

Through the generosity of Charles R. Millikan, D. Min., vice president for Spiritual Care and Values Integration, an annual award competition was established at Houston Methodist Hospital among the resident staff. To enter the writing competition, residents must submit a poem or essay of 1,000 words or less on the topic, "On Being a Doctor." A committee of seven was selected from Houston Methodist Hospital Education Institute to establish the judging criteria and select the winning entries. The following is the third-place winning entry for 2016.

"WR"

Halim Yammine, M.D., fifth-year General Surgery resident

Houston Methodist Hospital, Houston, Texas

I first met Dr. Rosenberg 3 years ago while a third-year surgery resident newly transferred into the program from Boston. He was hosting the monthly journal club at his home. I approached him and introduced myself:

"Hi Sir, I'm Halim Yammine. I recently joined the program as a third year. Thank you for having us."

"Wade Rosenberg"

Little did I know at that moment the profound effect this physician would have on my career.

I believe that in order for someone to be an effective leader, they should do so by example. No one does this better than him. With few words and hard work, he endeared himself into the hearts of every surgery resident. Being a surgery resident is a tough job. You're required to wake up early and work long, grueling hours caring for patients with complex and emergent conditions. Add in an emotional family dynamic, and it would be easy to find yourself complaining about your lot in life...except when you know your boss works harder than you do.

"WR"—as the residents refer to him—comes in each morning and identifies his preoperative patients, his operative day commencing soon after. And what an operative day! He typically averages about four to five surgeries per day, each with a varying degree of complexity. Whether a simple hernia repair, a complex Whipple procedure, a simple fistula for dialysis access, or a complex aortic repair, witnessing WR in action is the most inspiring experience of my training. He makes the most difficult cases appear effortless.

From the first day as the chief on his service, I knew I would be held to a higher standard. I was driven to excel, knowing I would need to bring my A-game every day and be willing to learn. Otherwise, it would be a very long rotation. I found that the enthusiasm to do well trickled down throughout the team. The scrub nurse, circulating nurse, medical student...everyone endeavored to be at their best every single day. In WR's operating room, it is truly a team atmosphere, with everyone working towards a common goal: to provide exemplary care for each patient. You get the feeling that

surgery is a team sport, and everyone is pitching in to make the day go as smoothly as possible.

While doing surgical procedures, he taught me how to focus and cut out distractions. "Let's just operate," he'd say, rather than talk about it! His direction in the operating room made all the difference when it came to honing my surgical skills. Simple suggestions, such as the way I positioned my body or how best to load the needle, caused my confidence and proficiency to go through the roof. The tasks that I'd previously struggled to perform now appeared effortless. The small tremor I had experienced in the past when suturing tiny vessels suddenly disappeared, purely because I now tucked in my elbow as he advised me to do! Learning how to be systematic when approaching cases made all the difference.

Being the chief on his service is truly a unique experience. No matter how ill or how old his patients, WR is dedicated to providing each and every one of them with excellent care. Thus, it is no surprise that he is called upon to take care of surgical issues that arise on lung and heart transplant cases. Being on his service allowed me to assist the greatest number of patients with the largest variety of conditions. He is one of the few remaining true "general surgeons" qualified to operate anywhere in the human body. Furthermore, his training in vascular surgery allows him to broaden his patient population even more. It is because of Wade Rosenberg that I chose to become a vascular surgeon and train to be the most complete surgeon I can. In the meantime, I'll continue to absorb the knowledge he shares, hoping to develop my surgical skills to a level that will allow me to have even a small semblance of his career!

Dr. Rosenberg has had the fortune of training with great master surgeons such as Drs. DeBakey, Crawford, Jordan, and Noon. To me, he is not only a true master surgeon himself but a skilled master teacher as well. I feel blessed to have been able to work with him and learn from him. What an honor it has been to have someone so talented and humble pass on the teachings of the fathers of surgery. As the boy who left his little hometown in the north of Lebanon and came to this country seeking better training, it makes me feel as if the journey was well worth it.