

Linda Stapleford Bluestein:

As a child, I was initially exposed to the medical profession as a bewildered onlooker as my younger sister was born with numerous congenital heart defects as well as other medical issues. Many hours were spent at hospitals, clinics and in surgery waiting rooms as we eagerly awaited her numerous procedure and test results. Although not fully understanding what was transpiring, I knew I wanted to be one of these individuals dressed in strange blue pajamas. Starting at age five, I also began a lifelong love affair with ballet, even setting up a small studio in my garage for neighborhood children. I danced and performed extensively throughout high school, college and residency. Prior to entering college, I aspired to dance professionally but numerous injuries and surgeries derailed this goal. Fortunately, I had an equally strong passion: to enter the medical profession and embark on a career of helping people.

Although I would never dance professionally, my love of ballet never waned. My undergraduate university (University of California, Irvine) was chosen for its outstanding conservatory style ballet program as well as its excellent Biologic Sciences department. After three years, I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences and was thrilled to be accepted into the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, a renowned clinical and research institution.

Medical school was a remarkable experience, being exposed to both cutting edge research and state of the art treatment paradigms. Choosing a career path was difficult as there were so many specialties that fascinated me. Originally planning to become an orthopedic surgeon specializing in dance medicine, I quickly realized that I might lack the physical strength required to perform some of the surgical procedures and joint manipulations. During medical school, I was quickly drawn to another intriguing specialty: anesthesiology, a field combining

physiology, pharmacology, and a requirement for quick decision making as well as rapid problem solving.

Following medical school, I was fortunate to match for my anesthesiology residency at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. There, I trained and conducted research under some of the most amazing clinicians and researchers in the world. After completing my residency, I have enjoyed an incredibly rewarding career as a physician anesthesiologist.

Now, while on the faculty at the Medical College of Wisconsin, Central Wisconsin I can pursue other passions and career goals: educating the next generation of physicians, conducting research and leading regional health initiatives. I serve as the director of the Medical College of Wisconsin - Central Wisconsin Healer's Art Program and on the Aspirus Physician Wellness Committee. Physician and patient wellness have been areas of great interest for me for many years and I believe play a pivotal role in improving the quality of our current healthcare system.

Also, I am proud to serve as the Medical Consultant to several non-profit organizations, including EDS Awareness, EDS Wisconsin and the local YMCA Adult Older Adults Program. My ambition is to improve the communication and interaction between patients and healthcare providers to optimize care. I am honored to be part of the noble profession of medicine and am excited to be involved in the rapidly evolving field of healthcare.