

Teaching medical students? Who me??

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Do you remember learning to ride a bicycle? You were, what, 4,5, 6 years old. Did you just jump on that bike and go roaring away? If you are like me, the answer is no, you did not. Somebody had to teach me how to ride a bike. Somebody had to put training wheels on the bike so I could get the hang of it. When I was ready, somebody had to take those training wheels off and run along next to me when I really did try to go roaring away.

Teaching. Despite all the technology today, teaching, with real patients in the clinical setting, is still at the heart of professional medical education (1). As physicians, we all remember listening to that first lub dup, lub dup, lub dup. We remember listening to rhonchi, rales & wheezing. We remember feeling that massively enlarged, rock hard edge of a liver 8 centimeters below the right costal margin.

Was it magic? No, it was clinical medicine. Somebody taught us how to listen to the heart, to recognize rales, rhonchi, and wheezing. Somebody taught us how to feel that rock hard liver.

Could that “somebody” be you?

In her article entitled “The Joy of Teaching Medical Students” (2-3), Dr. Marlana Li describes common themes about why physicians teach:

- Making a difference in a student’s life
- Deriving joys from watching a student “get it”
- “Paying it forward” and emulating a great teacher / mentor
- Enjoying life-long learning and staying sharp; it is a professional development journey
- Empowering students to reach their full potential, watching them grow and, in the process, growing oneself.

Physician preceptors at the University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine are a dedicated team and our students have noticed. For example, our students note:

“Doctor Abouzahr is a unique physician, the kind you only meet once in a lifetime.”

“Doctor Abouzahr is a unique physician, the kind you only meet once in a lifetime. He is a physician who is purely honest to his patients and motivates them to take ownership of their own health. Doctor Abuzar does not only manage patients medically, but he offers emotional and social support. Not jaded by medicine, he is one of the happiest doctors I have met. But what I admire most is that he is true to

himself and inspires me to do the same. He taught me that overall, although we may be surrounded by sickness and death, we can find peace and give hope to others.”

“Doctor Soni is so energetic and joyful.”

“Doctor Soni is so energetic and joyful. She is always willing to help each student, so kind and not afraid to engage them in learning even if they do not volunteer. She is such a great teacher, very inquisitive. And I always look forward to working on a side. Every chance I got.”

“Doctor Doski's passion for patient care, medicine and medical education is remarkable.”

“Doctor Doski's passion for patient care, medicine and medical education is remarkable. Although he has so many roles at the hospital and is quite the busy man, he always found time to share his passion and knowledge with us. He was very non-threatening and did a wonderful job engaging with us throughout the rotation. At times he would challenge us, which aided in our growth as learners. Watching Dr. Doski perform surgery was hugely enjoyable. He is so amazing at what he does. We are fortunate to have Dr. Doski as a preceptor.”

Dr. Li writes, I have heard countless stories of how preceptors inspired students to go into family medicine, or at least help them better understand the field and develop skills they will use in other specialties (2-3).

Could that somebody be you?

Rather than sit on the sideline, accept the challenge, and discover the joy of teaching. You, the daily practicing clinician, are in a unique position to improve the future of healthcare by inspiring the next generation of physicians, patient advocates, political activists, and leaders. The University of the Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine invites you to join us.

Could that somebody be you? Doctor of Osteopathic program at the University of Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine (UIWSOM) – Online link: [Preceptor Information | Preceptor Resources | University of the Incarnate Word \(uiw.edu\)](#)

References

1. Burgess A, van Diggele C, Roberts C, Mellis C. Key tips for teaching medical students in the clinical setting. BMC Medical Education, 20 (Suppl 2): 463 <https://10.1186/s12090-020-02283-2>. 2020.
2. Li M. The joy of teaching medical students. <https://www.fammedvitalsigns.com>; 2018
3. Schultz K et. Al. Medical students and residents preferred site characteristics and preceptor behaviors for learning in the ambulatory setting: A cross-sectional survey. BMC Med Educ. 2004; 4:12. <https://www.teachingphysician.org/become-a-preceptor/How-Students-Can-Add-Value-to-your-office>.