

Dr. Lutherer Scholarship Committee,

Hello, my name is Brandon Couch. I'm a third year medical student and the 2023 awardee of the Dr. Lorenz O. Lutherer Clinical Research Award. First and foremost, I would like to tell you how thankful I am for this generous scholarship. As everyone is aware, medical school and the cost of living have continued to rise in the recent years making living off of student loans very difficult and stressful. This scholarship helps alleviate some of that burden.

I would also like to mention how the Clinical Research Institute, CRI, has positively impacted my research. When I first started my project, *Improvement of Cell Viability in Temporary Storage of Split Thickness Skin Grafts*, I had many questions regarding how to actually begin a complicated operating room to lab research project that used human tissue samples. The CRI helped me with all of those questions. They helped me edit my proposal to receive IRB approval; a process that took far longer than I had originally imagined. I needed help obtaining patient consent, procuring specimens, educating OR personnel about the project, and getting supplies. The CRI helped me with each of those steps and many more. This exceeded my expectations, and, for that, I am grateful.

Ultimately, I am glad I chose to do medical school at TTUHSC School of Medicine. My time here has been well spent with good people and excellent opportunities. I have been able to pursue research in all the fields I have tried to, and I have had exposure to first-hand learning in all the specialties I have considered.

Thank you,



Brandon Couch

