

BRANDON NG, MD

- Family medicine, Entira Family Clinics, Inver Grove Heights.
- MMA member since 2012.
- Hometown is North Saint Paul. College and medical school at University of Minnesota Twin Cities. Residency with St. Joseph's Family Medicine Residency (now Woodwinds Family Medicine Residency).
- Family includes girlfriend and Scout the cat.



Became a physician because ...

I had an idea that I wanted to be a doctor when I was in high school, but when my grandpa passed away, I took it quite hard emotionally and it kind of scared me away from being a doctor. I thought I was going to do cancer research in a lab until I was almost done with college. My research PI had me shadow one of her colleagues working in the Ped's Heme Onc unit at the University of Minnesota. It was eye-opening and shocking to see how resilient these kids are. Every day, faced with sometimes seemingly impossible odds, they always tried to smile. I thought to myself, "How can you be scared of helping someone for fear they may die when these kids who face the threat of death every day can put on a smile?" That's when I decided that my fear of death meant nothing compared to patients' need for a competent doctor. So, here I am now!

Greatest challenge facing medicine today ...

Access to care is the greatest challenge. The current generation of doctors and other providers doesn't seem big enough to take care of current and future patient populations. As people live longer, their health complexity will almost always become greater. As we try to combat provider burnout by decreasing patient contact hours or having longer visits, we strain the moral line that brought many into this calling in the first place: helping patients. When we get call after call, day after day, asking for time to "fit in" one more patient, the burnout will only get worse. I think the solution is to increase residency slots and funding.

Favorite fictional physician ...

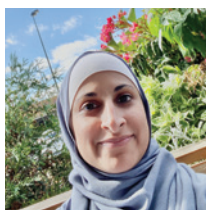
JD from "Scrubs." I love how idealistic he is and how he learns to apply that idealism to a harsh world. Plus, he's a goofball in the hospital and never fails to get people to laugh and smile.

If I weren't a physician ...

I think I'd be doing cancer research, which was my original life plan. If for some reason I couldn't be a physician anymore, I think I would be a high school biology teacher and make dumplings as a side gig while working on a dumpling-inspired Twitch gaming stream. When we were younger, my brother always joked about how he would start a dumpling shop in Minnesota. Since he's moved to New York City, that has now fallen on my shoulders. I'm a gamer and every stream needs to have a theme—unless you are actually good at gaming.

AASFIA QAADIR, DO

- Child/adolescent psychiatrist. Clinical director, PrairieCare Maplewood, and clinical consultant to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, PrairieCare.
- MMA member since 2016.
- From Chicago. Graduated from the University of Chicago and the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine. CAP Fellowship in psychiatry, Mayo Clinic. Has worked at PrairieCare since 2016.
- Family is "beautiful mixed Palestinian and Hyderabad!"—with feline furbabies.



Became a physician because ...

My parents and extended family have always set examples of a sense of social responsibility. It's the idea that your purpose in life extends beyond your own enjoyment of success, that you must go back into the community to improve it, to create opportunities for others to succeed and to try to solve some of the problems that lead to suffering. For me, healthcare is social justice work. I also was attracted to medicine because of the diverse roles I could engage for clinical care, education, mentoring, public health initiatives and advocacy for policies that impact the health of communities. Working with children is compelling because of the fundamental trajectory that can be shifted to impact the rest of their lives. Children make progress even in a short span of time and it is

amazing to watch them learn a new skill or learn how to communicate a need and problem-solve something for the first time.

Greatest challenge facing medicine today ...

Lack of access to healthcare. We have the technological advancements within medicine and within fields of information technology/communications, but cannot seem to agree on the fundamental value that healthcare is a basic human right that should not be abrogated by any other interest. Even when patients can access healthcare physically, they must still contend with implicit bias and inefficiencies in healthcare delivery that are driven by a lack of understanding of the historical roots of healthcare inequities and a lack of training in racial trauma.

Favorite fictional physician ...

Dr. Baker from "Little House on the Prairie," because that was one of the first depictions of a physician I recall as a child and what stood out was his relational connection in the community.

If I weren't a physician ...

Something to do with theater and film—perhaps starting as a writer and then a director/producer. Narratives shape our perspectives on what is and also what could be. Our stories are part of our collective imagination—and we should dream big.