

D.O.C.S. CLUB

Discovering Opportunities and Careers for Students in Medicine

MENTOR PHYSICIAN SESSION SUMMARIES

Dr. Roland T. Minami, MD, DDS, FACS

D.O.C.S. Club members had the privilege of meeting with Dr. Roland T. Minami in May for our first official information session with a Mentor Physician. Dr. Minami spent nearly two hours with our group to share his advice and experiences as a leading reconstructive surgeon in the United States. Dr. Minami's presentation included several reconstructive cases that required a series of surgeries to repair. One in particular involved a young lady who was dragged out of her tent by hyenas while camping in Africa. This woman's face was severely mauled and Dr. Minami was contacted to reconstruct it including "creating" a new upper lip (hers was bitten off) from facial tissue. It was amazing to see the end result in which the woman's face was beautifully restored.

Dr. Minami also introduced our group to the work that he and other surgeons perform through Rotoplast, a volunteer effort to repair the cleft lips and palettes of children from impoverished countries throughout the world. The before and after photographs were incredible and we learned not only about this sometimes life-saving medical procedure (babies cannot nurse with a cleft palette and starve to death), but the plight of the poor in Ethiopia and around the world. He helps to perform nearly 100 of these surgeries every year in just two weeks.

Dr. Minami shared his incredible insight and invaluable advice from "always do your best" and "never give up" to "the pros and cons of a life in medicine" and that "medicine is a lifelong passion and an inspiration for lifelong learning." Meeting with Dr. Minami was truly a privilege for all of us and we left with the feeling that if we honestly have a passion for medicine and that if we work hard enough, that we can do it. Thank you, Dr. Minami, for your time and generous contribution toward the D.O.C.S. Club!

Dr. Sylvia Flores, MD

D.O.C.S. Club members also had the privilege of meeting with Dr. Sylvia Flores, a leading Obstetrician/Gynecologist from Marin County. Dr. Flores is known not only for her brilliance and professionalism, but for her outstanding "bedside manner." Dr. Flores met with our group and shared her experiences and educational background at Stanford, and provided invaluable advice to us regarding colleges, course selections, and the importance of meaningful service work and having a passion and balance in your life.

Dr. Flores also provided an extensive "behind the scenes" tour of the Emergency Room and the Labor and Delivery Department at Marin General Hospital, explaining the purpose of each section from triage and the pre-labor section to the nursery and operating room that is specifically used for the C-sections, hysterectomies or delivery complications that she and other surgeons perform. This tour is one that is not available to the public and we were very fortunate to have Dr. Flores show us the inner workings of the hospital. One of the highlights was seeing a newborn baby (hours old!) in the nursery and another newborn being treated for jaundice by exposure to ultraviolet light.

Like Dr. Minami, Dr. Flores expressed identical advice when it came to pursuing medicine...that if we truly have a passion and work hard enough, that we can do it. It is so encouraging to know that when they were our age, they also questioned whether they had what it took to be a physician. They stuck with their passion and are today two of the finest doctors in their fields. Thank you, Dr. Flores, for sharing so much of your time and for being such an inspiration to us!