

Samantha Cooper
DO class of 2025
Reading for 2022 Celebration of Remembrance

I wish I could express the significance of what your donation means to me and my fellow peers. I have held your heart in my hand, but I do not know for whom it once beat for. I have held your brain, but I do not know the memories within the folds. To learn about the hands that could have held your first child, the feet that helped you take your first steps, and the body that has carried through your life. I have seen every bone, muscle, organ, nerve, artery, and vein that makes you, you; and as you taught me every name of every part of you, your own name was a mystery. I often wondered about your families, your history, the love you gave, and though these thoughts flooded my mind I realized your donation itself encompasses the life you lived. You have allowed me the privilege of knowing the home you inhabited in your time on Earth, to understand humanity on a level that very few are honored to see. Even in your death you have shown me one of lives most valuable lessons, the act of selflessness. The gift you have bestowed upon me enables me to make change in your honor, so that one day when my patients call upon me I can use the knowledge granted by you to understand their needs. You have shown me that although we are all unique, even anatomically at times, we have a shared human experience.

It is an act of faith to put your wellbeing in the hands of a relative stranger. It is an act carried out often in the world of medicine. Patients put their trust, faith, and confidence in doctors with the expectation that they will be treated carefully, kindly, and perhaps most important of all, masterfully. The care and kindness that my peers and educators I have seen firsthand. These are central skills that have been developed throughout our lives and are core to how we approach our work. However, the functional ability to practice medicine is developed here now, as medical students. This development is made possible only by the generosity of your loved one.

You have not only shown me the wonders of what makes us all uniquely human anatomically, but how compassion and love continue far beyond when death calls for us. From your act of selflessness, it has opened new doors, specifically for me, with a love of anatomy that I never thought I would have. I do not know how I could ever repay such an immense gift, but I thank you for all you have done for me and my peers, and hope that I can carry on the lessons of the beautiful life you lived.