

On behalf of the physical therapy program I would like to express our most heartfelt gratitude for all that your loved ones gave us. The educational experience the donors allowed us to have is unmatched and irreplaceable. There is no textbook, no CD-Rom, no model that could ever teach with the depth that our donors taught us. Not only do we as students benefit, but so will the thousands of patients we will see over the course of our careers.

Working with each donor showed us the anatomical similarities between us all that make us human. At the same time, we were able to observe subtle differences between each person that makes us the individuals we are. When we work with our patients we will remember these distinct characteristics each one of us holds, and make sure to treat each person as someone who brings with him or her unique features and experiences. Without all of our donors, we could not have been able to see and understand this so well.

Although we learned from all the donors, each student was able to work particularly close with one donor. Each donor had a small group of students who were responsible for caring for them throughout the semester. In our small groups we spent mornings, afternoons, and late evenings with that donor. We put pride and care into work with this individual, and we came to know him or her in a way that no others ever could. We developed a deep respect and a connection to this person. For me, it was a strange feeling to spend so much time with this person and not be able to know his name, personality, or life stories. During lab I would sometimes wonder what he did for fun, what his job was, and what his family was like. But I did know some things about him. He was generous, he cared about humanity, he valued education, and he was able to make an impact on society.

Each night after we finished our work together, we'd say goodnight to him and get him ready for the next day, as if we were tucking him into his bed. The last time I said goodbye I felt sad, but also so fortunate that I had the opportunity to spend this time with him, learning all that he had to teach us. I want to thank him, and all the donors for what they gave. I'd also like to thank the families and friends who are here today for supporting your loved ones with the significant and noble decision they made.