

## FAFP MAY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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Some people know they want to be a doctor or a teacher from a young age. Honestly, becoming a doctor never crossed my mind until I was about to graduate from college. Once I was a Family Medicine resident, I never thought that I would be a teacher of medicine. However, when I reflect on where my career has taken me, I know that I am exactly where I'm supposed to be. I've been practicing primary care Family Medicine for 20 years, I taught family medicine residents for 14 years, and I've been teaching medical students for 17 years. I love all my jobs. When teaching, I often have the opportunity to share my three basic tenets for life as a doctor. The first is that when picking a specialty or a job opportunity, you should love what you do. You shouldn't pick a specialty or job based on money, prestige or your student loan debt, but based on being able to wake up in the morning and look forward to going to work. I love the continuity of care and taking care of generations of families.

After residency, I practiced solo Family Medicine for 11 years before joining a local HMO, Florida Healthcare Plans, 7 years ago. Just today, I saw a patient who I first took care of in the newborn nursery at the hospital. Now, she is almost 20-years-old and just finished her first year of college. I feel so lucky and privileged to have taken care of her and her extended family for the past 20 years. The second tenet is that you never know where your path in life is going to take you, you just have to work hard and follow your heart. As I mentioned earlier, I could never have dreamed that I would be where I am now. I give credit to my faith and religion in trusting that I was on the right path. Having the best of both worlds, I am still practicing primary care while also remaining involved in medical student education. At first, I had third-year medical students from the Florida State University College of Medicine rotating with me on their Family Medicine rotation. Now, as the Family Medicine Education Director for FSU, I am in

charge of the Family Medicine curriculum for the third and fourth-year medical students. I truly enjoy the challenge of developing family medicine education as it evolves with technology, as well as meeting and recruiting future family physicians.

My third tenet is "self-care, self-care, self-care." Balancing the roles of female physician, educator, mother, wife and volunteer is a constant challenge. I learned how to say "no" at times when I was presented with opportunities to advance my career. I had to stop comparing my career to other physicians' careers. I greatly appreciate the wonderful mentors from whom I have been able to seek advice over the years. I would never have gotten to where I am now without the support of my family and friends. I look forward to what lies ahead in my career, while still enjoying practicing primary care and shaping family medicine education for future doctors.