

## FAFP JANUARY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

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Upon graduating residency in 2020, I started with Florida Health Care Plans (FHCP), a health care insurance company in east central Florida with an integrated care model. I transitioned from a resident clinic whose patients had a rotating door of physicians, and I inherited a panel that had been with the same physician for 20-30 years. Initially, I was confused about why my patients wanted their visit to center on questions about me and my motivations to become a physician. Quickly, I realized they were analyzing how my values and beliefs influenced the care they would receive. These interactions reminded me how essential building personal connection is to the healing process. In the words of our mentor Dr. Van Durme, “The patient does not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

While time is one of our most valuable assets as physicians, getting to know my patients personally is as important to me

as understanding their diagnoses. Spending quality time with a patient is sometimes as healing to them as recommending indicated treatment. When patients verbalize their appreciation of this, it reinforces my reason for entering medicine and reenergizes my passions.

Besides outpatient Family Medicine, I provide Addiction Medicine treatment for patients with substance use disorders. I utilize medication assisted therapies with FHCP, and I also work with a telehealth group-based organization for patients with opioid use disorder. Another meaningful part of my practice is my role as a clinical assistant professor with FSU College of Medicine. In addition to teaching students on their assigned clerkships, I appreciate the opportunity to educate all the medical students at the Daytona campus about caring for patients with substance use disorders. Aligned with educating students on this topic, sharing with my colleagues already in practice is stimulating to me profession-

ally. Advocating for compassionate care of this population is fulfilling to me personally. Although the time and energy involved is beyond the normal workday, I am invigorated by contributing to medicine in a variety of ways.

On a personal level, I am nurtured by tending to my garden, cooking, and traveling with friends and family. I especially enjoy edible landscaping and vegetable gardening. I often bond with others over discussion of plants and new recipes. Lately, my travels have centered on visiting our National Parks, where I enjoy hiking. These trips stay with me, as well as the connections with those who travel with me, long after I return home. My love of being outside is always easily reinforced by simply going for a walk or spending time working in my garden. Sometimes the simplest of activities can be the most rewarding to your physical health and emotional well-being.