I, Meng-Leo Chou, am a Taiwanese first-year resident in the Department of Neurology, National Cheng-Kung University Hospital. Chinese is my mother tongue, but I am fluent in English and Japanese. I enjoy travelling aboard by myself many times during my leisure time. My families and friends regard me as a passionate, broad-minded, and outspoken person.

The first experience of generalized tonic-clonic seizure happened to me while I was studying in senior high school. I received the diagnosis of epilepsy before long. From then on, I kept fighting with the fear it brought to me. The inherent uncertainty of epilepsy told by my attending doctor, sounded like a nightmare which would come at any time, had haunted me for years. However, not only the disease itself but also the issue it brought about had bothered me. For instance, at the beginning, I hesitated to tell my close friends what had occurred in my body because I was so afraid of breaking our relationship. Though eventually it turned out that almost none of my friends was the one who would tease epilepsy patient, the anxious feeling still dwells in my memory nowadays. I have ever considered having this disease is extremely “unfair,” since it continued to disturb my daily lives and shut the doors on established plans. Not until years later did I become capable of coping with negative thoughts and embracing a positive attitude. Now, I have learned how to focus on what I can manage and to utilize what I have to solve problems I face.

I think the way to becoming a doctor indeed had a significant impact on how I looked upon the disease. “Before becoming a doctor, become a man.” was what the Chair of Department of Medicine told us on the first day we entered the field of medicine. What about be a patient while being a doctor? The “dual identity” makes this people-oriented profession even more introspective and challenging. After years of clinical work engagement, I decided to commit myself to study epilepsy and I entered one of the best Department of Neurology in Taiwan. Whatever lead to this astonishing coincidence, I am really thankful to view the disease accompanying me for more than a decade from another point of view. Furthermore, I plan to participate in campaigns to secure the right of people with epilepsy, and I firmly believed that my career of a clinical physician was extremely helpful since I will have many opportunities of contact to persons with epilepsy of various background. I can learn a lot of their needs then applied them to further works. I, being a doctor as well as a patient, am confidence in acting as a bridge between the government, the society, the family and the people with epilepsy.

I have led a group of teenagers and young adults with epilepsy successfully to accomplish an innovative conference entitled “Taiwan Youth Epilepsy Summit” on 2020-11-21 in Tainan. The group was composed nationwide six outstanding youths and young adults with epilepsy. On behalf of persons with epilepsy we presented the needs of us. Following the conception of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the organizer invited experts of epilepsy in Taiwan, government officials at Tainan, and persons with epilepsy as well as their families to attend the conference. We aimed to disclose the obstacles we encountered in the society and propose feasible solutions. I led the planning and rehearsals before the conference. At the conference I firstly gave a speech on how can we achieve justice by policies in Taiwan. The conference has eventually aroused strong repercussions among the participants and the responses in the Facebook of Tainan Epilepsy Association which was absolutely encouraging to us.

I believed my personal life experiences so far including how I surmount the challenges can be helpful for other people with epilepsy. I would love to dedicate myself to take action regarding our rights as well as the social education of epilepsy, and I will leave no stone unturned.