

JOHN LEE HOOKER

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Personal Statement

As a teenager with crooked, misaligned teeth, I rarely smiled and constantly avoided cameras because I was self-conscious about my self-perceived awkward smile and protruding “fangs.” Like many adolescents, I was able to directly observe and experience the profound effects an orthodontist can have in improving an individual’s confidence, appearance, and entire disposition. However, unlike most kids my age, this life-changing experience sparked an interest that would later influence my career goals. My orthodontist, Dr. Muddy Waters, truly conveyed a love for his work. He strongly encouraged me to explore my curiosity in orthodontics and introduced me to a field that skillfully combines art and science to achieve the remarkable equivalent of human craniofacial sculpture.

As a fourth year dental student at the University of California, San Francisco School of Dentistry, I have had the privilege of attending an outstanding dental education program, particularly in research and academics. Under the direction of Dr. Otis Slim, I have had the great opportunity to develop, conduct, and present research in *Area of Research Here*, a method of *Describe Nature of Research Here*. I have presented this research on several occasions, including the International Association of Dental Research conference in Germany and the Conference on Orthodontic Advances in Science and Technology in California. My research at UCSF will culminate with the publication of a *Area of Research Here* paper. Also a three year member of the orthodontic journal club, I have presented and discussed many landmark orthodontic journal articles and learned the basics of bracket placement, cephalometric tracing, arch length analysis, and impression taking. These experiences have not only furthered my interest in clinical research, but also directed my desired career path toward an involvement in academics upon completion of my postdoctoral education.

I have always loved being a student and learning how to use my own problem solving abilities to resolve dilemmas. My long term-goals in the field of dentofacial orthopedics are to work in a university setting, where I will be a career student, constantly expanding my knowledge and challenging my mind. I see my future self transitioning from part-time to full-time faculty, and taking on academic, research, and administrative responsibilities. Abstract and creative thinking, adept logical reasoning ability, and strong interpersonal communication skills are among my strongest attributes. In time, I trust these qualities will enable me to make valuable contributions to the dental community as a clinician, a researcher, and an educator.

My interest and experience in working with children and disabled individuals together with my valuable dental school experience has allowed me to develop the compassion and commitment necessary to work well with patients and colleagues. I feel that I have obtained the necessary interpersonal skills, technical knowledge, and devotion that will help me thrive as an orthodontist and an educator. I sincerely appreciate your consideration of me as a potential member of your program.