



Richard A. Damon, MD

City: Bozeman, MT

Date of Graduation from Medical School: 1957

Medical School Graduated From: University of Iowa

Specialty: Family Practice

What factors influenced your decision to become a physician?

A passion to serve in a way that would allow me, under God's guidance, to have awareness and direct contact with the needs of people.

Did you have any mentors or influential people in the course of your medical training or careered who made an impact on you? Yes. Doctor Matt Tinley, my family physician (Council Bluffs, IA), Dr. Hamilton (Embryology / Histology Iowa State College, Ames, IA). Dr. Aldo Alden (Dept. of Anatomy, University of Tennessee, Memphis, Tennessee). Dr. Con Reslock, Waupun, WI.

Did you experience a defining moment that made you feel you had become a physician?

I felt a defining moment, manifested by a feeling of confirmed confidence, in assuming the Commanding Officer post of a fixed military installation for three years in Germany following internship.

What advice would you give to medical students graduating in the class of 2007?

Learn to spend time with learning and knowing your patients. Do not ever forget the caring part of the curing task in medicine.

What regrets, if any, do you have about your medical career? I have no regrets. The challenges were sometimes daunting and frightening. The meaningful rewards were receiving expressions of "thank you" from my patients.

Is there one patient, situation or incident that stands out above all others in your career?

Yes. 5 yo child stepped on by a horse. This resulted in large lacerations of the liver and spleen. There were five tears in the large and small bowel. She had a crushed pancreas torn in half. Our surgical team of three repaired the injuries and actually sutured her pancreas back together. During the procedure we sought consultation from a pediatric surgeon who gave little hope for success. The entire operating room staff and surgeons took a moment of prayer for her. The post-op course was rocky with three surgical drainage procedures for sub-diaphragmatic abscesses and treatment for tetany. She was discharged home after five weeks in the hospital. Her parents and I prayed daily. Her post-op liver and pancreatic chemistries quickly returned to normal. 12 year follow-up with chemistries showed normal results. She went on to graduate from nursing at the University of Wisconsin and worked for ten years or more as an ICU nurse at University Hospitals. She is now happily married with children. I attribute her recovery to God's grace.