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2024 UW Chief of Medicine Service Awards announced

By Anya Farwell Contributing Writer
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The University of Washington acknowledged Dr. Deborah Greenberg, Dr. Carolyn Keller, and Dr. Adam Templeton with the University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) Chief of Medicine Service Awards. Greenberg was honored for her work in outpatient care and recognized Keller and Templeton for their work in inpatient care.

The UWMC Chief of Medicine Service Awards were established in 2012 as a way to honor UW medical staff for their hard work and significant contributions to the clinical and scholarly missions of the UW Medical Center.

“Many of the goals [the university] still [states] — curiosity, compassion, and community — really resonated with me at the time, and still does,” Keller said.

The work of UW medical professionals is rigorous and precise. Both Keller and Templeton work in internal medicine, treating a wide variety of patients dealing with gastrointestinal cancer and precancerous problems, organ transplants, and post-operational care. While both doctors excel in their fields, medicine was not their initial choice.

Keller grew up surrounded by doctors, with both of her parents working in the medical field, but medical school was not her first choice, and she initially attended business school. Keller recalled an experience when she worked with Pepsi, coming out of a meeting where a heated debate took place about what shade of gray should be used for a t-shirt. This interaction spurred her “ah-ha” moment when she knew she wanted a change.

“I had a quarter-life crisis and decided I wanted to be a doctor,” Keller said.

Templeton, much like Keller, didn’t begin his professional career in the medical field.

“Definitely my 13-year-old self would never have thought he would grow up to be a gastroenterologist,” Templeton said.

Templeton didn’t realize he had a flare for medicine until he was learning how to splint a fracture or stabilize a spine. That is when it all clicked, leading to the beginning of his long and successful career in internal medicine.

On the road to their success, both gave tribute to their past mentors, with added pieces of advice for aspiring medicine students.

“Find role models, people whose lives you aspire to, and ask them how they got there, and what it is you admire about their life, not just their title,” Keller said.

In such a competitive field, Keller and Templeton found an outlet for advice from their past mentors, who would assist them later in their careers.

“I had some amazing gastroenterology mentors in medical school who had amazing academic and clinical careers and still had time for getting their kids out on the hockey pond or ski hill,” Templeton said.

Although their career shows their passion and the hard work they have done in the field, balance can be key in a career that can be all time-consuming.

“Medicine has a way to take over your life, not just being a job,” Keller said.

Templeton and Keller both think it's important to focus on life and hobbies outside of the hospital and the work they do.

“I’ve got two great kids and found a partner who is doing great things in the architectural world and reminds me that medicine and patient care are important but not everything,” Templeton said.

Reflecting on their careers, they are now honored as the recipients of the UWMC Chief of Service Awards, one of the highest awards UW grants for the field of medicine.

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