

I found it a bit ironic I received this email on the same day I was reading an JAMA editorial from Dr. Victor Fuchs, one of my instructors back in the 1981 core. I have reflected on my choice of hum bio (as opposed to more traditional premedical majors) and continue to see value. I want to thank another Hum Bio major, Lisa Taylor, '81, for redirecting me at the time. She and I remain good friends.

After Stanford I went on to several (albeit many very short) careers, in healthcare including oncology, neurology, neuroradiology, health IT and policy. As a medical student (Univ of Arizona MD '88), I thought to extend my experience in cancer research- this began at SU in Dr. Henry Kaplan's lab. At the time I was going to be an oncologist. This lead to a year at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm Sweden. During that time, I began to believe that cancer research already had too many people looking at the same problems. Admittedly without much guidance, I then pivoted and turned my interest in molecular bio to the neurosciences, with the intent of being a clinical, educator and researcher.

Returning to medical school, I committed myself to the neurosciences and neurology. I choose what, at the time, was a strong residency in basic science and clinical neurology at UT Southwestern. This interest lasted through part of my first year of residency. My wife was doing a radiology residency. She seemed to do all the cool stuff- MRI was coming into it's own and my exhaustive neuro exams seemed exhausting. Fortunately, the Chairman of Radiology was able to find a slot for me (as he said so that he won't lose my wife to some other program), and I transferred to Radiology.

I then completed a Radiology residency and followed this with a 2 year fellowship in Neuroradiology (in part so the earlier training won't be a complete waste) at the Barrow Neurological Institute here in Phoenix. This is the countries largest center of excellence for neuroscience with the largest training programs in Neurosurgery, Neurology and Neuroradiology. I finished with 9 post graduate years of training (35 years old) and my first real job.

After some time in private practice I returned to the BNI where I have been an Attending and Professor of Neuroradiology since 2000, finally fulfilling the desire to be a clinician, teacher and researcher.

In addition to my clinical practice I developed an interest in computers in medicine- this is fairly common for radiologists given our integral use of

computers for our daily work. This started in the imaging management space but then expanded to cloud based care and medical collaboration.

IT services are central to bending the cost care while improving care in America. My interests in IT lead to opportunities to be a healthcare advisor the McCain Campaign in 2008 as well as the healthcare representative to the Digital Arizona Council here in Arizona. My interest in the intersection between policy and technology continues to grow.

I have also advised and engaged the business of medicine through 6 different healthcare start ups over the years. One was a medical robotics company, while the other 5 were all in health IT. These opportunities lead to an introduction and most recent engagement with Avizia, a global telemedicine company, as their Chief Medical Officer in addition to my role at the BNI.

What does the future hold? I tell people you reach mid life and you either start drinking, have an affair or find a new job. I've chosen the least traumatic and least expensive choice becoming more involved with IT and policy and expect to do less clinical over time. I have also started to blog, in largely part an as attempt to bring others with me to change what most believe is a broken care model (www.alanpittmd.com).

I'm sending you this (somewhat long) update to express my gratitude for having a diverse education while at SU as a hum bio major, and perhaps as a story for those who will follow. Hum Bio did not limit me. It prepared me for the diverse experiences I could not have seen ahead.

In terms of Dr. Fuchs, I still remember his lectures on the new ways to deliver care at the time- HMOs. It seems like yesterday. The time will pass quickly for the current class of hum bio students. If they are like me, they likely see a clear path to success after college- this is an illusion. If they are blessed with an equally diverse path, they'll be well prepared.

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