuing a career in physiotherapy. At McMaster I volunteered at the McMaster sports injury clinic and at a rehabilitation program for people with spinal cord injuries. This program had 2 components called Mac Wheelers Spinal Cord Rehabilitation Program and Body-weight Supported treadmill training (BWSTT) program, both of which I was involved in. I started out as a volunteer and fell in love with it. I ended up becoming an

exercise supervisor and then the program co-coordinator with one of my fellow students. This program developed out of a research project and was maintained as a non-profit program for those affected by spinal cord injuries. It was a program that was supervised by Dr. Audrey Hicks and consisted of mainly student volunteers at McMaster that assisted with supervised exercise programs for those with spinal cord injury to help improve their functional status and their quality of life. The BWSTT program was a system with a parachute harness supported by an overhead pulley system for partial unloading of body-weight that allows the person to walk with assisted or unassisted leg movements. This was a really exciting and an extremely rewarding program to work for as the effects from these two programs had a significant impact on both the physical and psychological well-being of the participants involved. It was also extremely humbling and inspiring to work with these individuals who had been through an extremely challenging life-altering injury. They were all very strong, motivated and wonderful people and they are ultimately responsible for my decision to pursue medicine. Working in this program helped me to realize that I wanted to not only be involved in their physical rehabilitation, which is extremely important, but also the many other aspects of their health. I wanted to be able to help them work through their medical issues and their personal struggles that they dealt with everyday. I also wished I could have been involved earlier on in their healthcare, to start working with them from the very beginning of their injury. This aspect of their health and care was missing for me with physiotherapy and I was struggling with career goals. I spoke with one of my professors and a mentor, Dr. McCartney and he suggested I pursue medicine, which was the fantastic decision and one I am extremely grateful I was able to make.

I wrote my MCATS in summer 2005 and applied to medical school in the fall of 2005. I graduated from McMaster on the Dean's Honor List with an Honors Bachelor of Kinesiology in April 2006, with a University Senate Scholarship and a Kinesiology award. In June 2006, I received the very exciting news I had been accepted into the University of Ottawa medical school.

During my medical training there was no one field that truly captivated me more than the other and I found that I was really interested in more of a general medicine versus a specialized field. As medical students, we also had the opportunity to work with a rural family doctor for a week to experience what small community medicine is like. I instantly loved it and began to think that this was where my career was taking me. After completing the first two years of medical school and about midway through my clerkship I was certain family medicine was for me. I knew that I wanted to do general medicine and I also knew that this was the only field where I would have continuity of care with all of my patients. This was extremely important to me, as I often left wondering what happened to patients after I would see them in consult or in the ER or on a particular service. I really wanted to get be part of their entire care and be the primary provider for my patients. Thus, I applied to family medicine and was accepted to the University of Ottawa in April 2010. I also knew at this point that rural family medicine was what I would be pursuing, so after getting accepted I applied to the rural communities to do my family medicine training in. I wanted to work rurally as growing up in a small community; I missed the closeness you feel with your other community members that you don't get in a large city. During my various rural rotations, I also felt that there was more collegiality between not only the physicians in the community, but also the other health care workers, such as the nurses, the physiotherapists and the pharmacists. I just knew working in a small town was a much better fit for my personality and work style. I was excited to hear that Renfrew was taking residents and eagerly accepted the chance to

do my training there. I was set up with Dr. Steve Radke as my preceptor and was extremely lucky to start out my residency working out in Renfrew. The clinic I am working in is fantastic, with a great team of doctors. The hospital is great and a wonderful environment to work in. I also thought that the hospice was quite an extraordinary place and was pleasantly surprised to hear that it was a community initiative that was the result in its development. I knew only a month into working here that this was the type of community I wanted to live and work in.

Throughout my medical training I was nominated for 2 awards of Outstanding Clinical Performance in Family Medicine and Psychiatry. I was a volunteer and then a co-coordinator for a Street Health Awareness and Outreach group in my first 2 years of medical school. This program helped to develop awareness of the street-involved community issues and resources, the clinical skills needed to address these issues and the challenges that physicians face in addressing them. I was also a member of Daffodil Alliance and the Northern Rural Medicine Interest Group, in which I got my first experience in Renfrew working in the ER. I was also a volunteer for the Mini Medical School, an Orientation Week leader for year 1 medical students, a member of the Graduation Committee, and part of the Admission Interview Committee for incoming medical school applicants. I volunteered with the Elizabeth-Bruyere SCO Health Service, providing companionship for those in long term care.

I completed a research project in my fourth year titled "*The use of Body-Weight Supported Treadmill Training as a method to improve physical and psychological well-being in an individual with Multiple Sclerosis: A Case-Study.*" It was a self-directed, self-motivated fourth year research project investigating how treadmill training with body-weight support would affect an individual with primary progressive MS who had been wheelchair bound for more than 5 years. Positive results were found for both physical and psychological functioning. The abstract was published in the Journal of Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism in 2006 and was presented at the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology Conference.

My hobbies include mainly outdoor activities, such as jogging, rollerblading, and skiing. I like to be with my friends and family. I enjoy going out for dinner and just relaxing with a good book or watching a good movie. I am an avid traveler and have been to Europe, Southeast Asia, Peru, Nicaragua and Portugal. I have yet to plan my next destination.