

Andrew Tkach – Serving those who serve our country

My name is Andrew Tkach, and as I sit here in the bustling halls of Ternopil Regional Clinical Hospital, the weight of my responsibility as a surgical intern feels both overwhelming and profoundly meaningful. The rhythmic arrival of evacuation trains, bearing wounded soldiers, has become a somber metronome marking the passage of time in this place of healing.



My journey began with a childhood dream

My journey began with a childhood dream of becoming a firefighter. While life led me down a different path, the core desire to help others remained, finding its expression in medicine. The call to surgery grew stronger with each passing year of medical school, despite the daunting challenges it presented.

The financial hurdle seemed insurmountable at first, but through the generosity of the **HART Education Scholarship fund**, I was able to pursue my calling. Now, as I stand in these hospital corridors, I feel a deep sense of gratitude and purpose. **Every incision I make, every wound I treat, is an investment of the faith you placed in me.**

As I reflect on the past five years at Ternopil Medical University

As I reflect on the past five years at Ternopil Medical University, a wave of emotions washes over me. The journey has been both challenging and rewarding, filled with moments of triumph and self-discovery.

From the very beginning, I felt a deep connection to the medical field. It wasn't just about memorizing facts or passing exams; it was a calling that resonated within my soul. With each lecture, each practical session, I found myself more engrossed in the intricacies of the human body and the art of healing.

My passion drove me to seek out additional learning opportunities. I remember the first time I witnessed a surgery - the tension in the air, the precision of the surgeon's movements, and the miraculous transformation taking place before my eyes. These experiences only fueled my desire to excel and confirmed that I had chosen the right path.

Local church became my sanctuary

While medicine consumed much of my time, I refused to let it define my entire existence. My faith remained a cornerstone of my life, even when it meant traveling over a hundred kilometers to serve in my home church. This dedication to both my studies and my spiritual life taught me the importance of balance and time management.

The local church in Ternopil became my sanctuary when I couldn't make it home. It provided a sense of community amidst the whirlwind of medical school. My involvement with the Christian theater studio "Sporeas" allowed me to explore my artistic side. Acting became an outlet for expression, a way to connect with others, and share meaningful stories. The tours to other churches were not just performances; they were opportunities to touch lives and spread joy.

Military service

When the topic of military service arose, I didn't hesitate. The idea of serving as a military doctor felt like a natural extension of my calling. It was a chance to use my skills where they were needed most, to make a difference in the lives of those who sacrifice so much for our country.

As I look to the future, I'm filled with hope and determination. The path ahead may be challenging, but I know that with my passion for medicine, my faith, and my diverse experiences, I'm ready to face whatever comes my way.



Treating soldiers is a unique challenge

Treating soldiers is a unique challenge that tests both skill and spirit. Each case is a stark reminder of the brutality of war, yet also a testament to human resilience. The commonplace nature of explosions for these brave men and women is a jarring contrast to the gravity with which we approach each wound and lost limb. In these moments of struggle, I've come to recognize a profound truth: our efforts as medical professionals are bolstered by something greater than ourselves. The power of prayer and support is palpable, providing strength when our own reserves run low.

Lessons learned

One patient left an indelible mark on my heart. A soldier who lost three limbs. Although the explosion was devastating, resulting in the loss of both his legs above the knee and his left arm below the elbow, he maintained an unwavering positivity that defied comprehension. He underwent countless surgeries, but his ability to joke and smile, surrounded by the love of his family, was a masterclass in resilience. My own complaints about long hours and paperwork seem trivial in comparison.

Another case stands out – a left-handed soldier whose right forearm hung in the balance. The decision between saving part of the forearm or amputating to the shoulder weighed heavily on our team. Through a combination of skill, determination, and what I can only describe as divine intervention, we managed to save 4.2 cm of his forearm, just enough for future prosthetics.

These experiences have taught me that while our medical knowledge and skills are crucial, there are times when something more is needed. In those moments when human effort reaches its limit, faith and prayer can bridge the gap, leading to outcomes that seem miraculous.

I receive far more than I give

As I continue my journey as a surgical intern in these challenging times, I am humbled by the strength of the human spirit I witness daily. The soldiers I treat are not just patients; they are heroes who inspire me to push beyond my limits, to give more of myself in service to others.

In the end, I may not be able to miraculously heal or replace what these brave men and women have lost, but I can offer my skills, my time, and my compassion. And in doing so, I find that I receive far more than I give – lessons in courage, gratitude, and the indomitable human spirit that will shape not just my career, but my entire life.



From Scholarship to Service

My journey has revealed the profound impact of psychological support, motivating me to become a compassionate professional dedicated to helping others. I am deeply grateful for the HART Mission Scholarship Program and all those who have supported me along the way. Your generosity has instilled hope and created cherished memories.

As I look to the future, I am committed to pursuing a career that enables me to serve my country effectively. With God's guidance I am confident in my ability to achieve my aspirations and make a positive contribution to society.

I especially want to thank the entire HART Education Scholarship team. Your efforts have transformed our lives, opening doors to opportunities we once thought were unattainable. May God bless you abundantly for your kindness and compassion.

Note: Andrew has been serving his country at the front lines of the war for the past six months.

Andrew's story is not just his own

Andrew's story is not just his own. It is **our** story—the story of what happens when people in Canada and the U.S. choose to give, pray, and partner with HART. It's a reminder that every dollar given to HART's Education Fund is not just financial aid—it's a spark of destiny, a doorway to purpose, and a legacy of hope.

To every donor who supports HART: You are not just funding scholarships. You are raising up future heroes—men and women like Andriy—who are rebuilding Ukraine with hands of healing and hearts of faith.

Because you believed, Andrew is now living his calling. Because you gave, lives are being saved.
Because of your faithfulness, God is glorified.

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