MELANIE LOGAN

Dear Donors,

When I started on this journey of learning medicine and preparing to be a clinician, I had little idea of what was to come. I was eager, albeit nervous to learn the basic sciences that would provide the foundation for clinical medicine and physical diagnosis. I knew anatomy was a critical part of this. My mother is a physician and before starting school she told me how influential and impactful her donor was on her education - recalling fond memories with classmates learning the intricacies of the human body in gross anatomy some 30 years ago. To be completely honest, I was terrified to walk into my first anatomy lab. Putting on scrubs perhaps made me look the part, but I had no idea what I was doing and more significantly how I would feel. Nine months later as we finish up our anatomy curriculum for year 1, I look back with wholehearted gratitude.

Medicine is now more than ever evolving and changing. As new research and technology is constantly being developed, once cutting-edge therapies and procedures are being replaced with shiny new innovations. On the contrary, the anatomical structures and functions that comprise the human body are constant, established, enduring. There is beautiful comfort in knowing though every donor embodies a unique human experience, the sameness of the human body provides a cohesive collective experience that unites me and you.

Donating your body to students of medicine is a gift that can never be quantified. Laying our hands on you and tracing the intricate details of the vasculature that helped pump your heart for many years is a privilege we will never be able to express in adequate words. You don’t know us but we know you. You are our first teachers and our first patients. Because of your generosity, we now understand the foundations for clinical medicine, the uniqueness and variability of the human body and the incredible power of a life well lived. There is no textbook that could parallel the lessons you have taught me and my classmates and for that, we are forever grateful. We hope to emulate the same compassion you did at the end of your life with our patients every single day. This world needs more kindness and love and through such a selfless act, you have empowered us to recognize the power of compassion and empathy in our interactions with our future patients.
At the end of life, we all hope to leave our mark on this world. I’m certain you have left your mark on countless family and friends through years of a long wonderful life. Now you have left your mark on us. Legacy is not leaving something for people, but leaving something in them. Thank you for doing just that.