



Alumni Q & A: Medicine and Marriage

Staci J. Eskesen, M.D. '03, and David L. Hotchkin, M.D. '02, Res. '05, '06, Fel. '07, talk about school, life and being married to a fellow physician.

Where are you from originally?

David: Battle Ground, Wash.

Staci: Puyallup, Wash.

As a first-year student, what excited you about studying at UW Medicine?

Staci: Everything! I was just so excited to be accepted to medical school and to be close to family and friends.

David: Being in medical school and having the opportunity to move back to the Pacific Northwest from Southern California.

What type of medicine do you practice now?

Staci: Family medicine.

David: Pulmonary and critical care medicine.

How did your experience in medical school influence your career path?

David: When I was a third-year student, I did my medicine rotation in Boise, Idaho. I met some amazing faculty while I was there and realized that I wanted to pursue a career in pulmonary medicine rather than general surgery, as I had previously thought. I was given a lot of responsibility as a medical student and felt as though I had really gotten a taste of what it would be like to practice medicine.

Staci: During a four-week rotation in the Rural/Underserved Opportunities Program (R/UOP) in Colstrip, Mont., I learned two important things: that I really enjoyed primary care, and I didn't actually want to live in a town so small that the only restaurants are the bowling alley and the Taco Bell-Pizza Hut combo attached to the gas station. I also did a medicine rotation at the Seattle VA and had an enthusiastic R2 who made medicine exciting even during those long on-call nights. Some days it is important to remember why you chose this path!

What is the best memory you have from being a student at the UW School of Medicine?

David: There are a lot of great memories from medical school: traveling to California with classmates to spend 10 days in a cabin studying for step 1, going to Helena, Mont., for my R/UOP, spending six weeks in Wrangell, Alaska, for my family medicine rotation and — most of all spending time with my friends.

Staci: That's a tough question! I don't know if I have one best memory. Two of my best friendships evolved out of medical school, not to mention my marriage! The most fulfilling part of medicine for me is the relationships I establish with my patients, and medical school was full of those connections — not just with patients, but with fellow students, professors and attendings. The science of medicine is just icing on the cake.

How did the two of you meet?

Staci: David was the teaching assistant for my first-year anatomy class. But we didn't really get to know each other until later, through mutual friends, and that's when we started dating.

What's ideal about being in a relationship with a fellow physician?

David: Probably the best thing about being married to another physician is understanding what your spouse is going through. It can be difficult juggling two busy schedules, but having the common understanding to provide support when your partner has had a bad day goes a long way.

Staci: It's nice to not have to translate everything into layman's terms when you talk about medicine. Additionally, we have been on the same timeline in terms of career and family.

Staci, what are you most looking forward to about your 10th reunion this spring?

Staci: I hope I can make it since David is working that weekend! It would definitely be great to reconnect with classmates from E-99.
