Valentina Castillo - TMDSAS application and Baylor College of Medicine supplemental

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Applying to: Baylor College of Medicine MD program, 2026-27

Fictional applicant written for this sample. The person, her employers, her clinic and her student organizations are invented.

Education and tests

- **Texas A&M University**, College Station - BS Biomedical Sciences, May 2022. GPA 3.58 (science 3.49). Dean's List three semesters.
- **Laredo College**, dual credit, 2017-2018 (12 hours).
- Lowest grade: D in Organic Chemistry I (fall 2019). Retook spring 2020: B+. Organic Chemistry II: A-.
- **MCAT**: June 2024, 501. April 2025, 511 (CPBS 127, CARS 128, BBFL 128, PSBB 128).
- Languages: Spanish (native, medical interpreting), English (native).

Employment

1. **Clinical Research Coordinator**, Bayou Renal Research Partners, Houston (Aug 2024 - present, 40 hrs/week, ~4,400 hours). Coordinate a 14-site study testing whether two-way text reminders and a rides hotline reduce missed hemodialysis sessions. I consent patients in English and Spanish at four clinics, collect attendance data, and run the weekly missed-session report. 212 of our 480 enrolled patients are mine.
2. **Emergency Department Scribe**, Lone Star Scribe Services (Jun 2022 - Jul 2024, ~3,100 hours). Night shifts in a community hospital ED in Bryan, then Houston. Documented for 9 physicians and 4 physician assistants. Trained 11 new scribes in 2023.
3. **Server**, La Paloma Café, College Station (Aug 2019 - May 2022, 15 hrs/week, ~1,500 hours).

Activities

- **Spanish interpreter (volunteer)**, Clínica Esperanza Libre, Houston (Mar 2023 - present, 260 hours). Saturday clinic for uninsured adults, mostly diabetes and hypertension visits.
- **Volunteer swim coach**, Laredo Adaptive Swim Club (summers 2018 - 2022, 2025, 210 hours). Coached children with Down syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy; my cousin Mateo, who has Down syndrome, swims with the club.
- **Vice president, then president**, Aggie Health Literacy Project (Aug 2020 - May 2022, 340 hours). Ran blood pressure and "read your prescription label" workshops at Brazos County food pantries.

- **Physician shadowing** (2021 - 2024, 84 hours): family medicine, Laredo (40); nephrology and dialysis rounds, Houston (24); pediatric hospital medicine (20).
- **Hobbies**: distance running (Houston Half Marathon, January 2026, 2:04:51); cooking my grandmother's caldo de res for roommates on Sundays.

Honors

- Dean's List, Texas A&M (fall 2020, spring 2021, spring 2022)
- Coordinator of the Quarter, Bayou Renal Research Partners (Q2 2025)

Most meaningful experiences

1. **Research coordinator, dialysis attendance study.** I learned that "noncompliant" usually means "no ride" or "night shift." One patient missed 11 sessions in a month because his bus route changed. Getting him enrolled in the rides hotline took four phone calls and a printed map. He missed one session the next month.
2. **ED scribe.** Two years of watching decisions made at 3 a.m. taught me medical vocabulary and showed me the job without the glamour: physicians and PAs splitting patients, the hour of charting after every shift, and a wait room that never emptied.
3. **Adaptive swim coach.** Teaching Mateo and his teammates to float taught me patience, and to stop deciding for a child what he can't do.

Personal statement

My grandfather, Ramiro, did hemodialysis in Laredo three mornings a week for six years. In high school I drove him on Saturdays, sat in the waiting room doing chemistry homework, and learned the names of the technicians. I knew he hated the chair. I didn't know, until a nurse told me, that he sometimes skipped Wednesdays when my uncle couldn't drive him, and that each missed session was hurting his heart.

I arrived at Texas A&M sure I wanted medicine and then got a D in organic chemistry. I was working 15 hours a week at a café and studying the way I had in high school, by rereading. I retook the class with a study group, office hours every week and practice problems instead of notes, and earned a B+. It was the first time I had to rebuild how I learn instead of just working harder.

After graduation I became an ED scribe. One night a man came in short of breath, his potassium dangerously high. He had missed two dialysis sessions. The physician, Dr. Okonkwo, stabilized him, then asked me to find out why he missed. His answer: his daughter's car broke down and he couldn't afford a cab. Dr. Okonkwo said, "That's the diagnosis we can't treat here." I thought about my grandfather's Wednesdays. That night confirmed for me that I wanted to be the doctor in the room and also wanted to work on the problem outside it.

I took a research coordinator job on a study asking whether text reminders and a rides hotline reduce missed dialysis. I have consented more than 200 patients, many in Spanish, and I have learned what a study can measure and what it can't: the patient who stopped answering texts because her phone was

cut off, the man who comes every time but is quietly depressed. My first MCAT, 501, came during my first months in this job, when I studied on weekends without a plan. I retook it with a schedule and a 511.

I want to practice internal medicine, possibly nephrology, back on the border, where kidney disease and diabetes run through my own family. I want to be a physician who knows both potassium levels and bus routes.

Baylor supplemental

Why are you interested in Baylor College of Medicine?

I have spent two years consenting dialysis patients across Houston, including at clinics that serve Harris Health patients, and I want to train where those patients are cared for. Baylor's work in public hospitals like Ben Taub would put me with the uninsured and Spanish-speaking patients I already know. I am interested in the health policy pathway, because the rides hotline in our study exists only because a grant pays for it. I also want a shorter preclinical phase that gets me onto wards early; I learn by doing, as organic chemistry taught me.

Describe how you plan to spend your time between now and matriculation.

I will keep working full time as a research coordinator through June 2027, when enrollment closes, and help prepare the first attendance analysis. I will continue interpreting at Clínica Esperanza Libre on Saturdays and coach swimming in Laredo for two weeks next summer.

Is there anything else you would like the committee to know?

My academic record is uneven: a D in organic chemistry and a first MCAT of 501. Both times I changed how I prepared rather than just adding hours, and both times my results improved. I would rather show the committee that pattern than hide the first attempt.